CuratedPrep

IB DIPLOMA · MATHS AA · SL

Geometric sequences and series

15 questions · 180 marks

Answer all questions. The marks available are shown against each part. Every question is taken unaltered from a past paper; the source is noted beneath it. Some questions are taken from higher level papers, where they examine the same standard level content.

1.

5 marks

[Maximum mark: 5]

Consider a geometric sequence with first term 1 and common ratio 10.

S_n is the sum of the first n terms of the sequence.

(a) Find an expression for S_n in the form $\frac{a^n - 1}{b}$, where $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}^+$. [1]

(b) Hence, show that $S_1 + S_2 + S_3 + \ldots + S_n = \frac{10(10^n - 1) - 9n}{81}$. [4]

— IB 2224 – 7104 Maths AA · May 2024 Paper 1 TZ1 SL, Question 6

2.

5 marks

[Maximum mark: 5]

Consider a geometric sequence with first term 1 and common ratio 10.

S_n is the sum of the first n terms of the sequence.

(a) Find an expression for S_n in the form $\frac{a^n - 1}{b}$, where $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}^+$. [1]

(b) Hence, show that $S_1 + S_2 + S_3 + \ldots + S_n = \frac{10(10^n - 1) - 9n}{81}$. [4]

— IB 2224 – 7101 Maths AA · May 2024 Paper 1 TZ1 HL, Question 5

3. 7 marks

[Maximum mark: 7]

A geometric sequence has first term 80 and fourth term 0.74088.

(a) Find the second term. [3]

The first two terms of this geometric sequence are also the first term and eleventh term respectively, of an arithmetic sequence.

Let S_n denote the sum of the first n terms of the arithmetic sequence.

(b) Find the greatest value of S_n, giving your answer to two decimal places. [4]

— IB 2225 – 7112 Maths AA · May 2025 Paper 2 TZ2 HL, Question 7

4. 8 marks

[Maximum mark: 8]

Consider a sequence of ten rectangular picture frames $F_1, F_2, \ldots, F_9, F_{10}$.

Picture frame F_1 has width $4\,\text{cm}$ and height $5\,\text{cm}$.

The width and height of picture frame F_n, are each increased by 50% to generate the width and height of the next picture frame F_{n+1}, for $n \in \mathbb{Z}^+$, $1 \le n \le 9$.

(a) (i) Show that the area of picture frame F_n is $20\left(\frac{9}{4}\right)^{n-1}\text{cm}^2$.

(ii) Hence, find the mean area of the ten picture frames, giving your answer in the form $p\left(\left(\frac{9}{4}\right)^a - 1\right)\text{cm}^2$, where $p \in \mathbb{Q}^+$, $a \in \mathbb{Z}^+$. [5]

(b) Find the median area of the ten picture frames, giving your answer in the form $q\left(\frac{9}{4}\right)^4\text{cm}^2$, where $q \in \mathbb{Q}^+$. [3]

— IB 2225 – 7109 Maths AA · May 2025 Paper 1 TZ1 SL, Question 6

5. 8 marks

[Maximum mark: 8]

Consider a sequence of ten rectangular picture frames $F_1, F_2, \ldots, F_9, F_{10}$.

Picture frame F_1 has width $4\,\text{cm}$ and height $5\,\text{cm}$.

The width and height of picture frame F_n, are each increased by 50% to generate the width and height of the next picture frame F_{n+1}, for $n \in \mathbb{Z}^+$, $1 \le n \le 9$.

(a) (i) Show that the area of picture frame F_n is $20\left(\frac{9}{4}\right)^{n-1}\text{cm}^2$.

(ii) Hence, find the mean area of the ten picture frames, giving your answer in the form $p\left(\left(\frac{9}{4}\right)^a - 1\right)\text{cm}^2$, where $p \in \mathbb{Q}^+$, $a \in \mathbb{Z}^+$. [5]

(b) Find the median area of the ten picture frames, giving your answer in the form $q\left(\frac{9}{4}\right)^4\text{cm}^2$, where $q \in \mathbb{Q}^+$. [3]

— IB 2225 – 7106 Maths AA · May 2025 Paper 1 TZ1 HL, Question 5

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6. 9 marks

[Maximum mark: 9]

The sum of the first n terms of a geometric sequence is given by $S_n = \sum_{r=1}^{n} \frac{2}{3}\left(\frac{7}{8}\right)^r$.

(a) Find the first term of the sequence, u_1. [2]

(b) Find S_∞. [3]

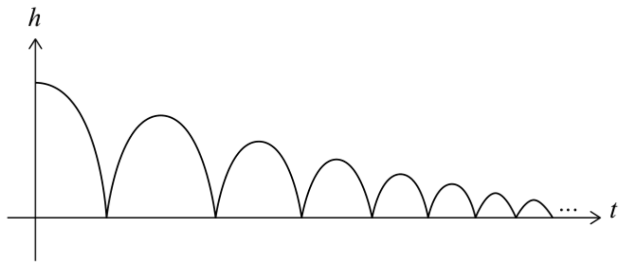
(c) Find the least value of n such that $S_\infty - S_n < 0.001$. [4]

— IB 8821 – 7102 Maths AA · November 2021 Paper 2 HL, Question 5

7. 14 marks

[Maximum mark: 14]

A tennis ball is dropped from a height. After each bounce the maximum height reached by the ball is $\frac{2}{3}$ of its previous maximum height. This can be seen in the diagram below where h, in metres, is the height of a ball after t seconds.



