

- [Home](#)
- [Presentations & Workshops](#)
- [About](#)
- [Author's Choice](#)
- [Contact](#)
-

[dy/dan](#)

less helpful

[Posts](#)

[Comments](#)

[Get Posts by E-mail](#)

Archive for the 'anyqs' Category

[#anyqs](#)

Posted in [anyqs](#) on May 5th, 2011 [51 Comments »](#)

I was working with Wisconsin's math teachers this afternoon, making the case that good storytelling is a first cousin to good math instruction. I challenged them at the end:

Give yourself one photo or one minute of video to tell a mathematical story so perplexing that all of your students will want to know the ending, without you saying a word or lifting a finger.

I'm talking about photos and video that provoke a vast majority of your class to wonder the same question without any explicit prompting. For instance, minutes before the presentation began, I [tweeted](#):

Dear Twitter: what's the first question that comes to mind? <http://vimeo.com/23242866> [#anyqs](#)



[\[anyq\] Stacking Dolls](#) from [Dan Meyer](#) on [Vimeo](#).

In the last minutes of my presentation — nervous as hell — I showed the group my Twitter feed. Here's what we saw:

Tweets mentioning @ddmeyer

 **mathhombre** John Golden
@ddmeyer Are they similar?
1 hour ago

 **lmhenry9** Lisa Henry
.@ddmeyer Are all the dolls nested inside similar by the same ratio? i.e. dolls 1 & 2 have 1/2 ratio, dolls 2 & 3 have 1/2 ratio, etc.
1 hour ago

 **chadmbol** Chad Casarotto
@ddmeyer How many are inside?
2 hours ago [Favorite](#) [Retweet](#) [Reply](#)

 **TaoWangSays** Tao Wang
@ddmeyer Honestly, it was "what's your right hand hiding when you open the first doll?" More math-oriented: "Is there a third doll?"
2 hours ago

 **nathanchow** Nathan Chow
@ddmeyer How many can be fit in the large one (or the smaller one)?
2 hours ago

 **park_star** park_star
@ddmeyer 1) why are those not painted like creepy Russian ladies 2) how many more 3) how big is the littlest one #anyqs
2 hours ago

 **anthony.com** anthony.com

 **@ddmeyer** will doll 3, if placed the same distance away from doll 2 as the doll 2 is from 1, form a line connecting the top of their heads?
2 hours ago

 **Mythagon** Ashli
@ddmeyer how big is the next doll? Is the size shrinking linearly?
2 hours ago

 **samandjt** Sam Morris
@ddmeyer What is hiding behind his hands? #suspiciousQuestion
How many more are in the little one? #inquisitiveQuestion #anyqs
2 hours ago

 **brianwfrank** Brian Frank
@ddmeyer how many are there?
2 hours ago

 **dandersod** Dan Anderson
@ddmeyer how many are inside?
2 hours ago

 **delta_dc** David Coffey
@ddmeyer I want to know how the volumes compare - not very deep but the 1st question ;-)

This kind of user feedback is invaluable. The results are mixed. There is a degree of consensus around one question but I still may head back to the drawing board to reshoot the problem in a way that makes "How many are there?" the most natural, perplexing question to ask.

So I'm pitching the same challenge to you. I have my hawk eyes on the #anyqs hashtag and I can promise you'll get a question from me, at the very least.

PS:

You know which group of students seriously *doesn't* hate it when you pose intriguing mathematical questions *without words*? English language learners. I know it's some kind of cliché to say that a picture is worth a thousand words, but seriously: the more scene-setting you can embed in a photo or video the better for everybody.

PPS:

Consider how bizarre the #anyqs challenge would appear to your textbook's publisher. They work in a world where it's totally normal to take some cheap clip art or stock photography and ask [a question about it](#) that would occur naturally to *nobody else in the world*. I'm challenging you to flip every aspect of that around.

2011 Dec 01. [Essential follow-up reading](#). Don't try to get your students to guess the question in your head.

[« Prev](#)

• Recent Comments:

- [Torre' Mills](#): The Comprehensive Math Assessment Resource
- [Debbie](#): [LOA] How Technology Can Help
- [Dan Meyer](#): [LOA] How Technology Can Help
- [Dan Meyer](#): “Get A Blog Already, Okay?”
- [Dan Meyer](#): The Comprehensive Math Assessment Resource
- [Debbie](#): [LOA] How Technology Can Help
- [Leslie \(@leslie_su76\)](#): The Comprehensive Math Assessment Resource
- [James Key](#): “Get A Blog Already, Okay?”
- [Jared Cosulich](#): [LOA] How Technology Can Help
- [Sybilla Beckmann](#): “Get A Blog Already, Okay?”



