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This is a one-of-a-kind reference for anyone with a serious interest in mathematics. Edited by Timothy Gowers, a recipient of the Fields Medal, it presents nearly two hundred entries, written especially for this book by some of the world's leading mathematicians, that introduce basic mathematical tools and vocabulary; trace the development of modern mathematics; explain essential terms and concepts; examine core ideas in major areas of mathematics; describe the achievements of scores of famous mathematicians; explore the impact of mathematics on other disciplines such as biology, finance, and music\_and much, much more.