

5.4

WRITING PROJECT: NEWTON, LEIBNIZ, AND THE INVENTION OF CALCULUS

This project can be completed anytime after you have studied Section 5.4 in the textbook.

We sometimes read that the inventors of calculus were Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727) and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716). But we know that the basic ideas behind integration were investigated 2500 years ago by ancient Greeks such as Eudoxus and Archimedes, and methods for finding tangents were pioneered by Pierre Fermat (1601–1665), Isaac Barrow (1630–1677), and others. Barrow, Newton’s teacher at Cambridge, was the first to understand the inverse relationship between differentiation and integration. What Newton and Leibniz did was to use this relationship, in the form of the Fundamental Theorem of Calculus, in order to develop calculus into a systematic mathematical discipline. It is in this sense that Newton and Leibniz are credited with the invention of calculus.

Read about the contributions of these men in one or more of the given references and write a report on one of the following three topics. You can include biographical details, but the main thrust of your report should be a description, in some detail, of their methods and notations. In particular, you should consult one of the sourcebooks, which give excerpts from the original publications of Newton and Leibniz, translated from Latin to English.

- The Role of Newton in the Development of Calculus
- The Role of Leibniz in the Development of Calculus
- The Controversy between the Followers of Newton and Leibniz over Priority in the Invention of Calculus

REFERENCES

1. Carl Boyer and Uta Merzbach, *A History of Mathematics* (New York: John Wiley, 1987), Chapter 19.
2. Carl Boyer, *The History of the Calculus and Its Conceptual Development* (New York: Dover, 1959), Chapter V.
3. C. H. Edwards, *The Historical Development of the Calculus* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1979), Chapters 8 and 9.
4. Howard Eves, *An Introduction to the History of Mathematics*, 6th ed. (New York: Saunders, 1990), Chapter 11.
5. C. C. Gillispie, ed., *Dictionary of Scientific Biography* (New York: Scribner’s, 1974). See the article on Leibniz by Joseph Hofmann in Volume VIII and the article on Newton by I. B. Cohen in Volume X.
6. Victor Katz, *A History of Mathematics: An Introduction* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), Chapter 12.
7. Morris Kline, *Mathematical Thought from Ancient to Modern Times* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), Chapter 17.

SOURCEBOOKS

1. John Fauvel and Jeremy Gray, eds., *The History of Mathematics: A Reader* (London: MacMillan Press, 1987), Chapters 12 and 13.
2. D. E. Smith, ed., *A Sourcebook in Mathematics* (New York: Dover, 1959), Chapter V.
3. D. J. Struik, ed., *A Sourcebook in Mathematics, 1200–1800* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), Chapter V.