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Issue 30

In issue 29 of *Plus*, we heard how a simple mathematical equation became the subject of a debate in the UK parliament. **Chris Budd** and **Chris Sangwin** continue the story of the mighty quadratic equation.



How the leopard got its spots

How does the uniform ball of cells that make up an embryo differentiate to create the dramatic patterns of a zebra or leopard? How come there are spotty animals with stripy tails, but no stripy animals with spotty tails? **Lewis Dartnell** solves these, and other, puzzles of animal patterning.



Running a lottery, for beginners

There are many different types of lottery around the world, but they all share a common aim: to make money. **John Haigh** explains why lotteries are the way they are.



Mathematics for aliens

It has often been observed that mathematics is astonishingly effective as a tool for understanding the universe. But, asks **Phil Wilson**, why should this be? Is mathematics a universal truth, and how would we tell?



Career interview: Fluid mechanics researcher

André Léger studies the fluid mechanics of food travelling through the intestines for consumer goods giant Unilever.



Plus is part of the family of activities in the Millennium Mathematics Project, which also includes the NRICH and MOTIVATE sites.