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## Poetry

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which were similar in several ways. While playing these games as a child, it would have been of interest to learn in school that the games my friends and I had been playing were like those enjoyed around the world in many other cultures. Examples of these games and possibly giving the opportunity to play the games of other peoples by making the game pieces as they would, could be a helpful tool in building a foundation for math.

From Quipus to sand tracing, it becomes evident that Math is more than just numbers. It's a fascinating world of information that stretches far back into the past, a past that holds a wealth of knowledge for even the most skeptical person.

Didn't you ever wonder why people, even very young children, are able to sing a song and remember each and every word? Perhaps that is because we view singing a song as pleasurable—it makes us feel good. Maybe a similar approach to teaching math and sciences is the answer. When the fear is removed and one finds learning pleasant and no longer intimidating, one can begin to explore new worlds that once were thought to be unreachable.

<sup>1</sup> Ascher, Marcia, *Ethnomathematics*, Brooks/Cole, Pacific Grove, CA, (1991).

## Poetry by Helen Lewy

*Presented at the Mathematics Poetry Reading, Jan 14, 1994  
Joint Mathematics Meetings, Cincinnati, OH*

### THE MATHEMATICIAN COMES HOME

"Hello, my dear,—and how are you?"  
"I'm fine. I baked a cake!  
And how was your day, Husband Mine?"  
" Oh, just the 'standard take'."

"What kind of goodie did you bake?"  
"Upside down" she quoth  
"Oh, no! Not that!!" he cried in pain,  
"It' s happened to us both!

For some eccentric Fate of ours  
Is playing Cosmic Clown:  
The math I did today,—it, too,—  
Came out quite upside down!!"

A programmer living in Gates  
Was subject to odd sorts of states;  
In a rage, a while back,  
He hacked up his Mac,—  
Now his future is up to the Fates!

A researcher in Algebra (Linear)  
Didn't dare to talk math during dinner!