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Equation Story

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dents to make conjectures and test conjecture - is most useful. I believe that an engaging mathematical investigation is useful for all learners, and the excitement of mathematical investigation is especially useful for individuals planning for a teaching career. I hope that my students feel the same.

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Equation Story

Whitney Perret

A short story by a student in Margaret Schafer's 7th grade class at Hale Middle School, Los Angeles

One day, a boy named Data was playing with his dog Variable. Data lived in a magical world called "Number Land." Everything revolved around numbers. People were named after math terms. They used math to label their houses. All of their jobs revolved around numbers. Their whole language was made of math terms.

"Son, come and finish your math chores," said his mom, Mrs. Sequence. The Sequence family liked to keep their numbers or equations in an ordered list.

"Aww, okay Mom," he answered.

"Use like terms to organize your equation," commanded his mom. The word equation translates to bedroom in Number Land.

"Okay," replied Data. His equation looked like this: $-7+n-8n+2=$. So he combined like terms and got $2n+2=$.

"You're almost done, but you need to know the value of n. In this equation, n is equal to 1," she said.

"Okay, Mom. Then my room is 4," he replied.

"Good job, honey. That's correct. Your equation is nice and organized," exclaimed Mrs. Sequence.

"Here puppy. Come on Variable, let's play with my friend Identity," said Data. "It's the funniest thing that all his Variables are exactly the same as my Variable. "Can Operation come over too?" asked Data.

"I guess," said Mrs. Sequence.

"My friend Operation sure knows how to do adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing very well. When I have friends over, I never invite Operation and Inverse Operation," Data explained. "Inverse, as we call him for short, always excludes Operation from everything."

"That's smart, honey; you sure know a lot of information," exclaimed Mrs. Sequence. So he called Identity and Operation and asked them to come over. They arrived five minutes later.

"Come on in you guys. I'll be right there but first I want to check the mail." So Data went to the mailbox and looked through it and found a letter. He brought it inside and opened it. "Oh. No. It's an exponent letter," he explained as he walked into the house.

"What does it say you have to do?" asked Operation.

"It says that I have to rewrite this letter 3^4 times or go to Division Crest to see what's at the top," Data yelled. So the three friends set off to Division Crest. "I wonder what's up there," said Data as they began to climb the mountain. "Probably the same thing that's on the top of every mountain, a peak." So they hiked all the way to the top. At the very top, they found a beautiful gleaming stone.

"Oh, my goodness, it's an emerald!"

"We're rich!" exclaimed Data.

"According to my calculations, you will now be 5,000.3 times richer," said Operation.