

Math Diversion Problem 202

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Young men should prove theorems, old
men should write books.
— G. H. Hardy

1 The Problem

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r17cEEA9VKg>
Title: Requested Video: How To Solve This Classic Equation
Using Lambert W Product Log Function
Presenter: Learn Math By Doing

Given the relation

$$x^x = 2, \tag{1}$$

find x . (Skip down to the solution, if you like.)

2 The Lambert W Function

Lemma:

$$W(x \ln x) = \ln x. \tag{2}$$

3 The Solution

The first thing I'll do is to take the natural logarithm across the equation.

$$x \ln x = \ln 2. \tag{3}$$

Then, using (2), we have that

$$\ln x = W(\ln 2). \tag{4}$$

Thus,

$$x = e^{W(\ln 2)}. \tag{5}$$