Mom,
Don’t Make Me Think —
Just Tell Me the Answer

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based on the work of Dr. Joan A. Cotter

How to Assist Thinking

How did you get your answer?

Why did that work?

Will that work every time?

Be quiet!

Allow processing and thinking time.

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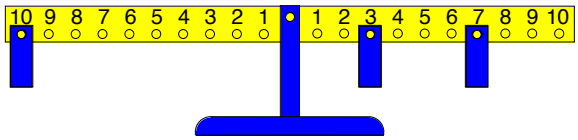
Math Balance



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Problem Solving

A problem is not a problem if the solution is obvious.

Don't have the child look for "key" words.

There are 76 tiles per box and we bought 38 boxes. How many tiles do we have ***altogether****?*

Using "key words" as a problem solving strategy turns an opportunity to THINK into just another procedure to follow, masking understanding.

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Problem Solving

- is NOT rote memorizing
- is NOT following rules blindly
- is NOT passive learning

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Problem Solving

Problem solving is:

- thinking carefully about the situation
- discovering what is given
- figuring out what is needed
- and deciding on methods to get there

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Problem Solving

Japanese teachers discuss one problem in depth, rather than four problems superficially.

They encourage multiple solutions.

Wrong solutions are discussed.

If an error isn't addressed, it will happen again. And again and again!

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Guided Discovery

To encourage and guide the child to discovery. And to get them to think.

Ask questions, encouraging the child to find the "trick" or "secret pattern".

It is vitally important that children think about what they are doing and not be satisfied with memorizing a rule.

This promotes critical thinkers!

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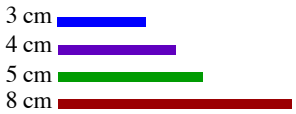
Guided Discovery

Using the following lengths, make triangles.



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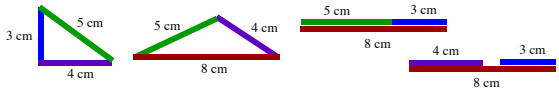
Guided Discovery

Using the following lengths, make triangles.



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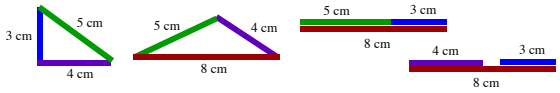
Guided Discovery

Using the following lengths, make triangles.



So, what did we discover?

Two sides of a triangle must be greater than the third side.

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Magic Squares

2	7	6
9	5	1
4	3	8

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Magic Squares

2	7	6
9	5	1
4	3	8

- Includes all the numbers 1 through 9.
- Even numbers in the corners; other numbers are odd.
- Each row and column add up to the magic number.
- Both diagonals add up to the magic number.
- Corners and opposite sides equal 10.
- The middle number times 3 is the magic number.

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Magic Squares

5	-2	
8	4	0
-1	10	3

- What's the missing number?
- What's the magic number?

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Magic Squares

5	-2	9
8	4	0
-1	10	3

- What's the missing number?
- What's the magic number?

12

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Durer's Magic Square

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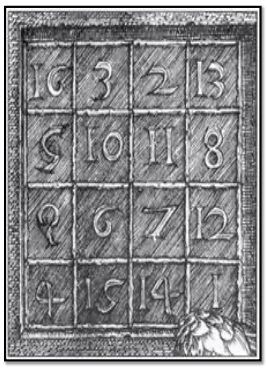
Durer's Magic Square

16	3	2	13
5	10	11	8
9	6	7	12
4	15	14	1



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Durer's Magic Square

16	3	2	13
5	10	11	8
9	6	7	12
4	15	14	1

- Includes all the numbers 1 through 16.
- Each row, column, and diagonals add up to the magic number of 34.
- Inner square adds to 34.
- Middle numbers on top and bottom add up to 34.
- Middle numbers on left and right add up to the magic number.
- The year 1514 is included!

