



THE SHAMBLING PARABOLA

$$y = x^2$$

THE FORMULA THAT JUST WOULDN'T DIE!

OUR STORY BEGINS IN THE FAR OFF LAND OF BABYLONIA...



HERE A LAND OWNER HAD TO PAY TAXES BASED ON THE AMOUNT OF LAND HE OWNED.

I GROW
 $C=MX^2$
CROPS.

NO ONE
CARES,
DAVE!

PAY ME WITH "C"
AMOUNT OF
CROPS.

WHAT DOES
THAT EVEN
MEAN?

DO I LOOK
LIKE I HAVE A
MAGICAL
PROPORTION
FAIRY?

WUHHGGG!

In mathematical terms, if x is the length of the side of the field, m is the amount of crop you can grow on a square field of sidelength 1, and c is the amount of crop that you can grow, then $c=mx^2$

YOU
SHOULD
ACTUALLY LISTEN
TO DAVE.

TOLD
YOU!

I WISH THIS
EQUATION WOULD JUST
DIE... THEN I WOULDN'T
HAVE TO PAY YOU.

I STILL NEED TO
SOLVE FOR x TO
DETERMINE HOW BIG A
FIELD TO PLANT.

EASY! x IS EQUAL
TO THE SQUARE ROOT
OF CROPS DIVIDED BY
AMOUNT YIELDED!

I LITERALLY
HATE YOU.

1000 YEARS LATER...

THE GREEKS DECIDED THEY JUST HAAAAAD TO FIGURE OUT A SOLUTION FOR THE EQUATION $x^2 = 2$

WHAT IS HE TALKING ABOUT?

TRIANGLES AND FIGURING OUT THE HYPOTENUSE LENGTH.

IS THAT A RIGHT TRIANGLE WITH SIDE LENGTHS OF ONE?

$$A^2 + B^2 = C^2$$

THAT'S THE TWELFTH TIME YOU'VE ASKED THAT. YOU'RE NOT FOOLING ANYONE...

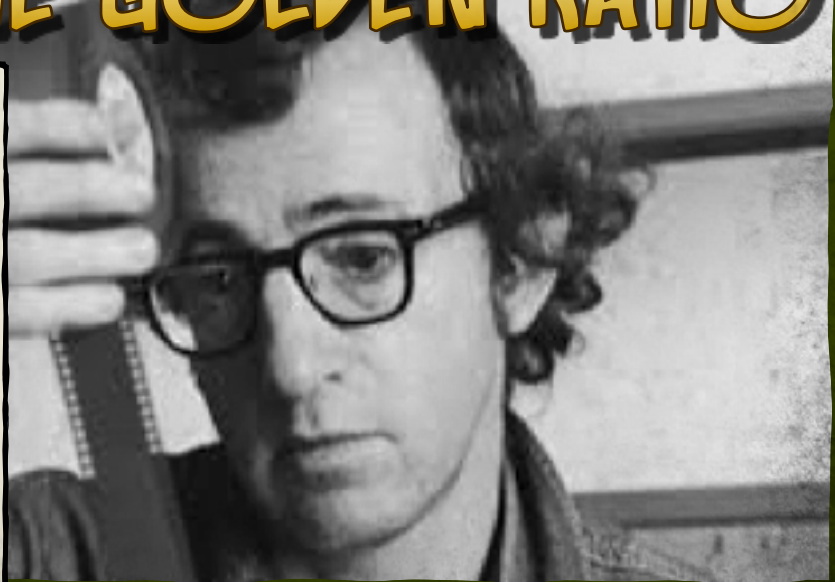
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THE GOLDEN RECTANGLE IS.

$$x = \frac{\sqrt{5} - 1}{2} = 0.61803 \dots$$

THE GOLDEN RECTANGLE CAN BE SEEN IN THE SHAPE OF WINDOWS, ESPECIALLY ON GEORGIAN HOUSES.

