

Mathematics 3810H – Ancient and classical mathematics

TRENT UNIVERSITY, Fall 2017

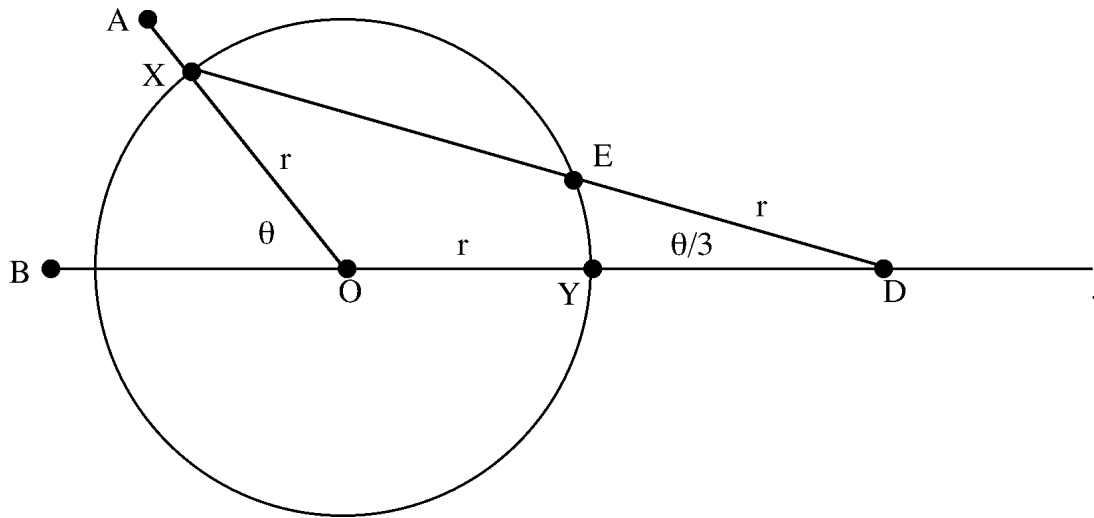
Assignment #4

Due on Friday, 10 November, 2017.

Trisections

1. Consider the following technique for trisecting an angle using a compass and a ruler with two marks that are some fixed distance of  $r$  apart:

Given that  $\angle AOB = \theta$ , draw a circle with centre  $O$  and radius  $r$ . Suppose this circle intersects  $OA$  at  $X$  and the line extending  $BO$  past  $O$  at  $Y$ . Slide the ruler around until its edge runs through  $X$ , one mark is on the line extending  $OY$  past  $Y$ , and the other mark lies on the circle. Let  $D$  be the point on the line where the first mark is and  $E$  be the point on the circle where the second mark is. Then  $\angle EDY = \theta/3$ .



Prove that this technique works. [5]

2. Greek and Hellenistic geometers experimented with various techniques besides to make possible trisections that cannot be accomplished with a compass and unmarked straightedge alone. Describe one such technique (other than the one given above) in detail and explain why it works (or fails). [5]