

**Math Teacher Lounge transcript
Season 3, Episode 6:
Bethany and Dan take on Twitter!**

Dan Meyer (00:02)

Hey folks. Welcome back to the Math Teacher Lounge. I'm your co-host, Dan Meyer.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (00:07):

And I am Bethany Lockhart Johnson. And I'm your co-host, Dan! Hi!

Dan Meyer (00:12):

We're co-hosts! Hey! Great to see you.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (00:13):

Dan, this is the last episode of Season 3. Three seasons!

Dan Meyer (00:19):

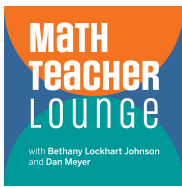
It's gotta have a cliffhanger. What will the cliffhanger be? You know?

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (00:22):

The cliffhanger is that we love having guests! It's one of our most favorite things, because selfishly, we love to talk to all of these amazing folks who are doing this interesting research and thinking about amazing things. But for this last episode, it's just you and I, Dan. Cliffhanger!

Dan Meyer (00:40):

Yeah. I like this. I like this. So the cliffhanger was last episode, and people are all like, "So who's the last guest gonna be of the season before we roll out into summer?" And yes, as Bethany said, we love all the fascinating guests we've had on throughout these last few seasons. And we realized...who is more fascinating to each other than both of us? You know, let's talk to each other about things, right? <laughs> You get that! You get that! Or am I alone here in this? We had this idea about what we should talk about here, and that's this: I am on Twitter a lot. I'm @DDMeyer on Twitter; throw me a follow; might follow back; who knows? I don't tweet much. Bethany, what's your handle on Twitter? Let 'em know.



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Bethany Lockhart Johnson (01:22):

I'm @LockhartEdu, and I was much more active pre-mamahood. But I'm still up in there. Go ahead.

Dan Meyer (01:30):

Yep. In there. Yeah, great. So I've been keeping track of the hottest conversations in math education Twitter, the conversations that the most people who kind of describe themselves as math teachers in their bios and whatnot have been replying to. We've got some little things working in the background, keeping track of this sort of thing. And so we are gonna bring you folks some of those extremely hot conversations, and even better than the questions—which we hope you'll reply to and tag us in your replies—even more than those questions, we'll bring you our answers—our answers!—to those questions. Can you believe that? We'll fully settle these questions! Won't we, Bethany? My gosh, won't we?

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (02:15):

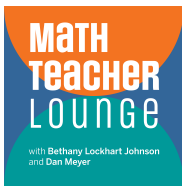
Jeez Louise! No! Dan Meyer, the point is not our final word on it! The point is this episode, we're furthering the conversation. We wanna hear from listeners about what do you think?

Dan Meyer (02:25):

Right. You're right. You all need someone in your life like Bethany who will help you become the best version of yourself. So here's the deal. We have several questions in a few different categories. We're gonna bust through some quick ones, pretty quick. And, uh, there's some meaty ones as well. Let's get into it! The first questions come to you all, and us, courtesy of MTL guest Howie Hua, who has a renowned knack for just creating math memes, but also conversation starters that really capture the curiosity and answers of of a grateful nation. So Howie's first question, which I'll pose to Bethany, is, "What's your favorite number?" Bethany? And why is it your favorite number?

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (03:14):

Oh, I love it. OK. Well, the first thing that came to my mind is 12. 'Cause it's a highly divisible number. I mean, 2, 6, 3, 4—I love it. And it coincides with the day and month of my birth. Which, like, the double digit... come on, 12, 12, 12, 12. I dunno, am I giving away, like, my bank security code <laugh> or anything by saying that?



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Dan Meyer (03:41):

Yeah. What's your favorite PIN?

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (03:43):

Let me change my PIN. Yeah, it's just such a happy, happy number. Well, 12 is, you know, 10 and 2. Two more. Anyway. Love it. What about you, Dan? What's your favorite number and why?

Dan Meyer (03:55):

I'm into it. I'm into it. I think I would choose 16. Because it's the first number for me when it was like, "Oh, you can keep on making numbers forever!" Where I'm like, OK, 2 times 2 is 4. Great. That's kind of an elemental expression in mathematics. Four times 2 is 8. OK. But then, 8 times 2 is 16, and it's like, "Oh, you can just keep doubling that thing over and over and over again!" And I can recall feeling pretty excited that numbers are just like, out there for the finding. For the taking. Cool stuff.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (04:33):

I'm sorry. Wait, I have to interrupt. You went 2 times 4 is 8 and you didn't go 4 times 4 is 16? You went 8 times 2 is 16? You wanted to keep the 2 the same?

