

# **The Power of Progressions: Untangling the Knotty Areas of Teaching and Learning Mathematics**

**Graham Fletcher**

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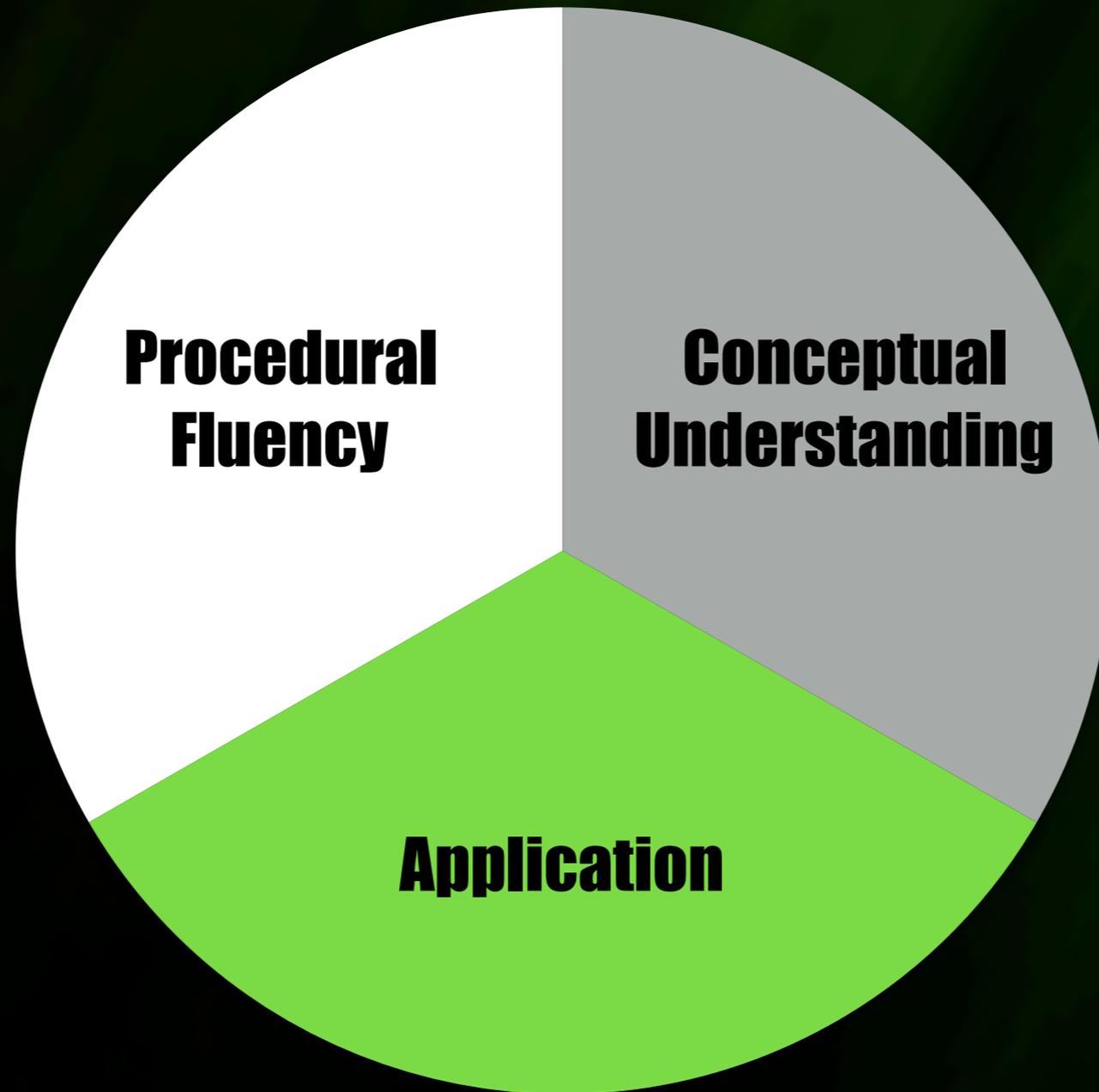
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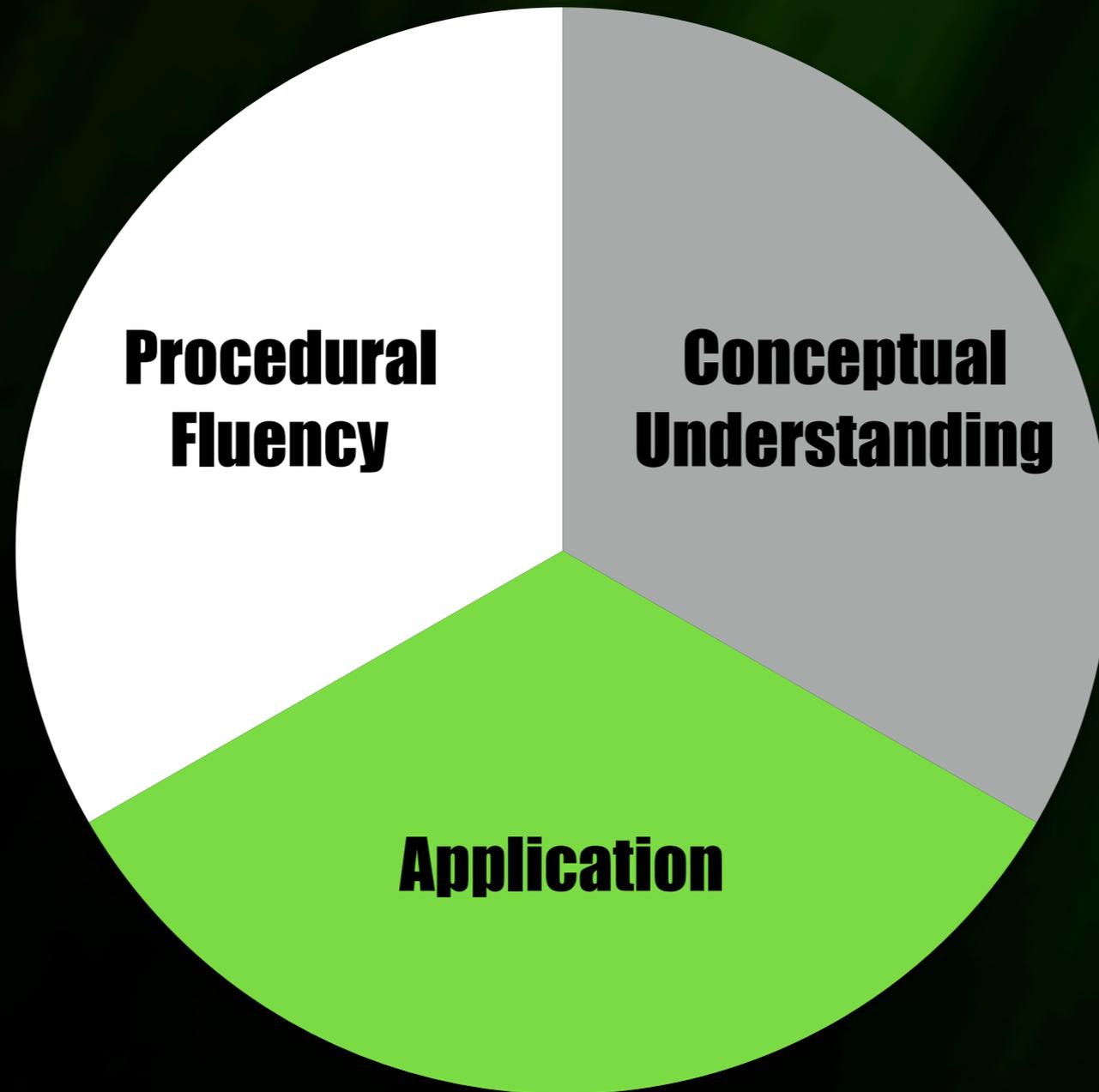
**NEXT TIME YOU'RE AFRAID  
TO SHARE IDEAS  
REMEMBER SOMEONE  
ONCE SAID IN A MEETING  
LET'S MAKE A FILM WITH A  
TORNADO FULL OF SHARKS**

