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Announcement: San Antonio Math Association Meeting Call for Papers, January 1999

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ematics?

Suppose we hadn't been talking about gardens, but about something we didn't have so much advance information about? How would we have known to reject the "wrong" solution? How wrong is it? It checks in the equation, doesn't it?

Well, there was a slippery phrase two paragraphs back: "...the equation expresses the conditions of the problem..." That isn't quite true. The conditions of the problem were two: First that x be a positive number, since we are looking for the length of the side of a real garden, built of real fencing in a real city; and second, that the equation be satisfied. This is how we know to reject the -10 . Had we been more careful in

stating the problem, we might have put it thus at the very outset: "Find the (positive) *length* of the side of a garden..." Then at each step of the narrowing down part of the solution, well before the "check," we would repeat "positive number" before the symbol " x ," e.g. "Let x be the positive number of the pretend length of ..." and so on. We would end, "Then the positive number x must be either 60 or -10 ," and it is clear that our final statement would be "Then x must be 60 " (if such an x exists). There would be no need to worry further about the -10 , but the check that 60 works would still be needed as before.

Part II of this article will be published in the next issue of the Humanistic Mathematics Network Journal.

Ethical, Humanistic, and Artistic Mathematics

Contributed paper sessions at the Math Association meeting
January 1999 San Antonio, TX

Organizers: Robert P. Webber, Longwood College
Alvin White, Harvey Mudd College
Stefanos Gialamas, Illinois Institute of Art

Description: This session will feature talks that relate mathematics and mathematics teaching to the culture in which they are embedded. Papers discussing any of the three following themes are welcome:

- * Ethical dilemmas and considerations in mathematics
- * Humanistic mathematics
- * Teaching mathematics to art students integrating an iconistic approach, guided inquiry, or any other philosophy or methodology

Send papers by surface mail, email, or fax to:

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phone 909-621-8867

Please state which of the three themes your paper addresses.