Dan Meyer (04:49):

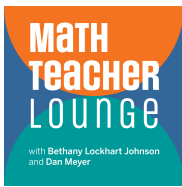
Yup. Yup. You can keep on doubling. You can keep on doubling numbers and it just keeps on going.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (04:53):

More evidence that our brain works very differently.

Dan Meyer (04:56):

We learn more about each other...let me keep this rolling with Howie questions. OK? Howie says, "If you could co-teach with one teacher from Twitter, who would you choose?"



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Bethany Lockhart Johnson (05:06):

Oh, oh, it has to be a teacher?

Dan Meyer (05:11):

Or anybody, I guess. I mean, like, I know you love Oprah.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (05:15):

Can I co-teach with Oprah?

Dan Meyer (05:16):

Yup, yeah, so there we are. <laugh> Yup. OK. Fair enough. We have to work Oprah into every single episode.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (05:23):

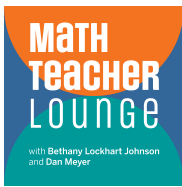
I'd just love to sit and like, we'd read together, we'd read to the students, and then we'd talk...I mean, obviously it'd be Oprah. But if we're thinking more of like MTBoS, like math Twitter blogosphere-land, I suppose the person I would wanna co-teach with honestly would probably be Allison Hintz. One of our former guests as well. Her book, *Mathematizing Children's Literature*, with Antony Smith, that book—I just love the idea of sitting and doing a read-aloud and then diving into some juicy math that's inspired by what comes out of that read-aloud. So yes, that's who I pick. Allison! Let's co-teach!

Dan Meyer (06:00):

<laugh> Shout-out to Allison.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (06:01):

What about you?



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Dan Meyer (06:03):

I would choose MTL guest Idil Abdulkadir—because, and this relates to Allison and also Elham Kazemi— they talked about, in our episode about teacher time-outs. And I'm choosing someone who I think is— like I've never seen Idil teach, but I work with Idil at Desmos and think she's fantastic. But what I really want in a co-teacher is someone that I can say, "Whoa, time out, do you see what's going on here? This is really interesting. What should we do next about this?" And have a little strategy sesh in front of the kids and no one gets freaked out by that. And I think that that'd be a pile of fun. Idil seems like she'd be receptive to that kind of interaction, teacher to teacher. So that's my vote right there.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (06:48):

Opportunity for you to grow your own practice, Dan.

Dan Meyer (06:52):

Yeah, yeah, exactly. 100%.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (06:56):

So Dan, I actually have a question for you from Howie. If we're on the Howie tweet train, I have one from Howie too.

Dan Meyer (07:04):

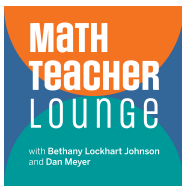
Howie had some fire tweets, some fire tweets this current year. Yep.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (07:08):

Dan, I wanna know: Do you prefer doing math in pen or pencil?

Dan Meyer (07:16):

Ooh, yeah. Oh, I see that Howie says, "I don't mean to start any drama, BUT," and then asks the question--



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Bethany Lockhart Johnson (07:23):

But!

Dan Meyer (07:24):

I think that Howie lives for drama. I think he knows he's messy. He lives for drama. He knows what he's doing this with this question here. He knows.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (07:32):

DRAAAAMAAAA!

Dan Meyer (07:32):

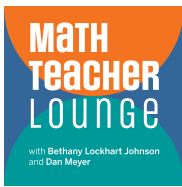
He knows what he's doing. Yup. So I would just say it depends. Is that cheating? Like if I'm doing math to learn, or if we are learning in that process, then I want to use pen, actually. I wanna see the tracks of the thinking. And if we're doing it for presentation, like if I'm presenting something, I wanna...I guess that's an area where I'd be fine to not erase things. I don't wanna prep it so it's, you know...I guess you could use pen for presentation also. Just pen. Period. But I wanna see the tracks of the thinking if we're doing some learning versus presentation. What about you?

