

# Why query?

- Editor's are busy.
- Shows whether or not you can write.
- Shows whether or not you can spell and use proper grammar.
- Shows whether or not you have done your homework.
- Shows whether or not you have credentials.

# Key Elements

- The hook
- The pitch
- The body
- The credentials
- The close

# The Hook

Here's one way to begin a query letter:

Dear Sirs:

I have an idea for an article for your magazine that I know you will love.

Everyone in my family loves the idea as does my neighbor, Bill, who reads a lot. My idea is about the Pythagorean Theorem and how it is at the root of everything.

Here's a better way:

Dear Mr. X:

Almost 2500 years ago, a small mystical cult known as the Pythagoreans discovered what is arguably the most famous mathematical theorem in history. While today this theorem is taught to every schoolchild, you might be surprised to learn it is still at the heart of some of our most advanced mathematics. My article, *The Little Theorem That Could*, tells the story of the Pythagorean Theorem and its impact on everything from carpentry, to the theory of special relativity, to Andrew Wile's recent breakthrough proof of Fermat's Last Theorem.

# The Pitch

Dear Mr. X:

Almost 2500 years ago, a small mystical cult known as the Pythagoreans discovered what is arguably the most famous mathematical theorem in history. While today this theorem is taught to every schoolchild, you might be surprised to learn it is still at the heart of some of our most advanced mathematics. My article, *The Little Theorem That Could*, tells the story of the Pythagorean Theorem and its impact on everything from carpentry, to the theory of special relativity, to Andrew Wile's recent breakthrough proof of Fermat's Last Theorem.

# The Body

- 2-4 paragraphs in length
- Gives an outline of your article
- Shows the logical organization
- Good place to put a word count
- Should be visually appealing and easy to read

# Credentials & Closing

- This is where you sell yourself
- Why are you qualified to write this article?
- Don't make things up! I really want to know *your* credentials. This will tell me how well you've connected your idea to yourself.
- Final paragraph should be a quick thank you & closing.

# Format

- Letterhead at the top
- Block style with line between paragraphs
- Formal salutation
- Clean, neat, and proofread