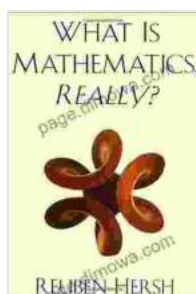
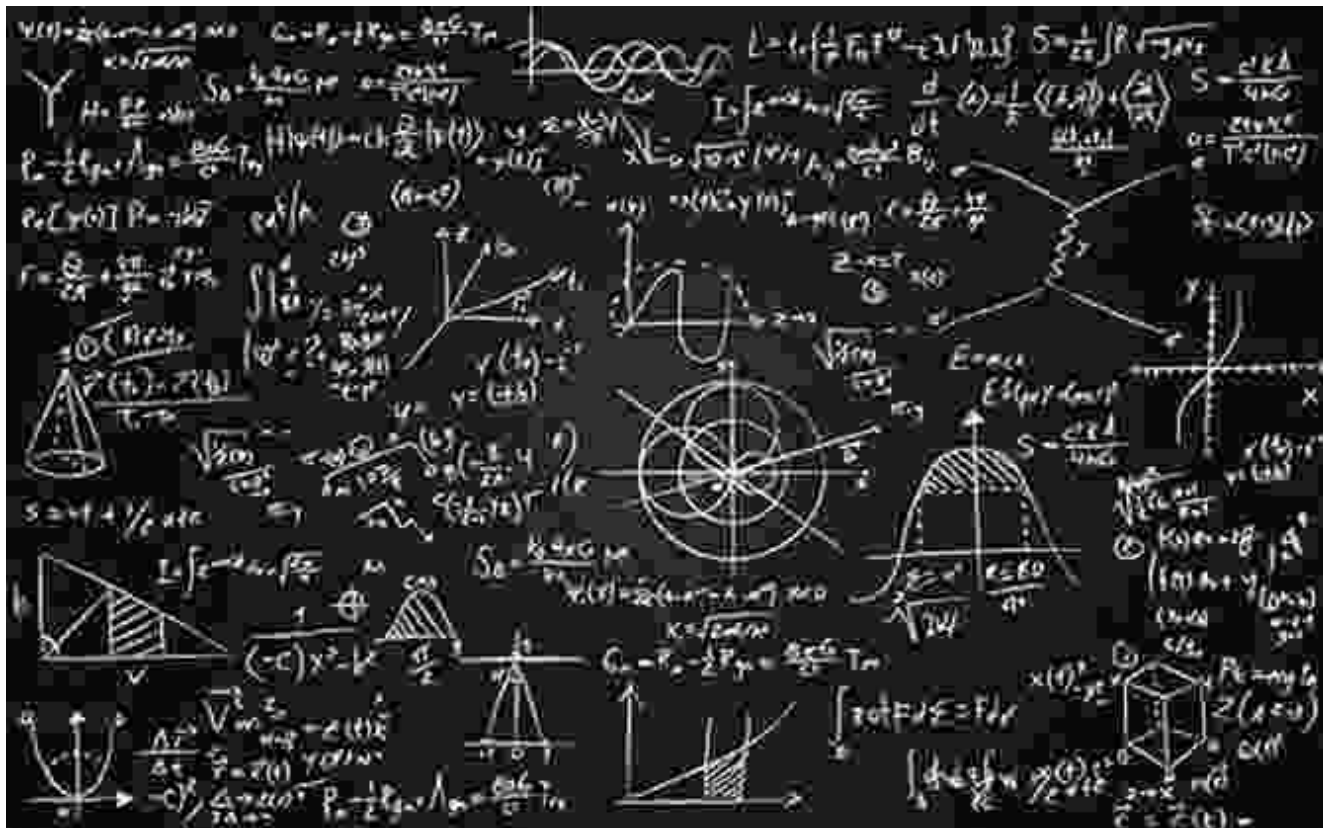


Unlocking the Enigmatic World of Mathematics: A Comprehensive Review of Reuben Hersh's "What Is Mathematics Really?"



What Is Mathematics, Really? by Reuben Hersh

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 28109 KB

Screen Reader : Supported

Print length : 220 pages

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Mathematics, a realm of abstract concepts and intricate formulas, has long captivated the minds of scholars and laypeople alike. Yet, beneath its seemingly impenetrable surface lies a profound question: what is mathematics really? In his seminal work, "What Is Mathematics Really?", Reuben Hersh embarks on a thought-provoking exploration of this enigmatic subject, shedding light on its nature, its epistemology, and its impact on our understanding of the world.

The Nature of Mathematics

Hersh argues that mathematics is not merely a collection of abstract truths, but rather a dynamic and evolving discipline. He emphasizes the role of intuition and creativity in mathematical discovery, challenging the traditional view of mathematics as a purely deductive science. Through examples from history and contemporary mathematics, Hersh demonstrates that mathematical concepts and theories often emerge from intuitive insights and are refined through a process of trial and error.

Epistemology of Mathematics

Hersh delves into the epistemological foundations of mathematics, examining how we come to know mathematical truths. He rejects the notion of mathematical certainty, arguing that mathematical knowledge is always provisional and subject to revision. Hersh emphasizes the importance of proof and logical reasoning in mathematics, but he also recognizes the role of intuition and experience in mathematical inquiry.

Mathematics and the World

Hersh explores the relationship between mathematics and the world we live in. He argues that mathematics is not simply an abstract game, but rather

an essential tool for understanding the physical and social world. From the laws of physics to the workings of the human mind, mathematics provides a powerful language for describing and explaining the phenomena around us. Hersh also discusses the ethical implications of mathematics, highlighting its potential for both good and evil.

Implications for Education

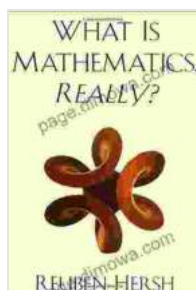
Hersh's work has profound implications for mathematics education. He advocates for a more student-centered approach that emphasizes understanding over rote memorization. Hersh believes that students should be encouraged to explore mathematical concepts through hands-on activities and creative problem-solving. He also emphasizes the importance of connecting mathematics to real-world applications, showing students how mathematics can be used to solve problems and make informed decisions.

Critical Reception and Legacy

"What Is Mathematics Really?" has received widespread critical acclaim since its publication in 1997. It has been praised for its clarity, depth, and originality. The book has become a standard text in philosophy of mathematics courses and has influenced generations of mathematicians, educators, and laypeople. Hersh's work has sparked ongoing discussions about the nature, foundations, and applications of mathematics, contributing to a deeper understanding of this enigmatic subject.

Reuben Hersh's "What Is Mathematics Really?" is a monumental work that provides a comprehensive and thought-provoking exploration of the nature, epistemology, and impact of mathematics. Hersh challenges traditional views of mathematics, emphasizing its dynamic, intuitive, and ever-evolving

nature. He examines the relationship between mathematics and the world, highlighting its essential role in understanding the physical and social realms. Hersh's work has profound implications for mathematics education, advocating for a more student-centered and application-oriented approach. "What Is Mathematics Really?" is a must-read for anyone interested in understanding the enigmatic world of mathematics and its profound implications for our lives.



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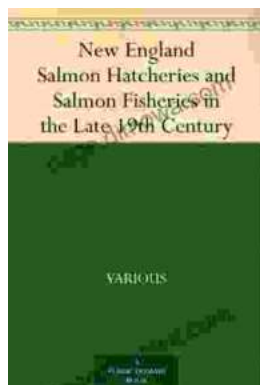
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