A box contains tennis balls. Each ball satisfies the condition of rebounding to $\frac{2}{3}$ of their previous maximum height. The tennis balls are numbered Ball $1, 2, 3, \ldots$

Ball 1 is dropped from a height of 10 metres.

(a) Find the maximum height of Ball 1 after the 5th bounce. [3]

(b) Find the total distance travelled by Ball 1 immediately before the 5th bounce. [3]

Let δ be the total distance travelled by any of these balls.

(c) A ball is dropped from a height of x metres. Show that $\delta = 5x$ metres. [3]

Let δ_1 be the total distance travelled by Ball 1.

(d) Write down the value of δ_1. [1]

Ball 2 is dropped from a height of 9.56 metres.

Let δ_2 be the total distance travelled by Ball 2, and so on for each ball in the box.

It is given that $\delta_1, \delta_2\ \delta_3, \ldots$ form an arithmetic sequence.

(e) Determine which tennis ball is the first ball to travel less than 25 metres. [4]

— IB 2225 – 7115 Maths AA · May 2025 Paper 2 TZ2 SL, Question 9

8. 14 marks

[Maximum mark: 14]

Consider the arithmetic sequence $u_1, u_2, u_3, \ldots$.

The sum of the first n terms of this sequence is given by $S_n = n^2 + 4n$.

(a) (i) Find the sum of the first five terms.

(ii) Given that $S_6 = 60$, find u_6. [4]

(b) Find u_1. [2]

(c) Hence or otherwise, write an expression for u_n in terms of n. [3]

Consider a geometric sequence, v_n, where $v_2 = u_1$ and $v_4 = u_6$.

(d) Find the possible values of the common ratio, r. [3]

(e) Given that $v_{99} < 0$, find v_5. [2]

— IB 2223 – 7109 Maths AA · May 2023 Paper 1 TZ1 SL, Question 8

9. 15 marks

[Maximum mark: 15]

All answers in this question should be given to four significant figures.

In a local weekly lottery, tickets cost $\$2$ each.

In the first week of the lottery, a player will receive $\$D$ for each ticket, with the probability distribution shown in the following table. For example, the probability of a player receiving $\$10$ is 0.03. The grand prize in the first week of the lottery is $\$1000$.

d	0	2	10	50	Grand Prize
$\mathrm{P}(D=d)$	0.85	c	0.03	0.002	0.0001

(a) Find the value of c. [2]

(b) Determine whether this lottery is a fair game in the first week. Justify your answer. [4]

If nobody wins the grand prize in the first week, the probabilities will remain the same, but the value of the grand prize will be $\$2000$ in the second week, and the value of the grand prize will continue to double each week until it is won. All other prize amounts will remain the same.

(c) Given that the grand prize is not won and the grand prize continues to double, write an expression in terms of n for the value of the grand prize in the nth week of the lottery. [2]

The wth week is the first week in which the player is expected to make a profit. Ryan knows that if he buys a lottery ticket in the wth week, his expected profit is $\$p$.

(d) Find the value of p. [7]

— IB 2221 – 7115 Maths AA · May 2021 Paper 2 TZ2 SL, Question 9

10. [Maximum mark: 15]

15 marks

Consider the function $f(x) = a^x$ where $x, a \in \mathbb{R}$ and $x > 0$, $a > 1$.

The graph of f contains the point $\left(\frac{2}{3}, 4\right)$.

(a) Show that $a = 8$. [2]

(b) Write down an expression for $f^{-1}(x)$. [1]

(c) Find the value of $f^{-1}\left(\sqrt{32}\right)$. [3]

(d) Consider the arithmetic sequence $\log_8 27$, $\log_8 p$, $\log_8 q$, $\log_8 125$, where $p > 1$ and $q > 1$.

(i) Show that 27, p, q and 125 are four consecutive terms in a geometric sequence.

(ii) Find the value of p and the value of q. [9]

— IB 8821 – 7104 Maths AA · November 2021 Paper 1 SL, Question 8

11. 16 marks

[Maximum mark: 16]

Consider the sequence $\{u_n\}$, with nth term given by u_n. The first three terms are

$$u_1 = k - 5,\ u_2 = 3 - 2k \text{ and } u_3 = 5k + 3, \text{ where } k \in \mathbb{R}.$$

(a) Consider the case when $\{u_n\}$ is arithmetic.

(i) Find the value of k.

(ii) Hence, or otherwise, find u_3. [5]

(b) Consider the case where $k = 12$.

(i) Show that the first three terms of $\{u_n\}$ form a geometric sequence.

(ii) Given that $\{u_n\}$ is geometric, state a reason why the sum of an infinite number of terms of this sequence does not exist. [4]

(c) The sequence, $\{u_n\}$, is geometric for a second value of k.

