

G. H. Hardy

Quotes

*Science, Math, Men, Art, Mathematics, Lying, Real, Numbers, Appreciation,
Years, Names, Study, Creative, Silly, Knowledge, Past, People, Mind, Sacrifice,
Beautiful*

In [great mathematics] there is a very high degree of unexpectedness, combined with inevitability and economy.

~G. H. Hardy

I am interested in mathematics only as a creative art.

~G. H. Hardy

It is not worth an intelligent man's time to be in the majority. By definition, there are already enough people to do that.

~G. H. Hardy

Beauty is the first test: there is no permanent place in the world for ugly mathematics.

~G. H. Hardy

A mathematician, like a painter or a poet, is a maker of patterns.

~G. H. Hardy

They [formulae 1.10 - 1.12 of Ramanujan] must be true because, if they were not true, no one would have had the imagination to invent them.

~G. H. Hardy

Asked if he believes in one G-d, a mathematician answered: "Yes, up to isomorphism".

~G. H. Hardy

The mathematician's patterns, like the painter's or the poet's, must be beautiful.

~G. H. Hardy

A mathematician, like a painter or poet, is a maker of patterns. If his patterns are more permanent than theirs, it is because they are made with ideas.

~G. H. Hardy

Most people are so frightened of the name of mathematics that they are ready, quite unaffectedly, to exaggerate their own mathematical stupidity.

~G. H. Hardy

Real mathematics must be justified as art if it can be justified at all.

~G. H. Hardy

If I could prove by logic that you would die in five minutes, I should be sorry you were going to die, but my sorrow would be very much mitigated by pleasure in the proof.

~G. H. Hardy

Sometimes one has to say difficult things, but one ought to say them as simply as one knows how.

~G. H. Hardy

I wrote a great deal during the next ten [early] years, but very little of any importance; there are not more than four or five papers which I can still remember with some satisfaction.

~G. H. Hardy

Mathematics is not a contemplative but a creative subject.

~G. H. Hardy

All analysts spend half their time hunting through the literature for inequalities which they want to use and cannot prove.

~G. H. Hardy

A mathematician ... has no material to work with but ideas, and so his patterns are likely to last longer, since ideas wear less with time than words.

~G. H. Hardy

Pure mathematics is on the whole distinctly more useful than applied... For what is useful above all is technique, and mathematical technique is taught mainly through pure mathematics.

~G. H. Hardy

There is no scorn more profound, or on the whole more justifiable, than that of the men who make for the men who explain.

~G. H. Hardy

Young men should prove theorems, old men should write books.

~G. H. Hardy

The case for my life... is this: that I have added something to knowledge, and helped others to add more

~G. H. Hardy

Cricket is the only game where you are playing against eleven of the other side and ten of your own.

~G. H. Hardy

I was at my best at a little past forty, when I was a professor at Oxford.

~G. H. Hardy

No discovery of mine has made, or is likely to make, directly or indirectly, for good or ill, the least difference to the amenity of the world.

~G. H. Hardy

The fact is there are few more popular subjects than mathematics. Most people have some appreciation of mathematics, just as most people can enjoy a pleasant tune.

~G. H. Hardy

Exposition, criticism, appreciation, is work for second-rate minds.

~G. H. Hardy

317 is a prime, not because we think so, or because our minds are shaped in one way rather than another, but because it is so, because mathematical reality is built that way.

~G. H. Hardy

A science is said to be useful if its development tends to accentuate the existing inequalities in the distribution of wealth, or more directly promotes the destruction of human life.

~G. H. Hardy

No one has yet discovered any warlike purpose to be served by the theory of numbers or relativity, and it seems unlikely that anyone will do so for many years.

~G. H. Hardy

For any serious purpose, intelligence is a very minor gift.

~G. H. Hardy

If intellectual curiosity, professional pride, and ambition are the dominant incentives to research, then assuredly no one has a fairer chance of gratifying them than a mathematician.

~G. H. Hardy

The creative life was the only one for a serious man.

~G. H. Hardy

A person's first duty, a young person's at any rate, is to be ambitious, and the noblest ambition is that of leaving behind something of permanent value.

~G. H. Hardy

Good work is not done by 'humble' men

~G. H. Hardy

No mathematician should ever allow himself to forget that mathematics, more than any other art or science, is a young man's game

~G. H. Hardy

I do not know an instance of a major mathematical advance initiated by a man past fifty

~G. H. Hardy

As Littlewood said to me once [of the ancient Greeks], they are not clever school boys or "scholarship candidates," but "Fellows of another college."

~G. H. Hardy

The public does not need to be convinced that there is something in mathematics.

~G. H. Hardy

Bombs are probably more merciful than bayonets

~G. H. Hardy

Most people can do nothing at all well

~G. H. Hardy

Greek mathematics is the real thing. The Greeks first spoke a language which modern mathematicians can understand... So Greek mathematics is 'permanent', more permanent even than Greek literature.

~G. H. Hardy

The primes are the raw material out of which we have to build arithmetic, and Euclid's theorem assures us that we have plenty of material for the task.

~G. H. Hardy

The study of mathematics is, if an unprofitable, a perfectly harmless and innocent occupation.

~G. H. Hardy

A month's intelligent instruction in the theory of numbers ought to be twice as instructive, twice as useful, and at least 10 times as entertaining as the same amount of 'calculus for engineers'.

~G. H. Hardy

... Philosophy proper is a subject, on the one hand so hopelessly obscure, on the other so astonishingly elementary, that there knowledge hardly counts.

~G. H. Hardy

As history proves abundantly, mathematical achievement, whatever its intrinsic worth, is the most enduring of all.

~G. H. Hardy

Chess problems are the hymn-tunes of mathematics.

~G. H. Hardy

A chess problem is simply an exercise in pure mathematics.

~G. H. Hardy

No one should ever be bored. â€œ One can be horrified, or disgusted, but one can't be bored.

~G. H. Hardy

The "seriousness" of a mathematical theorem lies, not in its practical consequences, which are usually negligible, but in the significance of the mathematical ideas which it connects.

~G. H. Hardy

Mathematics may, like poetry or music, "promote and sustain a lofty habit of mind."

~G. H. Hardy

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