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Patterns in Multiples

3	6	9
12	15	18
21	24	27
30		

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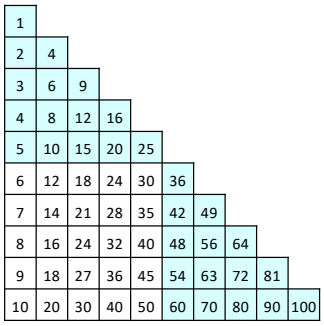
Short Multiplication Chart



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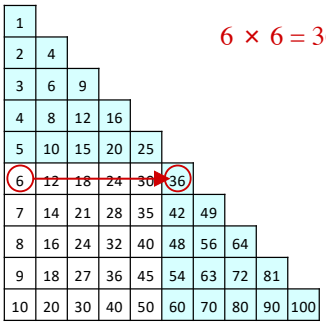
Short Multiplication Chart



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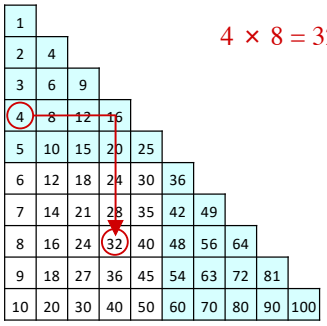
Short Multiplication Chart



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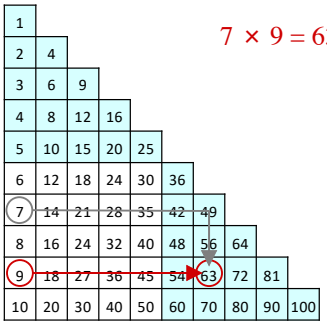
Short Multiplication Chart



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Puzzle Numbers

Make an equation using

2 9 8 3

with mathematics symbols,

= + − × ÷) ‾ /

keeping the numbers in the same order.

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Puzzle Numbers

Make an equation using

2 + 9 = 8 + 3

with mathematics symbols,

= + − × ÷) ‾ /

keeping the numbers in the same order.

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Puzzle Numbers

Make an equation using

$$2 + 9 - 8 = 3$$

with mathematics symbols,

= + − × ÷) /

keeping the numbers in the same order.

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Puzzle Numbers

Make an equation using

$$-2 = 9 - 8 - 3$$

with mathematics symbols,

= + − × ÷) /

keeping the numbers in the same order.

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Puzzle Numbers

Make an equation using

3 4 2 5

with mathematics symbols

= + − × ÷) /

keeping the numbers in the same order.

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Puzzle Numbers

Make an equation using

4 2 8 4

with mathematics symbols

= + − × ÷) /

keeping the numbers in the same order.

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Puzzle Numbers

Make an equation using

1 2 3 4

with mathematics symbols

= + − × ÷) /

keeping the numbers in the same order.

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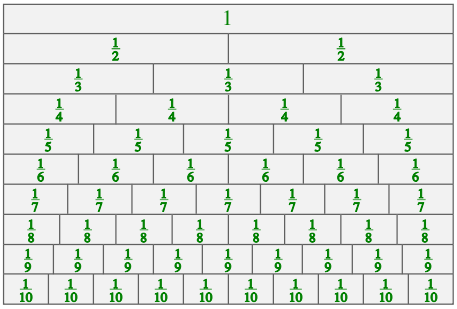
Fractions



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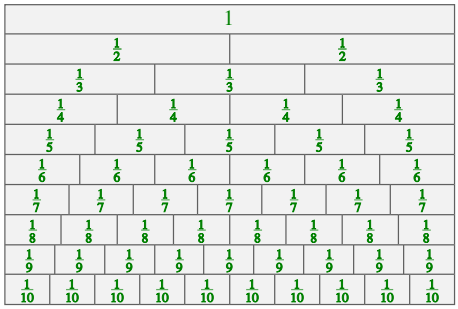
Fractions



How many fourths in a whole? How many fifths? Eighths?