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (08:09):

Well, I heard the voice in my head telling one of my kindergartners, "No, you cannot do that in sparkly pen. You need to do it in pencil." And I was like, "Wait, whose voice is that?" It was one of my math teachers telling me I couldn't do it in pen! Why couldn't this kid do it in pen? Sure! Do it in a sparkly pen! So I wanna say do it in pen. And since usually pen is what I have around...I mean, I do crosswords in pen, Dan.

Dan Meyer (08:36):

Wow, wow. With a piece of paper and math, you have lots of room to re-revise and cross off...but those little, little boxes on the crossword, that says a lot about your commitment to pen.



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Bethany Lockhart Johnson (08:46):

I got really good at making an A into an H or a P or whatever we need. So I would say, "Hey, if you're in the room with your kiddos and you're doing math, if somebody wants to do pen, let them do pen." But I do know that I've seen teachers say you need to do pen so that I can see all of your thinking. So I think I hear what you're saying. But do you think it should be like a classroom rule or something?

Dan Meyer (09:13):

Oh, no, no, no. I mean, I'm gonna ask you like, "How'd you get to this destination?" And I wanna know process somehow, and I think you'll get tired of having to explain it verbally rather than just, like, showing. Just don't erase stuff. Don't scratch stuff off. Let's let's see how you're getting there. That is what I'm into.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (09:30):

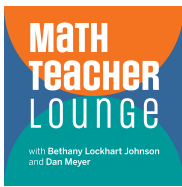
Thanks, Howie, for that trio of thought-provoking tweets, because I genuinely wanted to know what Dan thought and what our listeners think. I mean, Dan, I gotta say: Howie, you say you don't wanna cause drama, but I gotta say I'm with Dan on that---

Dan Meyer (09:50):

Got the gift. Got the gift for drama. We're still friends though. So I'm happy about that. Our next section, I got a few more questions queued up here and these ones relate to advice for educators, advice for yourself. Good advice, bad advice, that kind of thing. So let's jump in. I would love to know—this one's from Pernille Ripp—I'm very curious, Bethany, what is the worst teaching advice you have gotten in your life, ever?

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (10:19):

<laugh> Ooh. OK. Um, worst teaching advice was: "That's OK, just move on anyway." And that was in terms of pacing. It was like, students needed to do a deeper dive and the teacher who I was chatting with said, "No, no, it's fine; it's fine; just move on. Just move on to the next chapter." That was probably the worst advice, because no, I don't think that's what I should have done at all! <laugh>



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Dan Meyer (10:48):

Right.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (10:48):

But I was a first-year teacher and I was trying to figure it out. And I learned that that was not good advice. And I understand the pressure of pacing. But it was totally antithetical to the type of listening to my students that I want to do in my craft. And this teacher meant well, but that was not good advice, teacher! <Laugh> What about you, Dan? What is the worst teaching advice?

Dan Meyer (11:13):

I dig that. That feels similar to one of the replies to Pernille here. Frances Klein says, "Never let them know you've made a mistake" being particularly bad advice. You know, just this like idea of like moving along, covering your tracks, not backtracking or admitting mistakes, those all feel kind of a piece. The worst advice I think I've ever received, and I wasn't given this often, but it's echoed by a lot of the commenters here on this tweet, which is "Don't smile until X, Y, or Z," where X, Y, and Z are like Christmas, October, December, January. Just the idea that you've gotta develop—

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (11:54):

Wait, what?

Dan Meyer (11:55):

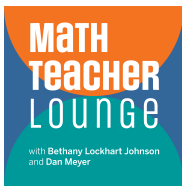
<laugh> Did you never hear this from anybody? Don't smile until Christmas? Perhaps this is more—

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (11:59):

I'm a kindergarten teacher! Can you imagine? If I don't smile the second they walk in? The tears?! The parents' tears?! The kids' tears?! If I'm just like, stoic?

Dan Meyer (12:07):

Yeah. Well.



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Bethany Lockhart Johnson (12:08):

So explain it to me.

Dan Meyer (12:10):

Well, the idea is, is that, you know, for older kids, they're scoping you, they're clocking you for weakness, they're looking at you, they're looking to take advantage. And so "don't smile until Christmas" is like, hey, you can always relax. You can always relax your discipline, but you can't UN-relax it if you start out, you know, Mr. Happy Pants Meyer. Which—

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (12:33):

Smile perceived as weakness.

