Reading Worksheet for Sections 4.1 and 4.2

History of Mathematics

Section 4.1

1. How did the Alexandria library come to be so well stocked?

2. What other period in mathematical history has been compared to the supremely productive 200 year span of 300-100 BC?

3. What other texts by Euclid are extant?

4. Describe the demise of "the Museum".

Section 4.2

1. David Hilbert reworked Euclid's Foundations. How many postulates and undefined terms did Hilbert require?

2. What is the "bridge of asses"?

3. What is the "mousetrap proof"?

4. How does our author summarize the impact of the "fear of the irrational" in Euclid's geometry?