## Morning's Goals

- Understand the structure of 3-act task and see how they fit into the scope and sequence of a unit.
- Explore the importance of progressional understanding and how a good task can be used as formative assessment.
  - Early Number and Counting
  - Addition and Subtraction
- Understand the importance of an effective closing and the role it plays in deciding our next move.



**Procedural  
Fluency**



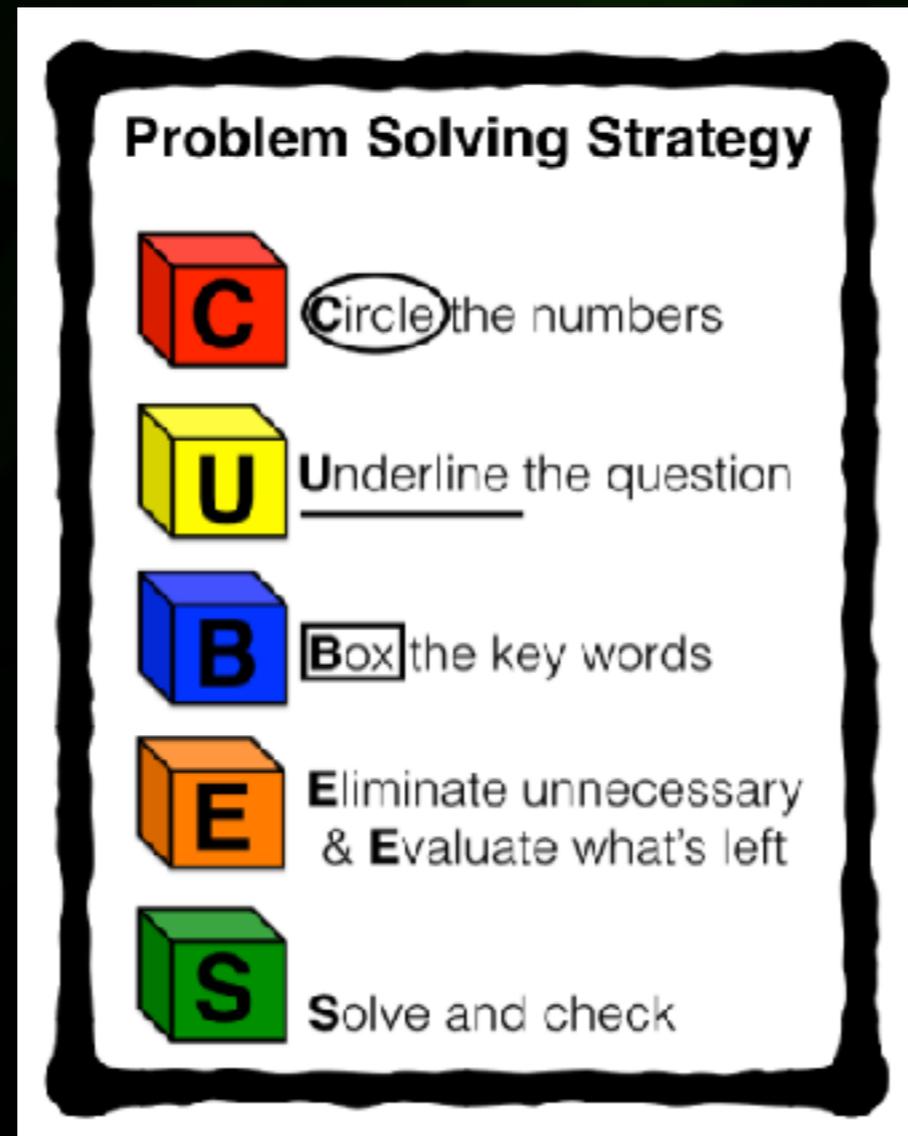


**Demetrius has 17 Skittles which is 12 fewer than Alicia.**

**How many Skittles does Alicia have?**

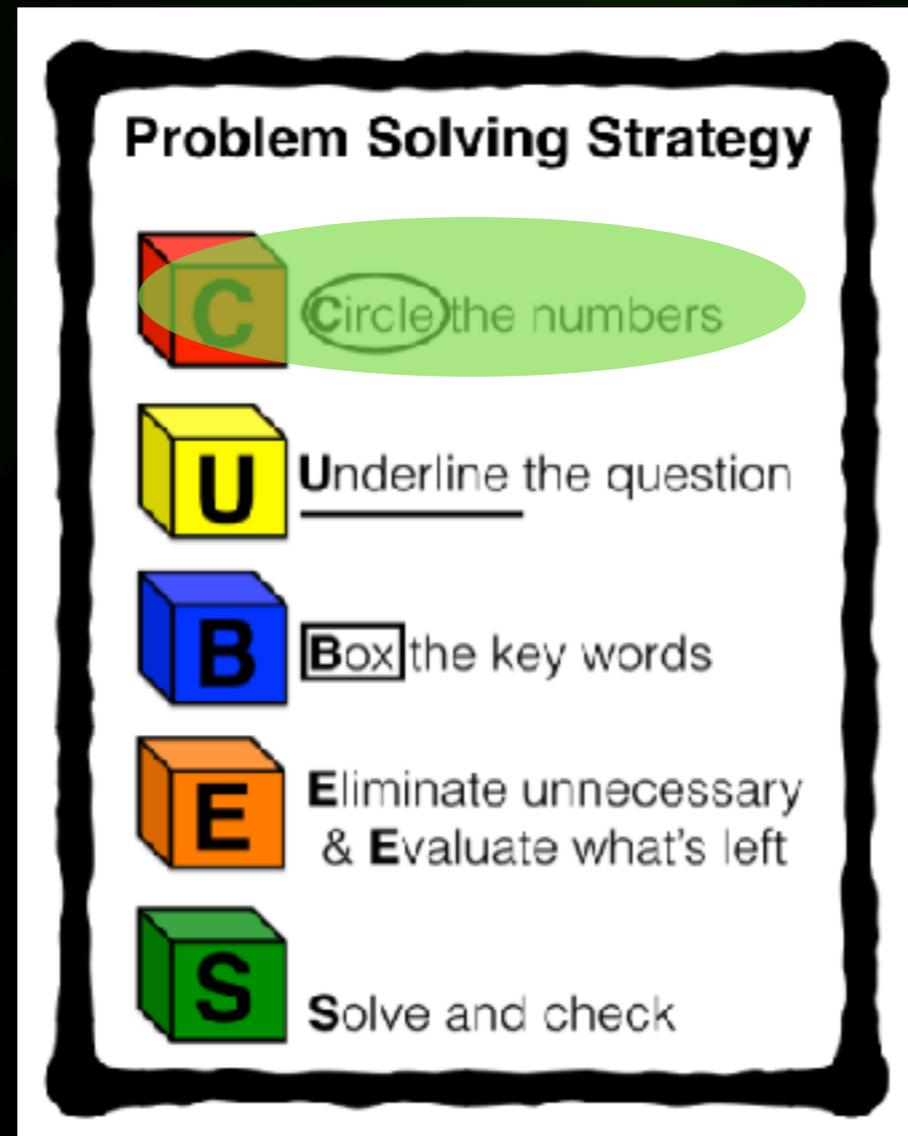
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Demetrius has 17 Skittles which is 12 fewer than Alicia.

How many Skittles does Alicia have?

**Problem Solving Strategy**

- C** Circle the numbers
- U** Underline the question
- B** Box the key words
- E** Eliminate unnecessary & Evaluate what's left
- S** Solve and check

Demetrius has 17 Skittles which is 12 fewer than Alicia.

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**fewer**

17

12

**Problem Solving Strategy**

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- S** Solve and check

 Add Sum Total All together Plus In all	 Multiply Product Times Twice Total Multiplied by
 Subtract Remain Difference Less than Fewer How many more Minus	 Divide Quotient Goes into Split Equally Each

# 17 – 12

### Problem Solving Strategy

- C** Circle the numbers
- U** Underline the question
- B** Box the key words
- E** Eliminate unnecessary & Evaluate what's left