Dan Meyer (12:36):

Yeah. Very obviously poor advice. Eventually you come to realize that like having a rapport and a relationship that is trusting and warm and demanding, that has high expectations, that's the best kind of classroom management. Not some kind of persona built around intimidation or stoicism, that kinda thing. So, terrible, terrible advice!

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (13:01):

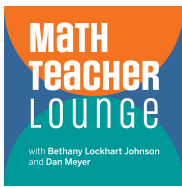
I feel like I did have a few of those math classes. Yeah.

Dan Meyer (13:04):

Yeah, exactly. <laugh> You loved them, right? They were like your favorite math classes. It was a blast, right?

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (13:11):

<laugh> So we have to ask the opposite. Thank you, Daniel Willingham, who said, "What's the best advice you got?" But hold on, Dan, he didn't just want the best advice. He wanted the best advice in three words.



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Dan Meyer (13:26):

Oh yeah. He doesn't, he doesn't want a book or dissertation or even a blog post or even a tweet. He wants just three words.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (13:32):

I think maybe that might have been to me. <laugh>

Dan Meyer (13:34):

This is someone who's doesn't have much time for this advice, wants it distilled down. I'm just obviously stalling here as I try to think about this. I don't know, there's just like so much nuance lost here. I would say, listen to students, listen to students. I can't say more than that, I guess. I guess I'm done. I can't say more than that there. But you're in a bad place if you're not listening carefully to students. How about you?

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (14:04):

OK. Mine is "Ask...lots...questions."

Dan Meyer (14:11):

Nice. 'Cause I filled in the word! I filled in the word! I was able to kinda infer that. I did that. I got that.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (14:17):

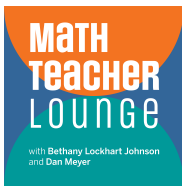
Wait, wait, wait, wait! I could have said many! Wait, I could have said "Ask many questions."

Dan Meyer (14:22):

Strong, strong.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (14:25):

So yeah. You know, no isolation, like don't put yourself in a bubble. Ask, not just, not just your students, but the teachers! Ask a lot of questions. You don't have to have it all figured out.



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Dan Meyer (14:34):

Into it. Very much into it.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (14:37):

Thanks. Daniel. Thanks, Pernille.

Dan Meyer (14:40):

Yeah. Daniel and Pernille, Both great questions there about advice, best and worst. Another fire tweet popped up earlier this year from Dr. Khristopher Childs, which was "Name one thing every educator should stop doing."

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (14:57):

Oh, I don't know. This kind of ties into my best advice about asking questions.

Dan Meyer (15:03):

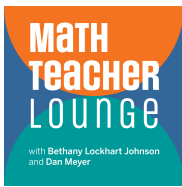
Stop not asking questions?

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (15:06):

<laugh> Avoid the isolation. I really love this idea of when we can, popping into each others' classrooms, co-teaching, building this collaborative nature. Elham Kazemi, in our interview, talked about this idea of, like you said, the teacher time-outs, learning from each other. So I feel like if we could stop isolating ourself...and I don't mean at lunch—sometimes you need to not be in the teacher lounge at lunch. Like if you need a minute, take the minute! But in general, as a practice, how can we not be isolated and instead be learning with, and from, each other? How can we stop the isolation? That's what I would hope every educator would stop doing. What about you, Dan?

Dan Meyer (15:54):

I think that educators should...this is gonna require a little bit of elaboration. I think educators should stop taking responsibility for things that are not in their zone of influence. I think that as a society we are asking teachers to do more and more, to become more and



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more of a central fixture holding together with chewing gum and twine all the various parts of a student's life. From their health, their fitness, emotional health, that we feed students at school. It becomes very tempting, I think, there's a lot of pressures to blame outcomes, disparate and unjust outcomes later on in life, on teachers. And teachers should just flatly refuse. And to yeah, understand what the job has been set up to do. What it's good for. And do that with excellence and intent and a lot of effort. And then not take responsibility for the rest of it.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (16:53):

If I asked five different people about the definition of what a teacher should be doing, I would get five different answers. So I think it's really interesting that you say that because yeah, many, many hats, which I think, yes, can lead to burnout. Can lead to all sorts of things. We're asking schools to be all things to all, all people. Interesting. I'm gonna think about that more. I need to hear folks' response on that, Dan.

