

Kolmogorov: the mathematician and the educator of children

A. N. Kolmogorov (1903-87) was one of the great mathematicians of all times. Among other epoch making contributions, he pioneered the modern approach to probability theory and stochastic processes, made a great contribution to the formulation of intuitionistic logic, and initiated the celebrated Kolmogorov-Arnold-Moser theory of dynamical systems. But his interests were not confined to mathematics alone, and were engaged in broad cultural areas as well. Of particular interest was his deep involvement in teaching programs for children, where he strived to open up new horizons for them. The following paragraph has been quoted in a Wikipedia article on Kolkmogorov, regarding his involvement in a children's school program:

To this school he devoted a major proportion of his time over many years, planning syllabuses, writing textbooks, spending a large number of teaching hours with the children themselves, introducing them to literature and music, joining in their recreations and taking them on hikes, excursions, and expeditions. ... [Kolmogorov] sought to ensure for these children a broad and natural development of the personality, and it did not worry him if the children in his school did not become mathematicians. Whatever profession they ultimately followed, he would be content if their outlook remained broad and their curiosity unstifled. Indeed it must have been wonderful to belong to this extended family of [Kolmogorov].

Source: D Kendall, G K Batchelor, N H Bingham, W K Hayman, J M E Hyland, G G Lorentz, H K Moffatt, W Parry, A A Razborov, C A Robinson and P Whittle, Andrei Nikolaevich Kolmogorov (1903-1987), *Bull. London Math. Soc.* **22** (1) (1990), 31-100.

A. Lahiri, Laketown, 03 April, 2013.