

J243. Let a, b, c be real numbers such that

$$\left(-\frac{a}{2} + \frac{b}{3} + \frac{c}{6}\right)^3 + \left(\frac{a}{3} + \frac{b}{6} - \frac{c}{2}\right)^3 + \left(\frac{a}{6} - \frac{b}{2} + \frac{c}{3}\right)^3 = \frac{1}{8}.$$

Prove that

$$(a - 3b + 2c)(2a + b - 3c)(-3a + 2b + c) = 9.$$

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Notice that

$$\left(-\frac{a}{2} + \frac{b}{3} + \frac{c}{6}\right)^3 + \left(\frac{a}{3} + \frac{b}{6} - \frac{c}{2}\right)^3 + \left(\frac{a}{6} - \frac{b}{2} + \frac{c}{3}\right)^3 = \frac{1}{8} \text{ iff } x^3 + y^3 + z^3 = 27,$$

where

$$x := (-3a + 2b + c)^3, \quad y := (2a + b - 3c)^3, \quad z := (a - 3b + 2c)^3.$$

Since for any reals x, y, z , we know that

$$x^3 + y^3 + z^3 - 3xyz = (x + y + z)(x^2 + y^2 + z^2 - xy - yz - zx),$$

it follows in our case, where we know $x + y + z = 0$, that $x^3 + y^3 + z^3 - 3xyz = 0$, i.e. $xyz = 9$. This is precisely what we want.

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