Dan Meyer (17:18):

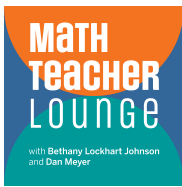
Mm-hmm. I'm curious too. I mean, yeah, there are definitely things that are in teachers' responsibility and some that are not. That's a tough one.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (17:26):

OK, for help, name an example of each. And what's something that you think every teacher should not and should be doing. 'Cause I feel like my brain goes to some things like, you know, I had teachers who were saying, "Well, I don't wanna have my kids have to have breakfast in my classroom in the morning. That shouldn't be my responsibility to serve breakfast in the morning." But I'm like, "But then your kids are eating and they're gonna be able to learn and be more focused." Should that be the teacher's responsibility? I'm not saying it necessarily should, but I'm saying...I don't know. It gets murky for me.

Dan Meyer (18:06):

Yeah, for sure. I mean, I think that we should, as a country, have a really generous social welfare net so that everyone has food at home. Where a school is not the place where some students have to go to in order to receive nutrition and nourishment. That seems sad to me. And uncommon in developed nations. I think that teachers should watch out for,



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should be responsible for, the mathematical development of the students they teach, up to a point, they should be responsible for learning math and creating relationships in their classes. I don't think that teachers should accept responsibility for larger kinds of outcomes, like the health of a democracy or international competition, who goes to the moon first. That kind of thing has historically been placed at the feet of teachers. And it's tempting when you're a teacher, I think, to take on that responsibility because it kind of develops your social importance. And I just say, we should say no to that. And get compensation, not in terms of social importance, but rather like in spendable dollars and monies.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (19:10):

I'm learning more about you, Dan. And you know, this is what I've gotten from that answer: If you're gonna dream, dream big. Right?

Dan Meyer (19:17):

Is that what you got from that? I don't know. I think I'm trying to dream realistically.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (19:23):

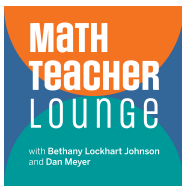
No, like if we're gonna say, "Maybe teachers shouldn't be responsible for serving breakfast in the morning," well, because we want every child to have access to nutritious and filling food at home and time to eat it in the morning, right? It's bigger than just, "I don't want the teacher to have to do this." So we're dreaming big. We're saying this should be the LEAST that students have access to, right?

Dan Meyer (19:53):

Yeah. Yeah. I'm here now. I'm with you. I like that dream. Where we take care of folks in their lives outside of schools. So schools don't have to be the one linchpin for every kind of social outcome. Like currently a lot of them run through a school 'cause we don't do a good job of setting up other ways to meet those needs. And we should.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (20:16):

And we're also recording this in, what, two weeks, a week, after a tragedy where students and teachers were killed in the classroom. And I think both of us are taking some deep



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breaths and recognizing that there's a lot of debate that is happening about what teacher's role should be in preventing this in the future. And I don't know if you've done drills in your classroom that are supposed to help mitigate disaster, but you know—collective deep breaths— <laugh> is where we're at right now.

Dan Meyer (20:52):

Yep. The idea of "we should arm teachers" is another example of no, we should not do that. We should solve the tendency towards violence outside of the classroom so that teachers and students can teach and learn. That sounds awesome to me.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (21:06):

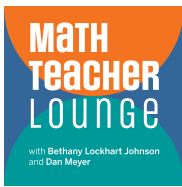
Collective deep breath. Whew. OK. So what else you got for me, Dan?

Dan Meyer (21:12):

Uh, that was a heavy one. That was a heavy one. Um, really appreciate talking that up with you as I have throughout this whole season. So let's jump over to Chris Luzniak, who hosts, uh, the DebateMath podcast. And Chris asks, "'I do, you do, we do'—is it a practice worth keeping or getting rid of?" What say you, Bethany?

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (21:33):

Ooh. So I feel like I've heard that in many teaching PDs. "I do, you do, we do." Actually I feel like I've seen like more "I do, we do, you do." Like graduated release. I do it, then we'll do it a little bit together, and then now you have permission to do it. And I feel like in directed draw, that's a hundred percent true. Like I'm gonna show you this and then you draw it. And then you cut here and then you do it. If we're trying to create this, like I'm teaching this new art technique. But in mathematics, I feel like that's really not what I want my classroom to look like. I want to support my students and set them up for sense-making, and then I want them to try it out and I don't want them to solve it the way it first comes to mind for me. I wanna see how they make sense of it and how they solve it. And then I want us to share it with each other so we can grow together. So I think time and place for "I do, you do, we do," or "I do, we do, you do." Or shoo-be-doo-be-doo-be. Yeah. You?



