

**Putnam 2015**
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– A

**A1** Let  $A$  and  $B$  be points on the same branch of the hyperbola  $xy = 1$ . Suppose that  $P$  is a point lying between  $A$  and  $B$  on this hyperbola, such that the area of the triangle  $APB$  is as large as possible. Show that the region bounded by the hyperbola and the chord  $AP$  has the same area as the region bounded by the hyperbola and the chord  $PB$ .

**A2** Let  $a_0 = 1$ ,  $a_1 = 2$ , and  $a_n = 4a_{n-1} - a_{n-2}$  for  $n \geq 2$ .  
Find an odd prime factor of  $a_{2015}$ .

**A3** Compute

$$\log_2 \left( \prod_{a=1}^{2015} \prod_{b=1}^{2015} \left( 1 + e^{2\pi i ab/2015} \right) \right)$$

Here  $i$  is the imaginary unit (that is,  $i^2 = -1$ ).

**A4** For each real number  $x$ , let

$$f(x) = \sum_{n \in S_x} \frac{1}{2^n}$$

where  $S_x$  is the set of positive integers  $n$  for which  $\lfloor nx \rfloor$  is even.

What is the largest real number  $L$  such that  $f(x) \geq L$  for all  $x \in [0, 1]$ ?

(As usual,  $\lfloor z \rfloor$  denotes the greatest integer less than or equal to  $z$ .)

**A5** Let  $q$  be an odd positive integer, and let  $N_q$  denote the number of integers  $a$  such that  $0 < a < q/4$  and  $\gcd(a, q) = 1$ . Show that  $N_q$  is odd if and only if  $q$  is of the form  $p^k$  with  $k$  a positive integer and  $p$  a prime congruent to 5 or 7 modulo 8.

**A6** Let  $n$  be a positive integer. Suppose that  $A$ ,  $B$ , and  $M$  are  $n \times n$  matrices with real entries such that  $AM = MB$ , and such that  $A$  and  $B$  have the same characteristic polynomial. Prove that  $\det(A - MX) = \det(B - XM)$  for every  $n \times n$  matrix  $X$  with real entries.

– B

**B1** Let  $f$  be a three times differentiable function (defined on  $\mathbb{R}$  and real-valued) such that  $f$  has at least five distinct real zeros. Prove that  $f + 6f' + 12f'' + 8f'''$  has at least two distinct real zeros.

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- B2** Given a list of the positive integers  $1, 2, 3, 4, \dots$ , take the first three numbers  $1, 2, 3$  and their sum  $6$  and cross all four numbers off the list. Repeat with the three smallest remaining numbers  $4, 5, 7$  and their sum  $16$ . Continue in this way, crossing off the three smallest remaining numbers and their sum and consider the sequence of sums produced:  $6, 16, 27, 36, \dots$ . Prove or disprove that there is some number in this sequence whose base 10 representation ends with 2015.
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- B3** Let  $S$  be the set of all  $2 \times 2$  real matrices

$$M = \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{pmatrix}$$

whose entries  $a, b, c, d$  (in that order) form an arithmetic progression. Find all matrices  $M$  in  $S$  for which there is some integer  $k > 1$  such that  $M^k$  is also in  $S$ .

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- B4** Let  $T$  be the set of all triples  $(a, b, c)$  of positive integers for which there exist triangles with side lengths  $a, b, c$ . Express

$$\sum_{(a,b,c) \in T} \frac{2^a}{3^b 5^c}$$

as a rational number in lowest terms.

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- B5** Let  $P_n$  be the number of permutations  $\pi$  of  $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$  such that

$$|i - j| = 1 \text{ implies } |\pi(i) - \pi(j)| \leq 2$$

for all  $i, j$  in  $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ . Show that for  $n \geq 2$ , the quantity

$$P_{n+5} - P_{n+4} - P_{n+3} + P_n$$

does not depend on  $n$ , and find its value.

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- B6** For each positive integer  $k$ , let  $A(k)$  be the number of odd divisors of  $k$  in the interval  $[1, \sqrt{2k})$ . Evaluate:

$$\sum_{k=1}^{\infty} (-1)^{k-1} \frac{A(k)}{k}.$$

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