

5. Prove that for any integer  $n$ , at least one of the integers  $n, n + 2, n + 4$  is divisible by 3.

PROOF If a number is divisible by 3, it can be expressed in the form  $3p$ , where  $p \in \mathcal{Z}$ . Consider an arbitrary integer  $n$ .

- If  $n$  is divisible by 3, the statement is true and the proof is complete. If  $n$  is not divisible by 3, it can be expressed in one of two forms:  $3p + 1$  or  $3p + 2$ , where  $p \in \mathcal{Z}$ .
- If  $n$  is of the form  $3p + 1$ ,  $n + 2$  simplifies to  $(3p + 1) + 2 = 3(p + 1)$ .  $(p + 1)$  is an integer, therefore,  $n + 2$  is divisible by 3 if  $n$  is of the form  $3p + 1$ .
- If  $n$  is of the form  $3p + 2$ ,  $n + 4$  simplifies to  $(3p + 2) + 4 = 3(p + 2)$ .  $(p + 2)$  is an integer, therefore,  $n + 4$  is divisible by 3 if  $n$  is of the form  $3p + 2$ .

Hence, for any integer  $n$ , at least one of  $n, n + 2$ , or  $n + 4$  is divisible by 3. This completes the proof. ■