

to take home overnight to more extensively prepare a particularly complex problem or illustrative example.

Another approach ideally suited to this kind of seating arrangement is the experimental lesson. So far this year, the students have performed a variation of Buffon's needle experiment to approximate the value of pi, have flipped three coins simultaneously to determine the probabilities of various upface combinations, and taken physical models of prisms, pyramids, cubes, parallelipipeds, and by actual measurement have calculated their total surface areas. In each case, follow-up reading is prescribed, and each table submits their results and conclusions. Many of the lead-ins to these experiments have arisen from our once-a-week "free" period wherein the students are free to play with dice, coins, and a roulette wheel, to read any book on mathematics from our classroom library, to go unsupervised to our school library to peruse their books on mathematics, to watch mathematics filmstrips of their own choice from the selection we have available, or to work on their mathematics project for that term. Every available inch of space in the classroom is filled with models they have built, curves they have stitched, and such other items as they have been interested in making. During the free period I bring a radio into the room and provide them with enjoyable music. After all, why shouldn't our classrooms be pleasant, stimulating, and enjoyable places in which to be and learn?

Reprinted, with permission, from
The Bulletin, published by the Ontario
Secondary Teachers' Federation,
December, 1968, pp.493, 494.

STATIC AND TRIANGLES

Brian Prior
President of CJHMCATA

The Calgary Public School Junior High Regional Mathematics Council (good grief!) held an open meeting on February 27, at which teachers were invited to make a set of aids. Those who were interested in this session met in a classroom where Lorne Sampson, the originator of the aids, demonstrated the use and construction. Following a short discussion, the group moved to the industrial arts shop to mark out and cut the raw material - a 4' x 2' x 1" sheet of expanded styrofoam.

To math teachers who also teach science, we can heartily recommend styrofoam dust as a material readily charged with static. Brushing has little effect.