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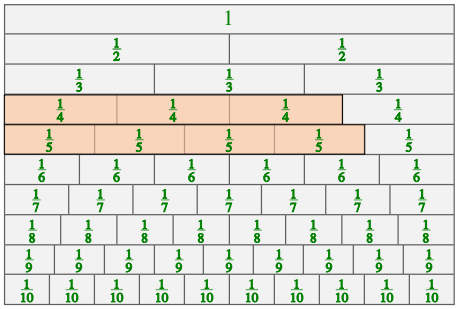
Fractions



Which is more, 3/4 or 4/5?

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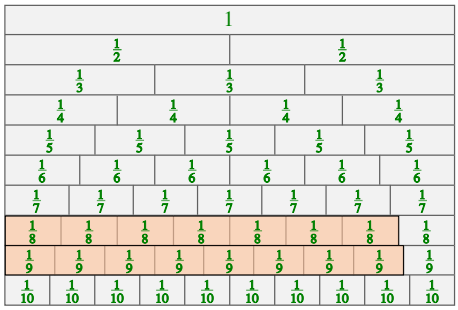
Fractions



Which is more, 7/8 or 8/9?

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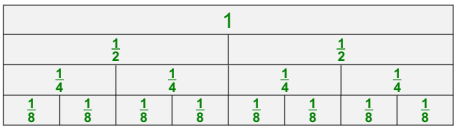
Partial Chart



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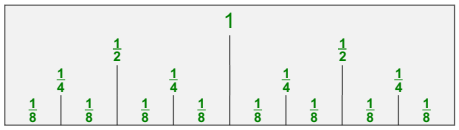
Partial Chart



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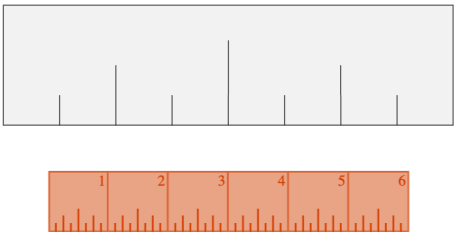

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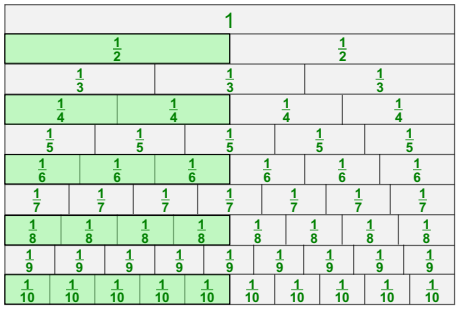
Simplifying Fractions



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Simplifying Fractions

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30
4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40
5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70
8	16	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80
9	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90
10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

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Simplifying Fractions

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30
4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40
5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70
8	16	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80
9	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90
10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

$\frac{21}{28}$

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Simplifying Fractions

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30
4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40
5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70
8	16	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80
9	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90
10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

$\frac{45}{72}$

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Simplifying Fractions

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30
4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40
5	~~10~~	~~15~~	~~20~~	~~25~~	~~30~~	~~35~~	~~40~~	45	50
6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70
8	~~16~~	~~24~~	~~32~~	~~40~~	~~48~~	~~56~~	~~64~~	72	80
9	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90
10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

$\frac{45}{72}$

Why does this work?

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Simplifying Fractions

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30
4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40
5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70
8	16	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80
9	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90
10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

$\frac{12}{16}$

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Remember, let the child **discover** the algorithm.

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How to Assist Thinking

How did you get your answer?

Why did that work?

Will that work every time?

Be quiet!

Allow processing and thinking time.

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In Conclusion …

Math needs to be taught so
95 percent is understood and
only 5 percent memorized.

Richard Skemp
– major pioneer in mathematics education

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In Conclusion …

Our goal as a teacher of mathematics
is to help our children transform,
expand, and refine these beginning ideas
into deeper mathematical thinking.

– Dr. Joan A. Cotter

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