

Knot Theory Addendum

At Right Angles met up with author Ramya to discuss her article on Knot Theory. Over coffee at Starbucks, Ramya adeptly made sense of a tangled bunch of wool which I had carried with me to try and see if Knot Theory could help me untangle the web.

Here was the Trefoil in a familiar form:



Figure 1. Trefoil (with Ramya's sketch alongside)

And now, with a little loosening of the wool :



Figure 2. Trefoil

Some tweaking and voila, here is another view of the same knot:

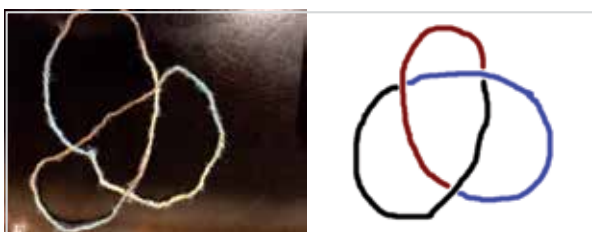


Figure 3. Trefoil

See the 3 crossings in each of the figures.

Now for a double knot:



Figure 4. Cinquefoil

Look at the star shape with the 5 crossings:

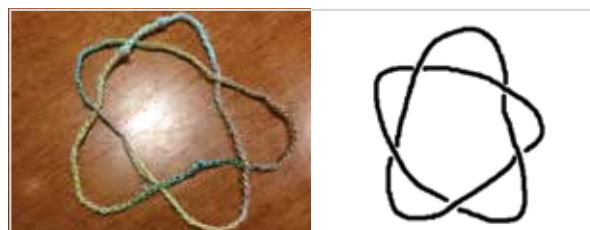


Figure 5. Cinquefoil

Starbucks may not appreciate their product being ignored, but I came away, not wanting to untangle my wool – in fact, I wanted to get it knottier!



P. S. RAMYA suggests the following simple reading on Knot Theory and DNA available at <http://www.tiem.utk.edu/~gross/bioed/webmodules/DNAknot.html>