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Dan Meyer (22:44):

I've got nothing. I have nothing to add. I thought that was just an excellent summary of a classroom I would love to be a part in, love to teach. I think it's a certain tool in the toolbox that I think is overused. But it's also a tool that can be useful in the case of certain kinds of operations. There are some operations that do benefit from "let me just show you how, like one way you might do this." I don't know. I'm like helping my kid whack a nail into a board and there's a moment where it's like, "Hey, actually, lemme just show you one way you can do this," and do it, and then that's helpful in some moments. But for so much of math, a lot of math does not relate to the operational kinds of fluency. And in those instances, it's a little bit...it's not a useful tool, I don't think, for those kinds of skills and ideas.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (23:34):

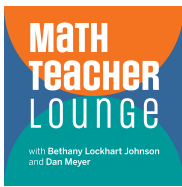
I'm thinking of tool talks in my classroom. So in kindergarten, many of the tools that we use in math and just in class in general, are new to the students. And if I tell them, this is exactly how you should use this tool, then I feel like I'm taking a lot of the sense-making away from them. But if I introduce the tool, show them how to use the tool safely, show them this is not a safe way to use the tool, chewing on this is not safe. That's not how we use this tool. This is how we take care of it, et cetera. But then support different modes of using the tool that are gonna help them use it to solve problems and make sense, I think...but I guess—Dan, have you heard "I do, you do, we do," or is it "I do, we do, you do"?

Dan Meyer (24:22):

I'm with you. And I think that it got clarified post-tweet. But yeah, it typically is "I do, we do, you do," the gradual release of responsibility it's often called. And I, I have heard people do what you described, which is...what is it? It's "You do, we do, I do"? Like an inversion of that? Like have people do a thing that I can do that's not too, too abstract for them, and then like "We all do something together, and then I'll offer a summary of what we learned," is one way that goes. I like that tool as well.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (24:53):

I think particularly, at least I've seen in elementary classrooms, there's sometimes this fear of letting students just try it out before I've really showed them, "but this is how it has to be." And what I am most excited about is supporting students and creating a classroom



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environment where students don't need my permission or need my direct "this is the only way to do it." Instead, it's like, yes, there's lots of things we model. But there's also like, "Hey, what do you think? How do you think this should be used?" And the joy of that exploration.

Dan Meyer (25:30):

Yeah. There's a feeling of efficiency that comes from "I do, we do, you do," for some kinds of math, but it's undercut in my experience by what it cultivates in the students, which is "I've gotta wait until the teacher does before I can do anything." So it pays off real diminishing returns over time. And it's, just for me, an exhausting way to teach. Always being the bottleneck for new learning is a total drag.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (25:55):

Ooh, what a great way to describe it. You do not wanna be the bottleneck. You want to be...what's the other thing? The facilitator? What's the opposite of a bottleneck? The flowing river? The...the...help me!

Dan Meyer (26:10):

Hit us up in the replies. I dunno. The opposite of a bottleneck. That's what you wanna...you wanna not be the opposite? No, you want, yeah. We got this here. We'll figure it out. We'll get back to you. <Laugh> OK. Well, folks, those were a few of this year's fire tweets. It's been fantastic chatting with you—

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (26:29):

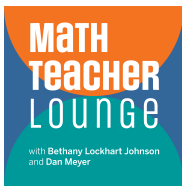
Dan.

Dan Meyer (26:29):

—Bethany, about all those—

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (26:32):

Dan. You know, my favorite thing to do is interrupting you, Dan. I have to interrupt you because we can't end fire tweets, Dan, without including a tweet from you.



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Dan Meyer (26:43):

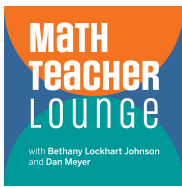
Oh, that's true. I do have my moments. Yeah, we should. We really should. <laugh> Do you have one in mind?