- S** Solve and check

The Key Word in Word Problems	
 Add Sum Total All together Plus In all	 Multiply Product Times Twice Total Multiplied by
 Subtract Remain Difference Less than Fewer How many more Minus	 Divide Quotient Goes into Split Equally Each

17 – 12

**W T F ?**

17 – 12

**W**hat's **T**he **F**ive **?**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What did you notice?

2. What do you wonder?

3. Main Question:

4. Make an estimate.



Place an "X" to represent your estimate on the number line.

5. What information do you need?

6. Construct a viable argument or share a reflection:

Answer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimate

Draw a picture to show your thinking:

Use numbers to show your thinking:

Answer:





?

 **-19 yellow**

 **-15 orange**

 **-19 green**

 **-17 purple**

 **-21 red**

# **The Big Reveal**



Graham had some Skittles. He had 19 yellow, 15 orange, 19 green, 17 purple, and 21 red. How many Skittles did Graham have?

# 3-Act Tasks

## Act 1:

- Real world problem or scenario presented
- What do you notice? What do you wonder?
- Make estimates

## Act 2:

- Identify missing variables and missing variables to solve
- Define solution path using variables

## Act 3:

- Solve and interpret results of the solution
- Validate answer

## Most asked questions:

- How often should we use 3-Act Tasks?
- When should we use 3-Act tasks? How do they fit into the scope of a unit?
- How long does one task usually take?
- What if we don't have the time?

