

NRICH

<http://nrich.maths.org/public/>

WEBSITE REVIEW

by **SNEHA TITUS**

From the website:

"The NRICH Project aims to enrich the mathematical experiences of all learners. To support this aim, members of the NRICH team work in a wide range of capacities, including providing professional development for teachers wishing to embed rich mathematical tasks into everyday classroom practice. On our website you will find thousands of our free mathematics enrichment materials (problems, articles and games) for teachers and learners from ages 5 to 19 years. All the resources are designed to develop subject knowledge, problem-solving and mathematical thinking skills. The website is updated with new material on the first day of every month."

The blurb above speaks the truth – I've been using this website for over 3 years now and have found it to be a rich resource of many things mathematical. The home page (to be redesigned this month – so I will speak of the page I have been used to) makes mathophiles itch to get their scratch pads and pencils out – the math problems of the month are featured in prominence here. There are problems at Stages 1-5 and the website invites students to send in their solutions for publication. This I feel is one of the best features

of the NRICH page. What better incentive for students to hone their mathematical communication skills than the promise of having their work put up online! And the solutions I have seen have been chosen not just for correct answers but for innovative thinking, logical presentation and good approaches to problem solving.

On the right of the home page, you find resources for teachers – a comprehensive array of articles, games and interactive resources. You can access previous issues where, reassuringly, problems come with solution sheets. Also, on the right, are the stem NRICH pages. The latter is a treasure trove of useful information with a plethora of articles ranging from different ways to braid your hair (Rapunzel would have been quite content in her tower with access to this page!), to studying epidemics ('Why do epidemics take off? Why don't they just carry on for ever once they've started?' These simple models will help us to understand what's going on, and how science can help us to prevent epidemics happening in the first place) and best of all, ideas for Stem Clubs which will certainly be of use to overburdened mathematics teachers who would

love to try new things but do not have the time to think them through. I found several student friendly activities on the Bridges of Königsberg as well as a smooth transition to networks and traversability which helped me show students how it was possible to think past a problem which had no solution. (Note: You can read the web pages in Gujarati, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu or even Urdu, if you are so inclined!)

Searching on NRICH is easy and you can search by level or topic or activity (worksheets, games, articles and so on). My personal favourite is a game found at <http://nrich.maths.org/6402> which I stumbled upon while doing a search on 'division'. It's a great way to practise the tables but it goes beyond that because it actually encourages students to find the shortest possible route to guessing a number by a series of divisions. According to a friend who is a harried father of four, this game has occupied his children happily, on otherwise interminable car journeys. And his ten year old has figured out the algorithm after playing for a while.

Need I say more?