

Another nice problem from Nrich: Really numbers, from 1st epsilons

If x , y and z are real numbers such that:

$$x+y+z=5 \quad \text{and} \quad xy+yz+zx=3,$$

what is the largest value that any one of these numbers can have?

I had some trouble following the solutions using maxima /minima of curves.

However I propose the following:

$$(x + y + z)^2 = 25$$

$$x^2 + y^2 + z^2 + 2(xy + yz + xz) = x^2 + y^2 + z^2 + 6$$

Therefore

$$x^2 + y^2 + z^2 = 19$$

Possible solutions: $x = \pm 3$, $y = \pm 3$, $z = \pm 1$

The only combination satisfying the required conditions is:

$$x = 3, \quad y = 3, \quad z = -1$$