# Orchestrating Discussions

*Five practices constitute a model for effectively using student responses in whole-class discussions that can potentially make teaching with high-level tasks more manageable for teachers.*

Margaret S. Smith, Elizabeth K. Hughes, Randi A. Engle, and Mary Kay Stein



Margaret S. Smith, [pegso@pitt.edu](mailto:pegso@pitt.edu), is an associate professor of mathematics education at the University of Pittsburgh. Over the past decade, she has been developing research-based materials for use in the professional development of mathematics teachers and studying what teachers learn from the professional development in which they engage. Elizabeth K. Hughes, [elizabeth.hughes@pitt.edu](mailto:elizabeth.hughes@pitt.edu), recently finished her doctorate in mathematics education at the University of Pittsburgh. Her areas of interest include preservice secondary mathematics teacher education and the use of practice-based materials in developing teachers' understanding of what it means to teach and learn mathematics. Randi A. Engle, [raengle@berkeley.edu](mailto:raengle@berkeley.edu), is an assistant professor of mathematics education and the social context of learning at the University of California Berkeley. She is interested in developing practical theories for how mathematics teachers can create discussion-based learning environments that promote strong student engagement, learning, and transfer. Mary Kay Stein, [mstein@pitt.edu](mailto:mstein@pitt.edu), is a professor of learning solutions and policy and the director of the Learning Policy Center at the University of Pittsburgh. Her research focuses on instructional practice and the organizational and policy conditions that shape it.

Discussions that focus on cognitively challenging mathematical tasks, namely, those that promote thinking, reasoning, and problem solving, are a primary mechanism for promoting conceptual understanding of mathematics (Hirano and Inagaki 1991; Michaels, O'Connor, and Resnick forthcoming). Such discussions give students opportunities to share ideas and clarify understandings, develop convincing arguments regarding why and how things work, develop a language for expressing mathematical ideas, and learn to see things from other perspectives (NCTM 2000).

Although discussions about high-level tasks provide important

The **5** practices are:

1. **Anticipating** student responses to challenging mathematical tasks;
2. **Monitoring** students' work on and engagement with the tasks;
3. **Selecting** particular students to present their mathematical work;
4. **Sequencing** the student responses that will be displayed in a specific order and;
5. **Connecting** different students' responses and connecting the responses to key mathematical ideas.

Task Planning Page

Learning Target:

Questions and Look-Fors:

Strategy	Who and What	Order

Notes:

Anticipating → Monitoring → Selecting → Sequencing → Connecting



Name: 14

Student #1

Estimate  
14

Draw a picture or use numbers to show your thinking:

Answer:  
91

Name: 11

Student #2

Estimate  
13

Draw a picture or use numbers to show your thinking:

$19 + 15 + 19 + 17 + 21 = 91$

Answer:  
91

Name:

Student #3

Estimate  
42

Draw a picture to show your thinking:

Orange - 10  
Purple - 10  
green - 10  
red - 10  
Yellow - 10

$60 + 10 + 10 + 10 + 10 = 91$

Use numbers to show your thinking:

Answer:  
91

Name: 13

Student #4

Estimate  
18

Draw a picture or use numbers to show your thinking:

Answer:  
73

# Identify and name the strategy used, then place the student work in order in terms of efficiency (least to greatest)

Name:

Student #5

Estimate  
50

Draw a picture to show your thinking:

$$\begin{array}{r} 19 \\ 15 \\ 19 \\ 17 \\ + 21 \\ \hline 91 \\ 60 \\ \hline 91 \end{array}$$

Use numbers to show your thinking:

Answer:

Name:

Student #6

Estimate  
34

Draw a picture to show your thinking:

Use numbers to show your thinking:  
I moved the numbers around

Answer:

Name: 23

Student #7

Estimate  
81

Draw a picture or use numbers to show your thinking:

yellow  
orange  
green  
purple

"I counted them all"

Answer:  
91

Name: 4

Student #8

Estimate  
81

Draw a picture or use numbers to show your thinking:

Answer:  
91

# Making Sense Series

the progression of addition AND subtraction  
the standard traditional algorithm

created by Graham Fletcher



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[www.gfletchy.com](http://www.gfletchy.com)

**3-Act Tasks**

**5 Practices**

**Progressions**

1 sheet for 4 people

Cut up all the numbers and symbols and create one equation. All the numbers and symbols must be used in the equation.

Nothing should be leftover except for the black square.

0	5	6	9
1	4	7	8
2	3	+	+
+	-	=	=
=	=	+	DO NOT USE DISCARD

**Using the digits 1-9 at most one time each,  
create 4 numbers that have a sum of 91.**

$$\square \square + \square + \square \square + \square \square + \square \square$$

**You can use the 9 & 1 from the cards**

**Kindergarten?**



 **4-orange**

 **2-red**

 **2-yellow**

 **2-white**

 **0-pink**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimate

3

S5

Draw a picture to show your thinking:

$$4 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 0 =$$

10

Use numbers to show your thinking:

Answer:

10

Estimate

6

51

Draw a picture to show your thinking:

