

MATHS IMPROVES YOUR CHANCES!

Imagine a game of “heads and tails” between two people where the first one to 6 is the winner. If the game is interrupted when one person has 5 wins and the other player has 2, how should the prize money be split?

This problem of the unfinished game led to correspondence between two great 17th century French mathematicians, Pierre de Fermat and Blaise Pascal, which led to the discovery of the laws of probability which govern so many of our decisions today. Check out www.mathsweek.ie for the answer and more.



MONTY HALL PROBLEM

The winner on a TV game show is given a chance to win a car. There are three doors and behind one door is a car and behind the other two are goats. The contestant is asked to guess which door the car is behind. The host Monty Hall, who knows what's behind the doors, doesn't open that door but opens another door revealing a goat. Monty then offers the contestant the chance to change doors.

Suppose you're on the show and you're given the choice of three doors: You pick a door, say No. 1 and Monty opens another door, say No.3, which has a goat. He then says to you, "Do you want to pick door No.2?" Would you have a better chance if you switch?

Check out www.mathsweek.ie for the surprising answer