MORE RECENTLY, THE GOLDEN RATIO CAN ALSO BE FOUND AS THE "PERFECT SHAPE" FOR PHOTOGRAPHS AND FILM IMAGES. SO THINK ABOUT THAT NEXT TIME YOU TAKE A SQUARE INSTAGRAM PHOTO... YOU'RE RUINING THOUSANDS OF YEARS OF MATHEMATICAL DISCOVERY. AND THE NEXT TIME YOU'RE WATCHING NETFLIX FOR EIGHT HOURS IN A ROW THINK ABOUT HOW PERFECT THE IMAGES LOOK AND REMEMBER THE GOLDEN RECTANGLE.

THE GOLDEN RATIO

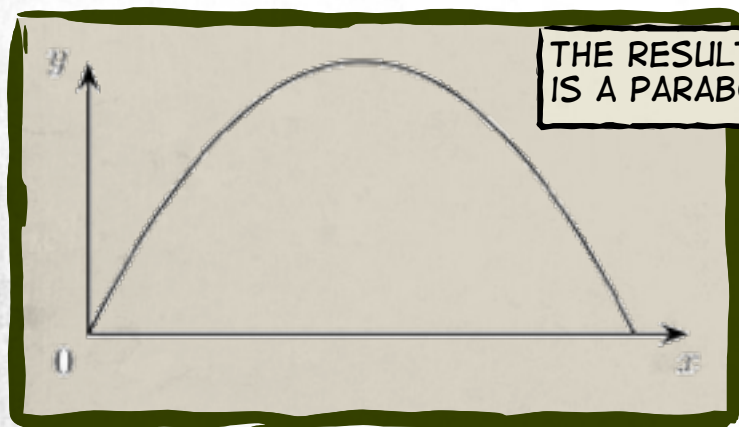
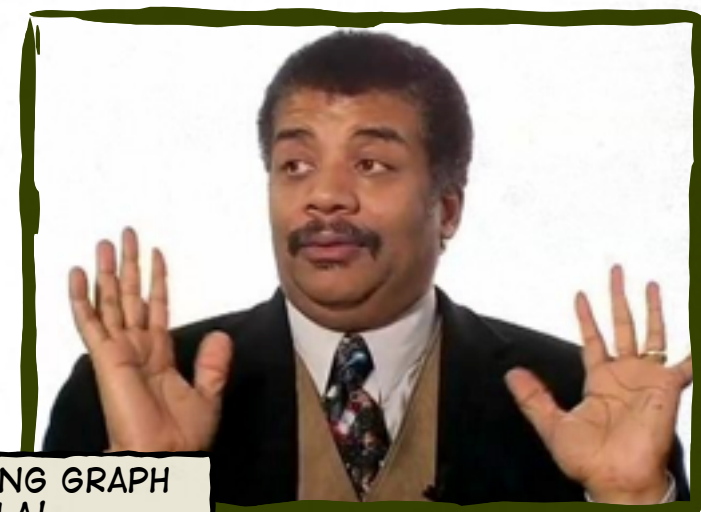


THE EQUATION THAT SAVES LIVES

AND GETS YOU MONEY

$$y = \left(\frac{v}{u}\right)x - \left(\frac{g}{2u^2}\right)x^2,$$

DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU ARE PART OF THIS EQUATION EVERY TIME YOU'RE IN A CAR THAT ACCELERATES AND STOPS?



THE RESULTING GRAPH IS A PARABOLA!

WHO CARES?!





A mobile phone works by converting your speech into high frequency radio waves and the behavior of these waves can then be calculated using further formulae involving i . So we can say with justification that without the simple quadratic equation $x^2 = -1$ the mobile phone would never have been invented.



Super long story sort of short:

Imaginary numbers were created when mathematicians faced the problem $x^2 = -1$. The "cheat" they created was to just make up an answer by defining it using the symbol i . Now $i^2 = -1$, which means it can't be a real number, so it's imaginary.

And we apply our understanding of i and quantum theory to calculate "wave number" of a quantity to create this partial differential equation:

$$i \frac{\partial u}{\partial t} + \nabla^2 u + v(x)u = 0.$$

Understanding the motion of these electrons is what allows us to design integrated circuits for things like computers, cars DVD players and mobile phones.