

The Elegance of Abstraction  
Spring 2015

**Writing assignment 1**

Set: Week 1  
Due: Week 2

1. Write 400-500 words on your “mathematical autobiography”. I would like to understand why you have chosen this class and what you hope to get out of it. You might consider describing
  - your past experience with math
  - how you feel about math right now
  - what you have previously liked and disliked about math
  - at what point you feel you hit a ceiling with math previously (if you did)
2. (a) Write a story in approximately 100 words, beginning with the words “This morning there were three mice in my kitchen,” and ending with the words “and Mrs Smith’s cat was happy too”.  
(b) Why do you think I asked you to do that?
3. Find a really boring math video on YouTube. Write 100 words about what makes it so boring and how it could be improved. (Submit the URL as well.)