

Let's define a sequence b_i such that $b_0 = 2$ and for all non-negative integers n

$$b_{n+1} = b_n^2 - b_n + 1.$$

We will now prove that

$$3^{2^{n-1}} < b_{n+1} - 1 < 3^{2^n}$$

is satisfied for all positive integers n . We know that $3^{2^n} = (3^{2^{n-1}})^2$ and $b_{n+1} - 1 = b_n^2 - b_n$. Let's break this inequality into two parts.

We will first prove $3^{2^{n-1}} < b_{n+1} - 1$ for all positive integers n . Base case: If $n = 1$, then $3^{2^0} = 3$ and $b_2 - 1 = 7 - 1 = 6$. Thus, the inequality is satisfied for $n = 1$ since $3 < 6$. For the inductive step, assume that $3^{2^{n-1}} < b_{n+1} - 1$ is satisfied for a positive integer n . We will now prove that this inequality is still satisfied for $n + 1$. Plugging in $n + 1$, we have $3^{2^n} = 3^{2^{n-1}} \cdot 3^{2^{n-1}}$ and $b_{n+2} - 1 = b_{n+1}^2 - b_{n+1} = (b_{n+1} - 1)(b_{n+1})$.

Thus, we want to prove

$$3^{2^{n-1}} \cdot 3^{2^{n-1}} < (b_{n+1} - 1)(b_{n+1}).$$

Since we know that $3^{2^{n-1}} < b_{n+1} - 1$, $3^{2^{n-1}} < b_{n+1}$ is also true. Since n is positive, $2^{2^{n-1}}$, b_{n+1} , b_{n+1} are all positive. Thus, we can multiply the two inequalities together and get

$$3^{2^{n-1}} \cdot 3^{2^{n-1}} < (b_{n+1} - 1)(b_{n+1})$$

which is what we wanted to prove. Thus, we know $3^{2^{n-1}} < b_{n+1} - 1$ is satisfied for all positive integers n .

We will now prove $b_{n+1} - 1 < 3^{2^n}$ for all positive integers n . Base case: If $n = 1$, then $3^{2^1} = 9$ and $b_2 - 1 = 7 - 1 = 6$. Thus, the inequality is satisfied for $n = 1$ since $6 < 9$. For the inductive step, assume that $b_{n+1} - 1 < 3^{2^n}$ is satisfied for a positive integer n . We will now prove that this inequality is still satisfied for $n + 1$. Plugging in $n + 1$, we have $3^{2^{n+1}} = 3^{2^n} \cdot 3^{2^n}$ and

$$b_{n+2} - 1 = b_{n+1}^2 - b_{n+1} = (b_{n+1} - 1)(b_{n+1}).$$

Thus, we want to prove

$$(b_{n+1} - 1)(b_{n+1}) < 3^{2^n} \cdot 3^{2^n}.$$

We know that $b_{n+1} - 1 < 3^{2^n}$. Thus, $b_{n+1} \leq 3^{2^n}$ since b_{n+1} and 3^{2^n} are both integers and thus differ by no less than 1. Since n is positive, $2^{2^{n-1}}$, b_{n+1} , b_{n+1} are all positive. If $b_{n+1} < 3^{2^n}$, then we can multiply the two inequalities together to get

$$(b_{n+1} - 1)(b_{n+1}) < 3^{2^n} \cdot 3^{2^n}.$$

If $b_{n+1} = 3^{2^n}$, then multiplying left hand side by $b_{n+1} - 1$ and the right hand side by 3^{2^n} will guarantee

$$(b_{n+1} - 1)(b_{n+1}) < 3^{2^n} \cdot 3^{2^n}$$

since $b_{n+1} - 1 < 3^{2^n}$. Thus, we have proven both cases, which means $b_{n+1} - 1 < 3^{2^n}$ is satisfied for all positive integers n .

Since both parts were proved, we have proved that

$$3^{2^{n-1}} < b_{n+1} - 1 < 3^{2^n}$$

is satisfied for all positive integers n . For every expression in this inequality, we will now take its inverse, reverse its sign, then add 1. We then get

$$1 - \frac{1}{3^{2^{n-1}}} < 1 - \frac{1}{b_{n+1} - 1} < 1 - \frac{1}{3^{2^n}}$$

is satisfied for all positive integers n .

We can rewrite $\frac{1}{b_n}$ as

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{1}{b_n} &= \frac{(b_n - 1)^2}{(b_n - 1)^2 b_n} = \frac{b_n^2 - b_n}{(b_n - 1)^2 b_n} - \frac{b_n - 1}{(b_n - 1)^2 b_n} \\ &= \frac{1}{b_n - 1} - \frac{1}{b_n^2 - b_n} = \frac{1}{b_n - 1} - \frac{1}{b_{n+1} - 1}. \end{aligned}$$

By telescoping, we get

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{i=0}^n \frac{1}{b_i} &= \frac{1}{b_0 - 1} - \frac{1}{b_1 - 1} + \frac{1}{b_1 - 1} - \frac{1}{b_2 - 1} + \cdots + \frac{1}{b_n - 1} - \frac{1}{b_{n+1} - 1} \\ &= \frac{1}{b_0 - 1} - \frac{1}{b_{n+1} - 1} = \frac{1}{2 - 1} - \frac{1}{b_{n+1} - 1} = 1 - \frac{1}{b_{n+1} - 1}. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, we can replace $1 - \frac{1}{b_{n+1}-1}$ in our inequality with $\sum_{i=0}^n \frac{1}{b_i}$ so that

$$1 - \frac{1}{3^{2^{n-1}}} < 1 - \sum_{i=0}^n \frac{1}{b_i} < 1 - \frac{1}{3^{2^n}}$$

is satisfied for all positive integers n .

From what's given in the problem, we have

$$a_{n+1} = \frac{a_n^2}{a_n^2 - a_n + 1} = \frac{1}{1 - \frac{1}{a_n} + \frac{1}{a_n^2}}.$$

Lets define $a_0 = \frac{1}{2}$. We will now prove $a_n = \frac{1}{b_n}$ for all non-negative integers n . The base case is already satisfied, as $a_0 = \frac{1}{2} = \frac{1}{b_0}$ since we've defined $b_0 = 2$. The inductive step is as follows: Assume that $a_n = \frac{1}{b_n}$ is true for a positive integer n . We will now prove that this equation is satisfied for $n + 1$. We have

$$a_{n+1} = \frac{1}{1 - \frac{1}{a_n} + \frac{1}{a_n^2}} = \frac{1}{1 - b_n + b_n^2} = \frac{1}{b_{n+1}}.$$

This is based off the fact that $\frac{1}{a_n} = b_n$ and $b_{n+1} = b_n^2 - b_n + 1$. Thus, we have

$$\frac{1}{2} + a_1 + a_2 + \cdots + a_n = \frac{1}{b_0} + \frac{1}{b_1} + \frac{1}{b_2} + \cdots + \frac{1}{b_n} = \sum_{i=0}^n \frac{1}{b_i}.$$

We can now rewrite our inequality so that

$$1 - \frac{1}{3^{2^{n-1}}} < 1 - \frac{1}{2} + a_1 + a_2 + \cdots + a_n < 1 - \frac{1}{3^{2^n}}$$

is satisfied for all positive integers n . Subtracting each expression in the inequality by $\frac{1}{2}$, we thus obtain

$$\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{3^{2^{n-1}}} < a_1 + a_2 + \cdots + a_n < \frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{3^{2^n}}$$

which is satisfied for all positive integers n .