**DISCUSSING   
*The Boy Who Dreamed of Infinity* with children**

1. **Who is a genius? Or what is a genius like?**

*“Ramanujan, are you a genius?”*

*“I don’t know but if I am my elbow is making a genius of me.”*

**Look for and discuss places where he …**

* + Daydreamed
  + Asked questions
  + Worked really, really hard
  + Never gave up even after failing
  + Kept his ideas and dreams in a notebook
  + Thought so much about math that he dreamed about it at night
  + Was a joyful, relentless mistake-maker
  + Took a chance

1. **Who is a mathematician?**

**a kenning**: *a poetic new name used for or in addition to the usual name of a person or thing, such as “a wave traveler” for “a boat.”*

**Page through the book and generate kennings for a math person**:   
pattern-maker, dream-catcher, mistake-maker, game-player, question-asker, number-artist, …

**Then ask who is a mathematician?**   
Male/female, rich/poor, Black/brown/white, educated/uneducated,   
from the U.S./Europe/Africa/Asia/Latin America …

1. **How is math supposed to be done? What counts as *doing math*?**

*“He didn’t know how math was supposed to be done so he did it his own way.”*

**Look for and discuss places where he …**

* Made patterns
* Asked wondering questions, number questions
* Played games
* Talked about primes, factorization, partitions, infinite series without ever using those words
* Made up his own symbols

1. **What is Inside a Number?** – see additional handout for this

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