

Odd ways of expressing things

In Unit 9 we see that the cubic formula sometimes yields strange looking expressions which are just representations of familiar numbers. This is a more serious version of a whimsical story about a new spelling for the word fish.

GHOTI

The idea is simple: One pronounces GH as in cough, O as in women, and TI as in nation. This is often attributed to George Bernard Shaw (1856 – 1950), but the first known reference is in an 1855 letter from [Charles Ollie](#), in which this is attributed to his son William. Nothing related to this alternative spelling appears in Shaw's writings; presumably the misattribution arose because Shaw was an advocate of spelling reform.