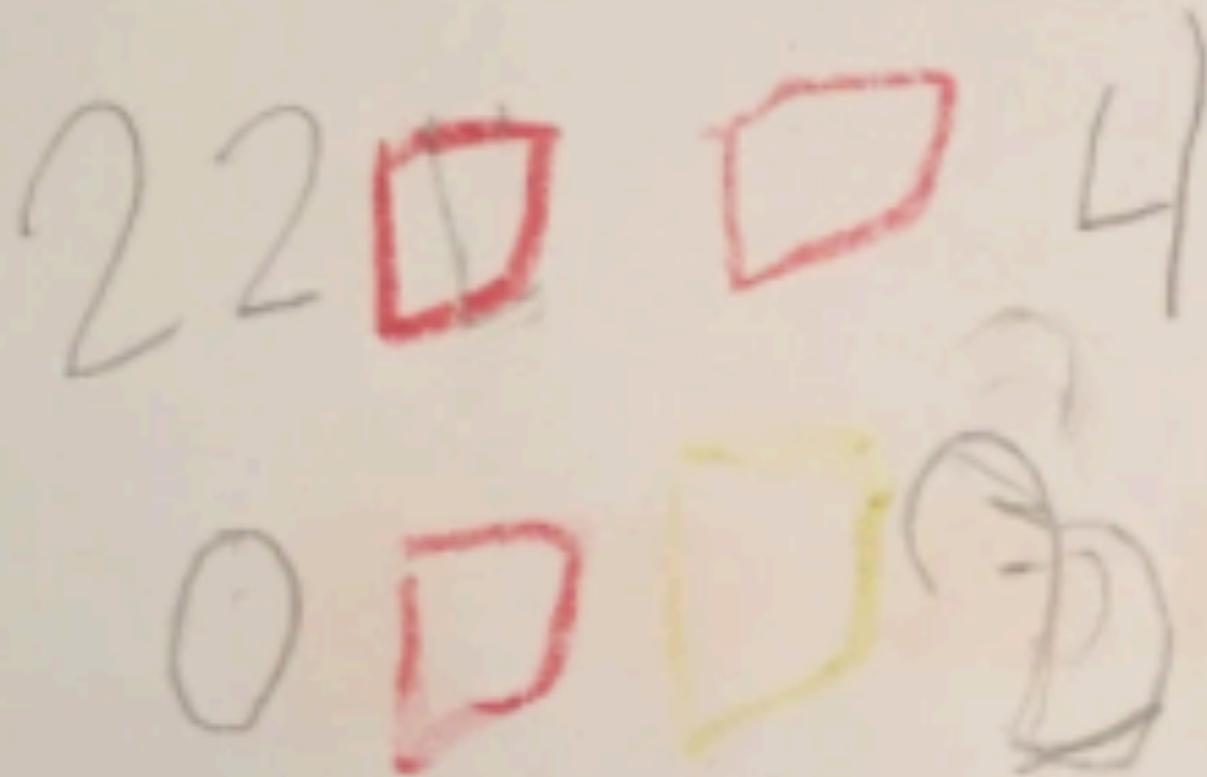


Estimate

1

86

Draw a picture to show your thinking:



Write

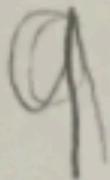
S3

Draw a picture to show your thinking



