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Edith Prentice Mendez* (edith.mendez@sonoma.edu), Mathematics Department, Sonoma State University, 1801 East Cotati Avenue, Rohnert Park, CA. *Thabit Teaches How to Read a Text: Amicable Numbers for Prospective Elementary Teachers*. Preliminary report.

In the ninth century CE, Thabit ibn Qurra presented and proved an algorithm for finding amicable numbers that went well beyond earlier Greek results. Yet the concept of amicable numbers is accessible to mathematically unsophisticated undergraduates, such as prospective elementary teachers in their second collegiate mathematics course. The critical skill of reading a mathematics textbook carefully, working through the problems, was taught using an adaptation of the English translation of Thabit's work found in "The Mathematics of Egypt, Mesopotamia, China, India, and Islam." Thabit's instructions were organized with steps of his text interspersed with examples and exercises. Resource cards with definitions were prepared so that students could work in groups on the reading problems. Groups of 3-5 students read together, finding the work challenging but worthwhile as they discovered the first pair of amicable numbers while learning to carefully read their texts. Students were generally positive: "It makes us think about what we are reading." "It worked out! I was very surprised!" The activity introduced the students to interesting mathematics, to text reading skills, and to a taste of the history of Islamic mathematics. (Received September 13, 2007)