

1. Find the real roots of $x^4 + 4x^3 + 6x^2 + 4x - 15$.

Answer: 1, -3

Solution: Note that $x^4 + 4x^3 + 6x^2 + 4x - 15 = (x+1)^4 - 2^4 = ((x+1)^2 + 4)((x+1)^2 - 4)$. Thus, the roots of $x^4 + 4x^3 + 6x^2 + 4x - 15$ are the roots of $(x+1)^2 - 4$, so the roots are $x = \boxed{1, -3}$.

2. Compute

$$\sum_{m=1}^{2015} \sum_{k=m-2015}^{m-2} \frac{1}{m^2 + k^2 - 2mk - m + k}$$

Answer: 2014

Solution: Note that the denominator of the fraction can be factored. Then, if we make the substitution $n = m - k$, then the entire inner sum can be written without m , and becomes a simple telescoping sum. The answer follows.

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{m=1}^{2015} \sum_{k=m-2015}^{m-2} \frac{1}{m^2 + k^2 - 2mk - m + k} &= \sum_{m=1}^{2015} \sum_{k=m-2015}^{m-2} \frac{1}{(m-k)(m-k-1)} \\ &= \sum_{m=1}^{2015} \sum_{n=2}^{2015} \frac{1}{n(n-1)} \\ &= 2015 \sum_{n=2}^{2015} \frac{1}{n(n-1)} \\ &= 2015 \cdot \frac{2014}{2015} \\ &= \boxed{2014} \end{aligned}$$

3. Find the minimal value of

$$\left(\frac{x+y}{x-y}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{y+z}{y-z}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{z+x}{z-x}\right)^2$$

where $x \neq y \neq z$ are real numbers.

Answer: 2

Solution: Set $a = \frac{x+y}{x-y}$, $b = \frac{y+z}{y-z}$, $c = \frac{z+x}{z-x}$. Observe that

$$(a+1)(b+1)(c+1) = \frac{2x \cdot 2y \cdot 2z}{(x-y)(y-z)(z-x)} = \frac{2y \cdot 2z \cdot 2x}{(x-y)(y-z)(z-x)} = (a-1)(b-1)(c-1).$$

This means that $ab + bc + ca = -1$, so therefore $a^2 + b^2 + c^2 = (a+b+c)^2 + 2$ and hence $a^2 + b^2 + c^2 \geq \boxed{2}$.

Finally, we show that this is achievable: take $x = -1$, $y = 0$, $z = 1$.