

sketched intuitively, when a part of the physical universe is finally understood, its description often looks like a page in a mathematics text.

- E** Still, the non-mathematical reader can go far in understanding mathematical reasoning. This book presents the details that illustrate the mathematical style of thinking, which involves sustained, step-by-step analysis, experiments, and insights. You will turn these pages much more slowly than when reading a novel or a newspaper. It may help to have a pencil and paper ready to check claims and carry out experiments.
- F** As I wrote, I kept in mind two types of readers: those who enjoyed mathematics until they were turned off by an unpleasant episode, usually around fifth grade, and mathematics aficionados, who will find much that is new throughout the book.

This book also serves readers who simply want to sharpen their analytical skills. Many careers, such as law and medicine, require extended, precise analysis. Each chapter offers practice in following a sustained and closely argued line of thought. That mathematics can develop this skill is shown by these two testimonials:

- G** A physician wrote, 'The discipline of analytical thought processes [in mathematics] prepared me extremely well for medical school. In medicine one is faced with a problem which must be thoroughly analyzed before a solution can be found. The process is similar to doing mathematics.'

A lawyer made the same point, 'Although I had no background in law – not even one political science course – I did well at one of the best law schools. I attribute much of my success there to having learned, through the study of mathematics, and, in particular, theorems, how to analyze complicated principles. Lawyers who have studied mathematics can master the legal principles in a way that most others cannot.'

I hope you will share my delight in watching as simple, even naïve, questions lead to remarkable solutions and purely theoretical discoveries find unanticipated applications.