ALLYSA LUMLEY, York University

Once Upon a Sequence: Using Narrative and Pop Culture to Face the "Final Boss" of Taylor Series

Infinite series are notoriously tough to teach because students usually see sequences, power series, and Taylor series as a disjointed checklist rather than one big story. In this talk, I want to break down the choices I made to change that by turning the whole unit into a cohesive narrative. To meet students where they are emotionally, I deliberately brought in pop culture references they actually get, and I leaned into a classic student fear: trigonometric functions. By treating trig as the "villain" of our story arc, we built up a fun sense of dramatic tension that naturally made students want to figure out polynomial approximations. I'll share why I chose this narrative style over traditional setups, how it helped flip student anxiety into genuine excitement, and the real highs and lows of trying it out in my classroom.