• My Curricula

- [Algebra](#)
- [Geometry](#)
- [Three-Act Math](#)

• Tags

◦ Categories

- [3acts](#) (21)
- [anecdotes](#) (80)
- [anyqs](#) (21)
- [assessment](#) (34)
- [classroom management](#) (45)
- [conferences](#) (57)
- [contest](#) (37)
 - [four slide sales pitch](#) (14)
 - [mtt2k](#) (1)
 - [my annual report](#) (20)
- [design](#) (232)
 - [digital instruction](#) (76)
 - [digital storytelling](#) (19)
 - [information design](#) (49)
 - [keynotecamp](#) (1)
 - [presentation](#) (28)
 - [redesigned](#) (12)
- [dissent](#) (4)
- [guest blogger](#) (9)
- [help wanted](#) (2)
- [howto](#) (2)

- [interview](#) (3)
- [itgotaway](#) (3)
- [lessons](#) (86)
 - [advisory](#) (1)
 - [algebra](#) (37)
 - [ela](#) (9)
 - [geometry](#) (29)
 - [review activities](#) (4)
 - [science](#) (4)
 - [social studies](#) (3)
 - [vapa](#) (4)
- [loa](#) (7)
- [mailbag](#) (19)
- [new teacher lab](#) (6)
- [ontheroad](#) (4)
- [pseudocontextsaturday](#) (29)
- [series](#) (133)
 - [design for educators](#) (3)
 - [dy/av](#) (20)
 - [how i work](#) (6)
 - [how to present](#) (7)
 - [what can you do with this?](#) (99)
- [show and tell](#) (30)
- [tech contrarianism](#) (85)
- [tech enthusiasm](#) (61)
- [uncategorized](#) (361)

• Archives

- [August 2012](#) (9)
- [July 2012](#) (10)
- [June 2012](#) (9)
- [May 2012](#) (16)
- [April 2012](#) (13)
- [March 2012](#) (10)
- [February 2012](#) (10)
- [January 2012](#) (9)
- [December 2011](#) (9)
- [November 2011](#) (10)
- [October 2011](#) (10)
- [September 2011](#) (11)
- [August 2011](#) (10)
- [July 2011](#) (10)
- [June 2011](#) (14)
- [May 2011](#) (12)
- [April 2011](#) (14)
- [March 2011](#) (11)
- [February 2011](#) (11)
- [January 2011](#) (18)
- [December 2010](#) (11)

- [November 2010](#) (14)
- [October 2010](#) (19)
- [September 2010](#) (10)
- [August 2010](#) (15)
- [July 2010](#) (7)
- [June 2010](#) (13)
- [May 2010](#) (12)
- [April 2010](#) (11)
- [March 2010](#) (13)
- [February 2010](#) (16)
- [January 2010](#) (10)
- [December 2009](#) (16)
- [November 2009](#) (6)
- [October 2009](#) (10)
- [September 2009](#) (14)
- [August 2009](#) (12)
- [July 2009](#) (8)
- [June 2009](#) (11)
- [May 2009](#) (11)
- [April 2009](#) (25)
- [March 2009](#) (15)
- [February 2009](#) (19)
- [January 2009](#) (14)
- [December 2008](#) (19)
- [November 2008](#) (10)
- [October 2008](#) (16)
- [September 2008](#) (17)
- [August 2008](#) (21)
- [July 2008](#) (19)
- [June 2008](#) (20)
- [May 2008](#) (18)
- [April 2008](#) (25)
- [March 2008](#) (32)
- [February 2008](#) (25)
- [January 2008](#) (44)
- [December 2007](#) (33)
- [November 2007](#) (36)
- [October 2007](#) (32)
- [September 2007](#) (41)
- [August 2007](#) (42)
- [July 2007](#) (22)
- [June 2007](#) (19)
- [May 2007](#) (23)
- [April 2007](#) (21)
- [March 2007](#) (21)
- [February 2007](#) (35)
- [January 2007](#) (29)
- [December 2006](#) (4)
- [November 2006](#) (8)
- [October 2006](#) (7)

- [September 2006](#) (2)

**keynotes,
breakouts &
workshops**

Everything I post here is licensed [CC-BY](#) unless otherwise specified. Same goes for everything you post here too.

[MistyLook](#) by [Sadish](#)

Powered by [WordPress](#)

I don't speak for Stanford University.