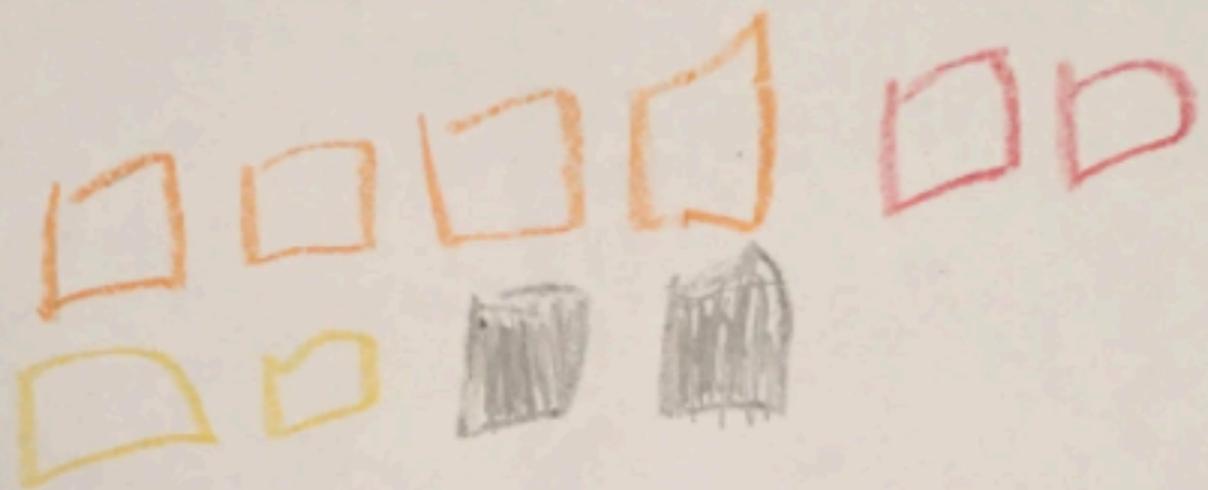
Use numbers to show your thinking

Estimate



S8

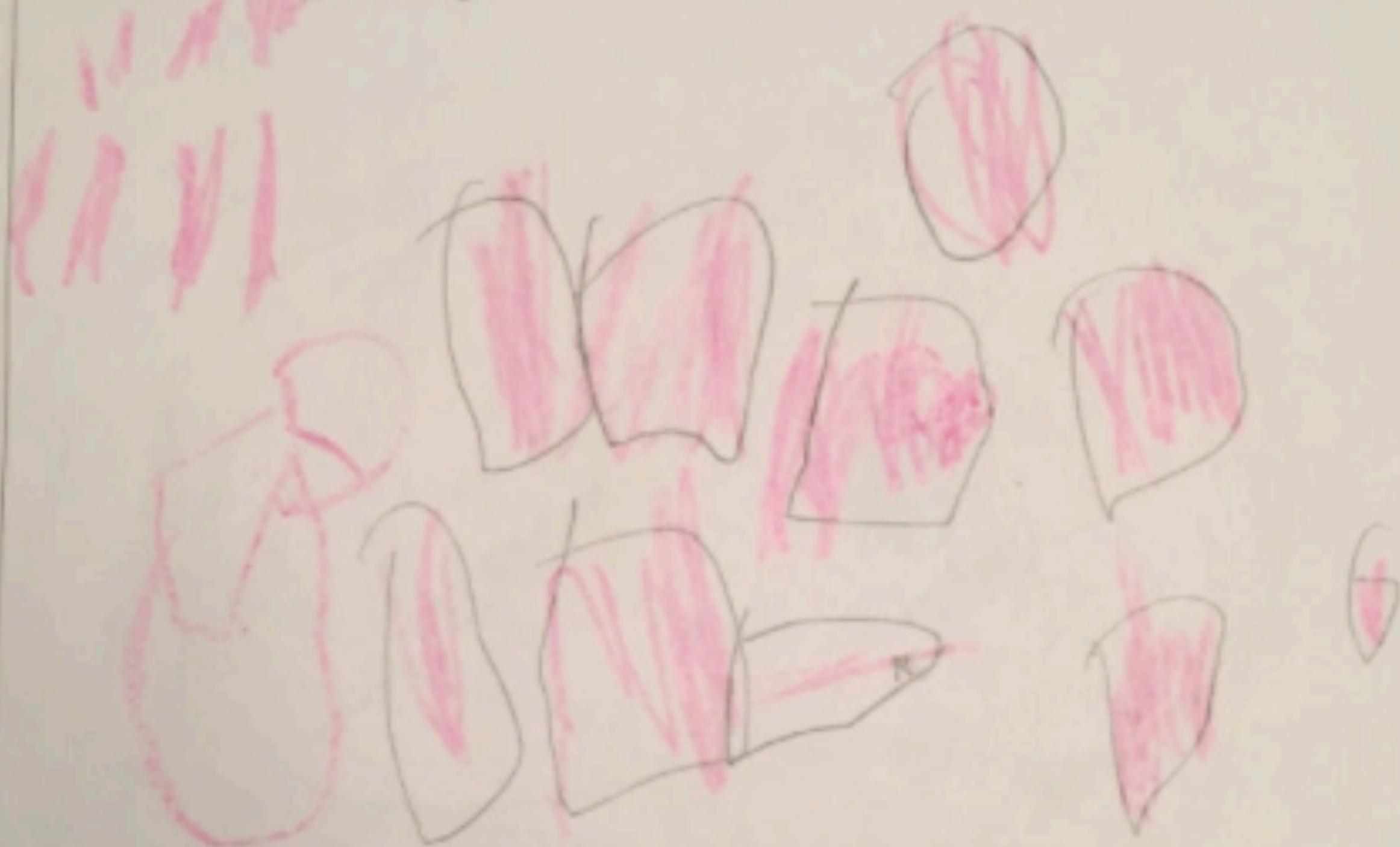
Draw a picture to show your thinking:



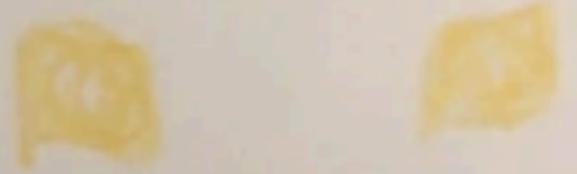
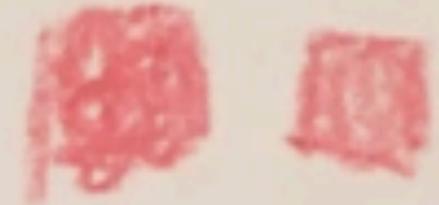
Use numbers to show your thinking:

1 2 3 4 2 6 7 8 9 10

Draw a picture to show your thinking:



Use numbers to show your thinking:



Use numbers to show your thinking:

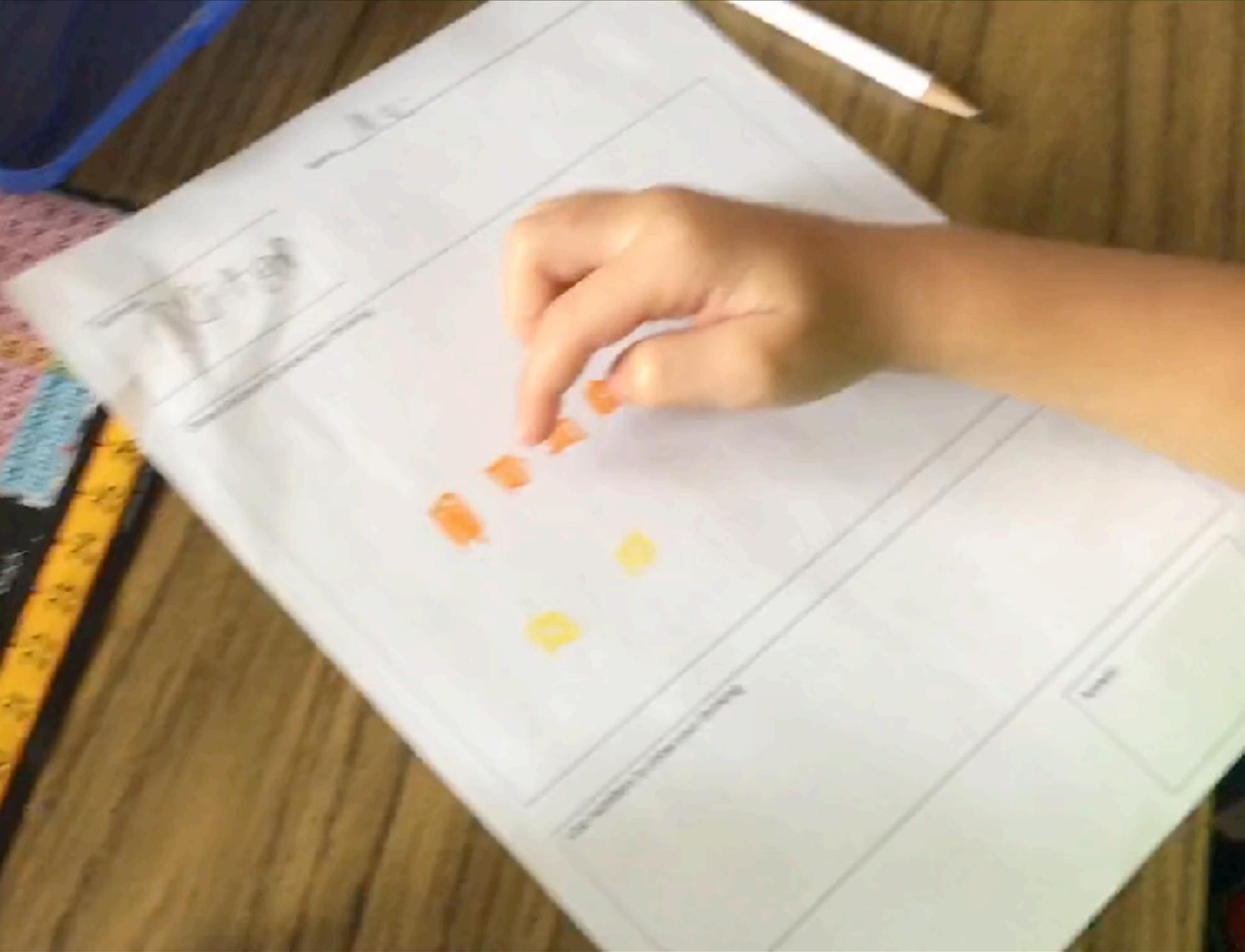
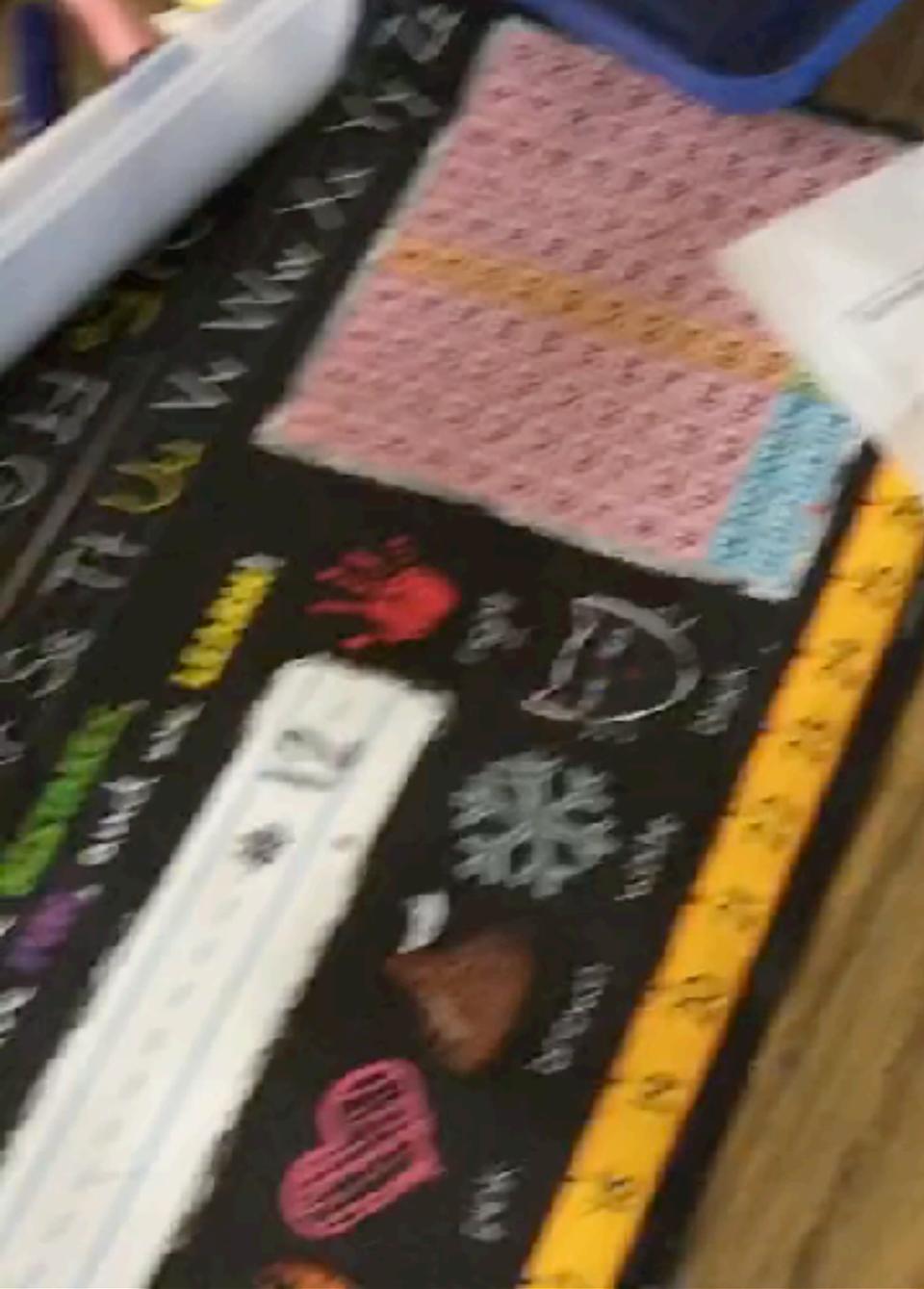
 **4-orange**

