

**MASSACHUSETTS MATHEMATICS LEAGUE  
CONTEST 3 - DECEMBER 2012 SOLUTION KEY**

**Team Round - continued**

- D) For  $x = 2$ , the top level of the function rule applies and  $f(2) = A + 35$ . The piecewise function is defined by the logarithmic component to the left of the vertical line  $x = 2$  and by the exponential component to the right. As  $x$  approaches 2 from the left,  $f(x)$  approaches

$$A \log_4(2) + B = \frac{A}{2} + B. \text{ If the function is to be continuous at } x = 2,$$

then these function values must be equal, namely  $A + 35 = \frac{A}{2} + B$ .

Combining with  $A + B = 17$ , we have

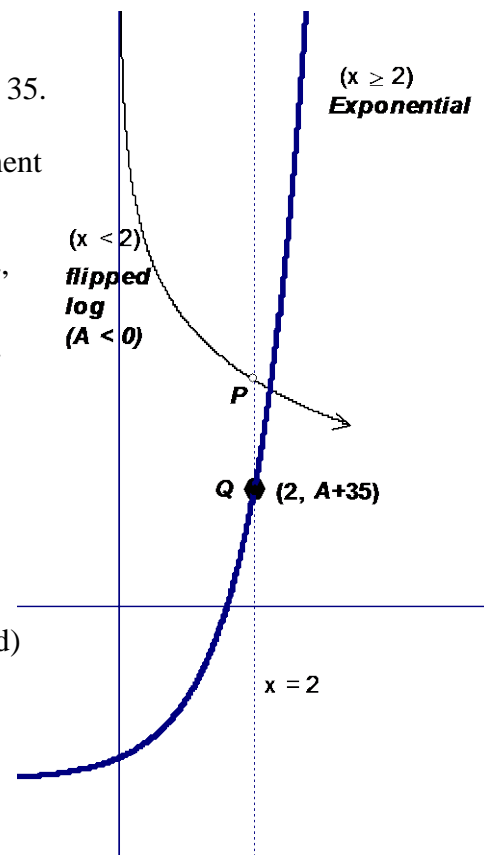
$$\frac{A}{2} + (17 - A) = A + 35 \Rightarrow A + 34 - 2A = 2A + 70 \Rightarrow A = -12$$

Thus,  $(A, B) = \underline{(-12, 29)}$ .

Graphically, since  $A < 0$ , the logarithmic piece is flipped.

Each piece is itself continuous, but there is a gap at  $x = 2$

To close the gap the logarithmic piece must be translated (dropped) so that point  $P$  (the hole) coincides with the endpoint  $Q$ .



- E) Given:  $x = 2$ ,  $y < 0$ ,  $z > 0$  and  $\frac{x+y}{z} = \frac{y+z}{x} = \frac{x+z}{y}$

$$\text{Substituting for } x, \text{ we have } \frac{2+y}{z} = \frac{y+z}{2} = \frac{2+z}{y}$$

Cross multiplying the first two fractions,  $4 + 2y = yz + z^2 \Leftrightarrow z^2 + yz - 2(y+2) = 0$

Since this is a quadratic equation in  $z$ , using the QF,

$$z = \frac{-y \pm \sqrt{y^2 + 8(y+2)}}{2} = \frac{-y \pm \sqrt{(y+4)^2}}{2} = \frac{-y \pm (y+4)}{2}$$

Thus,  $z = 2, -(y+2)$ .

Case 1:

$$z = 2 \Rightarrow \frac{2+y}{2} = \frac{y+2}{2} = \frac{2+2}{y} = \frac{4}{y} \text{ which is satisfied if } y^2 + 2y - 8 = (y+4)(y-2) = 0$$

$$\Rightarrow y = 2, -4 \Rightarrow (x, y, z) = (\underline{2, 2, 2}) \text{ or } (2, -4, 2) \text{ The first solution is rejected, since } y > 0.$$

Case 2:

$$z = -(y+2) > 0 \Rightarrow y < -2 \text{ and solution must be of the form } (2, y, -(y+2)).$$

Picking  $y$  as large as possible, we have  $(2, -3, 1)$ .

Thus, the maximum value of  $y$  is -3.