

# Proof exploration

Peter Rowlett

Investigate the following theorems. What are they saying? Can you rewrite them in your own words? Try out some special cases. What might a proof look like?

1. Suppose that  $m, n \in \mathbb{N}$ . Then  $mn$  is even if and only if  $m$  and  $n$  are even.
2. An integer  $n$  is divisible by 9 if and only if the sum of its digits is equivalent to 0 (mod 9).
3. If  $A$  and  $B$  are finite sets, then  $|A \times B| = |A||B|$ .
4. A train goes 500 miles along a straight track, without stopping, completing the trip with an average speed of exactly 50 miles per hour. It travels, however, at different speeds along the way. There must be a segment of 50 miles that the train traverses in precisely one hour.
5. Let  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  with  $n \geq 3$ . For  $n$  distinct points on a circle connect consecutive points by a straight line. The sum of the interior angles of the resulting shape is  $(n - 2) \times 180^\circ$ .
6. If  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  and  $n \geq 7$ , then

$$\frac{n}{n^2 - 8n + 12} \geq \frac{1}{n}.$$

7. Let  $A$  be a finite set. Let  $S$  be the set of all subsets of  $A$ . Then  $|S| = 2^{|A|}$ .  
(Note: The set  $S$  is called the *power set* of  $A$ .)
8. For sets  $A$ ,  $B$  and  $C$  we have
  - (a)  $A - (B \cup C) = (A - B) \cap (A - C)$ ;
  - (b)  $A - (B \cap C) = (A - B) \cup (A - C)$ ;
  - (c)  $A \neq B$  if and only if  $(A - B) \cup (A - C)$ ;
  - (d)  $A \cup B \subseteq C$  if and only if  $A \subseteq C$  and  $B \subseteq C$ .

What happens in the extreme case(s) where some (or all) sets are empty?