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (26:50):

No. Dan. Yes. I loved...you tweeted recently, "How many years have you been teaching?" Which, OK. "What has been like the most influential? Like, what, OK, blah, blah, blah." <blathering noises> You tweeted, "How many years have you been teaching? And at this point, what has most influenced how you teach?" And you gave some ideas: A methods course, PD sessions, curriculum, TV and movies, et cetera, et cetera. And I love that you put that out there because this episode is coming out as we're wrapping up another school year. And it also got me thinking about summer and what teachers sometimes do during the summer, but what we might need to do this summer for self-care. But I'm really curious. I love that tweet. And I'm curious, Dan, what did folks say was the thing that had most influenced their teaching and what's most influenced your teaching?

Dan Meyer (27:49):

Ooh, yeah. People's responses to this one were really fantastic. I came into this, I was flying to the Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators conference. And I just found myself wondering, so, the pre-service year, the one year of, like, you're learning how to teach, is how we did it in California. Like how much of that has still infused my practice? And in what ways? I don't think I think about that stuff consciously, but I think that did like set me up with a lot of images that I would be unpacking for going on two decades now working in education. I think conversations with people, I think observing classes, I don't think that like the one-day PDs, the one-day development days throughout the year, four times per year, I don't think those stuck to me much. I think that this summer, I have learned so much, just an embarrassment of riches, from non-educational sources. From other disciplines. From storytelling, for instance. From how people have constructed movies I like. I am proud of the way...one of the aspects of my character that I'm proud of—it takes a lot to admit this, as I'm sure you understand, Bethany—but to integrate lots of wacky stuff and pick from it and use that to affect my practice and teaching has been really positive. So for this summer, I hope that people read a good beach book and just kinda let your teaching mind rest a little bit. And in doing so, create some openings for new ideas about education from



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other parts of the world. Kids! Having kids has been helpful. I don't know! Just everything! It's such a big job, education. Everything has so helpful. What about you? What's an influence on your practice that might surprise me or other folks out there in MTL land?

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (29:52):

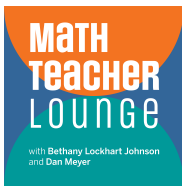
Well, I don't know about surprise. I mean, I definitely feel similarly, like methods courses absolutely impacted my teaching. But I feel like opportunities where I was able to observe other teachers and where I was able to have conversations with folks about their practice, that has deeply impacted me. And books I've read. I mean, honestly, I've learned so much from sharing with other teachers. Like, for example, maybe I'll bring student work and we'll talk about it. And we kind of create this conversation together about how we wanna come back to the students based on the work we see. Those type of moments where we're collaborating and we're bringing multiple perspectives to the table, that I think, has really often shifted me out of my first initial reaction or what I thought I was going to do in the classroom the next day. So that continues to surprise and delight me. And thinking about this summer, I think there's a lot of creativity and joy that can come out of the marination process, when you're just kind of sitting back and healing yourself, whether through sleep or sunshine or time with friends and family or whatever that looks like for you. I think there's a lot of creativity that can come from that place of fertile, you know, wellness. I never think of that as wasted time. I think of that as getting the soil ready for all that's gonna come in the fall. And that being said, I also think it could be a fun time to dip your toes into something that you are excited to read, that you might not have a chance to read during the school year that could be teaching-related. So it's like very low pressure, like, "Oh, I've really wanted to read more by this author. I've wanted to read this article. I've wanted to dip into this topic." And not with a pressure, but just with a curiosity. And, yeah, I think so often we as teachers love learning, and to give yourself space to learn in whatever that looks like can be a real gift.

Dan Meyer (32:09):

Yes. And if you need book recommendations, hit the MTL back catalog of episodes. Loads of folks that we interviewed have real good books out.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (32:16):

Yes!



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Dan Meyer (32:16):

Think about it. Think about it.

Bethany Lockhart Johnson (32:22):

One quick recommendation: Again, gotta plug Antony Smith and Allison Hintz's book. I read *Mathematizing Children's Literature* before we did the interview, but this summer I wanna read all the children's books that they mention. I just wanna go to the library and read all those children's books. I wanna read them to my son. I wanna read 'em to myself. So, you know, diving into some good YA, children's books, just, like, TLC. Dan, thank you for such a rich season and a chance to have so many interesting conversations. It is genuinely a joy to learn with and from you.

Dan Meyer (33:00):

Likewise. And always hope to see you folks on Twitter now and then. Let us know what you're up to this summer at MTLShow on Twitter or in our Facebook group, Math Teacher Lounge. We'll be there tuning in now and then. It's been a treat interacting with you folks over this last season. Take care and until the new season, so long.