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Prelude to Mathematics Dover Books on Mathematics

By W. W. Sawyer

Dover Publications. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 224 pages. Dimensions: 8.2in. x 5.3in. x 0.6in. No mathematician can be a complete mathematician unless he is also something of a poet. K. Weierstrass In this lively and stimulating account, noted mathematician and educator W. W. Sawyer (Professor Emeritus, University of Toronto) defines mathematics as the classification and study of all possible patterns. It is a broad definition, but one that seems appropriate to the great scope and depth of the topic. Indeed, mathematics seems to have few boundaries, either in applications to practical matters or in its mind-stretching excursions into realms of pure abstraction. Gearing his approach to the layman whose grasp of things mathematical may be a bit precarious, Professor Sawyer offers a lucid, accessible introduction to the mathematicians cast of mind. Five well-written preliminary chapters explore the beauty, power and mysticism of mathematics; the role of math as an adjunct in utilitarian matters; and the concepts of pattern, generalization and unification as both tools and goals of mathematical thought. After developing this conceptual groundwork, the author goes on to treat of more advanced topics: non-Euclidean geometry, matrices, projective geometry, determinants, transformations and group theory. The emphasis here is not on mathematics...


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