(i) Show that $k^2 - 10k - 24 = 0$.

(ii) Find the first three terms of $\{u_n\}$ for this second value of k.

(iii) Hence, write down the value of S_{2m}, the sum of the first $2m$ terms, for this second value of k. [7]

— IB 2225 – 7119 Maths AA · May 2025 Paper 1 TZ3 SL, Question 8

12. 16 marks

[Maximum mark: 16]

Consider the sequence $\{u_n\}$, with nth term given by u_n. The first three terms are

$$u_1 = k - 5,\ u_2 = 3 - 2k \text{ and } u_3 = 5k + 3, \text{ where } k \in \mathbb{R}.$$

(a) Consider the case when $\{u_n\}$ is arithmetic.

(i) Find the value of k.

(ii) Hence, or otherwise, find u_3. [5]

(b) Consider the case where $k = 12$.

(i) Show that the first three terms of $\{u_n\}$ form a geometric sequence.

(ii) Given that $\{u_n\}$ is geometric, state a reason why the sum of an infinite number of terms of this sequence does not exist. [4]

(c) The sequence, $\{u_n\}$, is geometric for a second value of k.

(i) Show that $k^2 - 10k - 24 = 0$.

(ii) Find the first three terms of $\{u_n\}$ for this second value of k.

(iii) Hence, write down the value of S_{2m}, the sum of the first $2m$ terms, for this second value of k. [7]

— IB 2225 – 7116 Maths AA · May 2025 Paper 1 TZ3 HL, Question 10

13. 16 marks

[Maximum mark: 16]

Consider the arithmetic sequence a, p, q..., where a, p, $q \neq 0$.

(a) Show that $2p - q = a$. [2]

Consider the geometric sequence a, s, t..., where a, s, $t \neq 0$.

(b) Show that $s^2 = at$. [2]

The first term of both sequences is a.

It is given that $q = t = 1$.

(c) Show that $p > \frac{1}{2}$. [2]

Consider the case where $a = 9$, $s > 0$ and $q = t = 1$.

(d) Write down the first four terms of the

(i) arithmetic sequence;

(ii) geometric sequence. [4]

The arithmetic and the geometric sequence are used to form a new arithmetic sequence u_n.

The first three terms of u_n are $u_1 = 9 + \ln 9$, $u_2 = 5 + \ln 3$, and $u_3 = 1 + \ln 1$.

(e) (i) Find the common difference of the new sequence in terms of $\ln 3$.

(ii) Show that $\sum_{i=1}^{10} u_i = -90 - 25\ln 3$. [6]

— IB 2224 - 7106 Maths AA · May 2024 Paper 1 TZ2 HL, Question 10

14. [Maximum mark: 16] 16 marks

Two friends Amelia and Bill, each set themselves a target of saving $\$20\,000$. They each have $\$9000$ to invest.

(a) Amelia invests her $\$9000$ in an account that offers an interest rate of 7% per annum compounded **annually**.

(i) Find the value of Amelia's investment after 5 years to the nearest hundred dollars.

(ii) Determine the number of years required for Amelia's investment to reach the target. [5]

(b) Bill invests his $\$9000$ in an account that offers an interest rate of $r\%$ per annum compounded **monthly**, where r is set to two decimal places.

Find the minimum value of r needed for Bill to reach the target after 10 years. [3]

(c) A third friend Chris also wants to reach the $\$20\,000$ target. He puts his money in a safe where he does not earn any interest. His system is to add more money to this safe each year. Each year he will add half the amount added in the previous year.

(i) Show that Chris will never reach the target if his initial deposit is $\$9000$.

(ii) Find the amount Chris needs to deposit initially in order to reach the target after 5 years. Give your answer to the nearest dollar. [8]

— IB 2221 – 7110 Maths AA · May 2021 Paper 2 TZ1 SL, Question 7

15. [Maximum mark: 16] 16 marks

Consider the arithmetic sequence a, p, q ..., where a, p, $q \neq 0$.

(a) Show that $2p - q = a$. [2]

Consider the geometric sequence a, s, t ..., where a, s, $t \neq 0$.

(b) Show that $s^2 = at$. [2]

The first term of both sequences is a.

It is given that $q = t = 1$.

(c) Show that $p > \frac{1}{2}$. [2]

Consider the case where $a = 9$, $s > 0$ and $q = t = 1$.

(d) Write down the first four terms of the

(i) arithmetic sequence;

(ii) geometric sequence. [4]

The arithmetic and the geometric sequence are used to form a new arithmetic sequence u_n.

The first three terms of u_n are $u_1 = 9 + \ln 9$, $u_2 = 5 + \ln 3$, and $u_3 = 1 + \ln 1$.

(e) (i) Find the common difference of the new sequence in terms of $\ln 3$.

(ii) Show that $\sum_{i=1}^{10} u_i = -90 - 25\ln 3$. [6]

— IB 2224 – 7109 Maths AA · May 2024 Paper 1 TZ2 SL, Question 9