 **2-red**

 **2-yellow**

 **2-white**

 **0-pink**



# Number Sense Trajectory

Comparison

Counting

Hierarchical Inclusion

Subitizing

Cardinality

Number Conservation

1-to-1 Correspondence

# Number Sense Trajectory

Subitizing

Comparison

Rote Counting

1-to-1 Correspondence

Cardinality

Hierarchical Inclusion

Number Conservation

## Number Sense Trajectory –Putting It All Together

Trajectory	<b>Subitizing</b> Being able to visually recognize a quantity of 5 or less.	<b>Comparison</b> Being able to compare quantities by identifying which has more and which has less.	<b>Counting</b> Rote procedure of counting. The meaning attached to counting is developed through one-to-one correspondence.	<b>One-to-One Correspondence</b> Students can connect one number with one object and then count them with understanding.	<b>Cardinality</b> Tells how many things are in a set. When counting a set of objects, the last word in the counting sequence names the quantity for that set.	<b>Hierarchical Inclusion</b> Numbers are nested inside of each other and that the number grows by one each count. 9 is inside 10 or 10 is the same as $9 + 1$ .	<b>Number Conservation</b> The number of objects remains the same when they are rearranged spatially. 5 is 4&1 OR 3&2.
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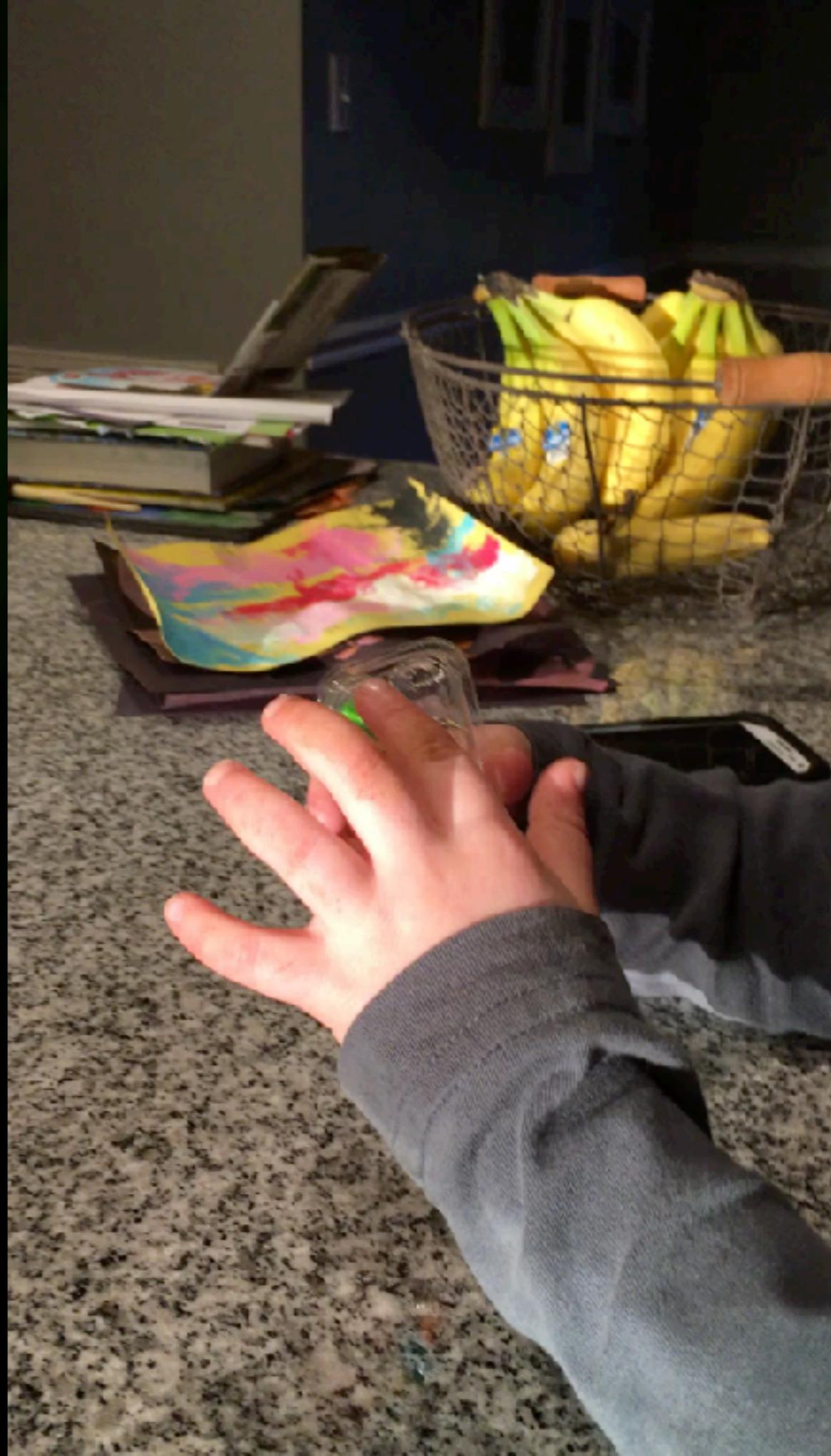
*Each concept builds on the previous idea and students should explore and construct concepts in such a sequence*

Number Relationships	<b>Spatial Relationship</b> <b>Patterned Set Recognition</b> Students can learn to recognize sets of objects in patterned arrangements and tell how many without counting.	<b>One and Two-More or Less</b> Students need to understand the relationship of number as it relates to $\pm$ one or two. Here students should begin to see that 5 is 1 more than 4 and that it is also 2 less than 7.	<b>Understanding Anchors</b> Students need to see the relationship between numbers and how they relate to 5s and 10s. 3 is 2 away from 5 and 7 away from 10.	<b>Part-Part-Whole Relationship</b> Students begin to conceptualize a number as being made up from two or more parts.
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**Perceptual**

**&**

**Conceptual**

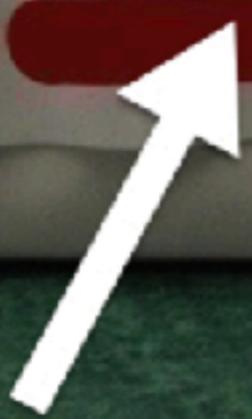




**MULTI-USE Paper**  
**Letter / 500 Sheets**

<b>92</b> 106 Euro Equivalent BRIGHTNESS	<b>145</b> Bright White WHITENESS	<b>20</b> Standard Weight WEIGHT (LB)
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Item  

# **Making Sense Series**

the progression of early number & counting

created by Graham Fletcher

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$$6 \times \frac{5}{8}$$

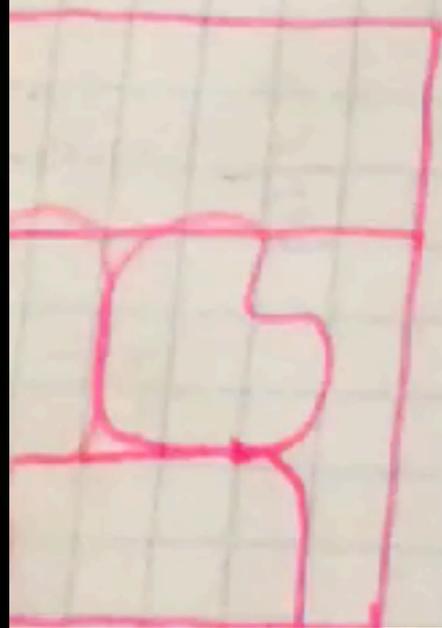
$$6 \times \frac{5}{8}$$

$$6 \text{ @ } \frac{10 + 3 + 5/8}{600 | 180}$$

$$6 \times 5/8 = 3 \frac{6}{8}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 10 + 3 + 5/8 \\ \hline 600 \mid 180 \end{array}$$

$$6 \times 5/8 = 3 \frac{6}{8}$$



$$6 \times \frac{5}{8}$$



8



How many orange wedges are in the bowl?



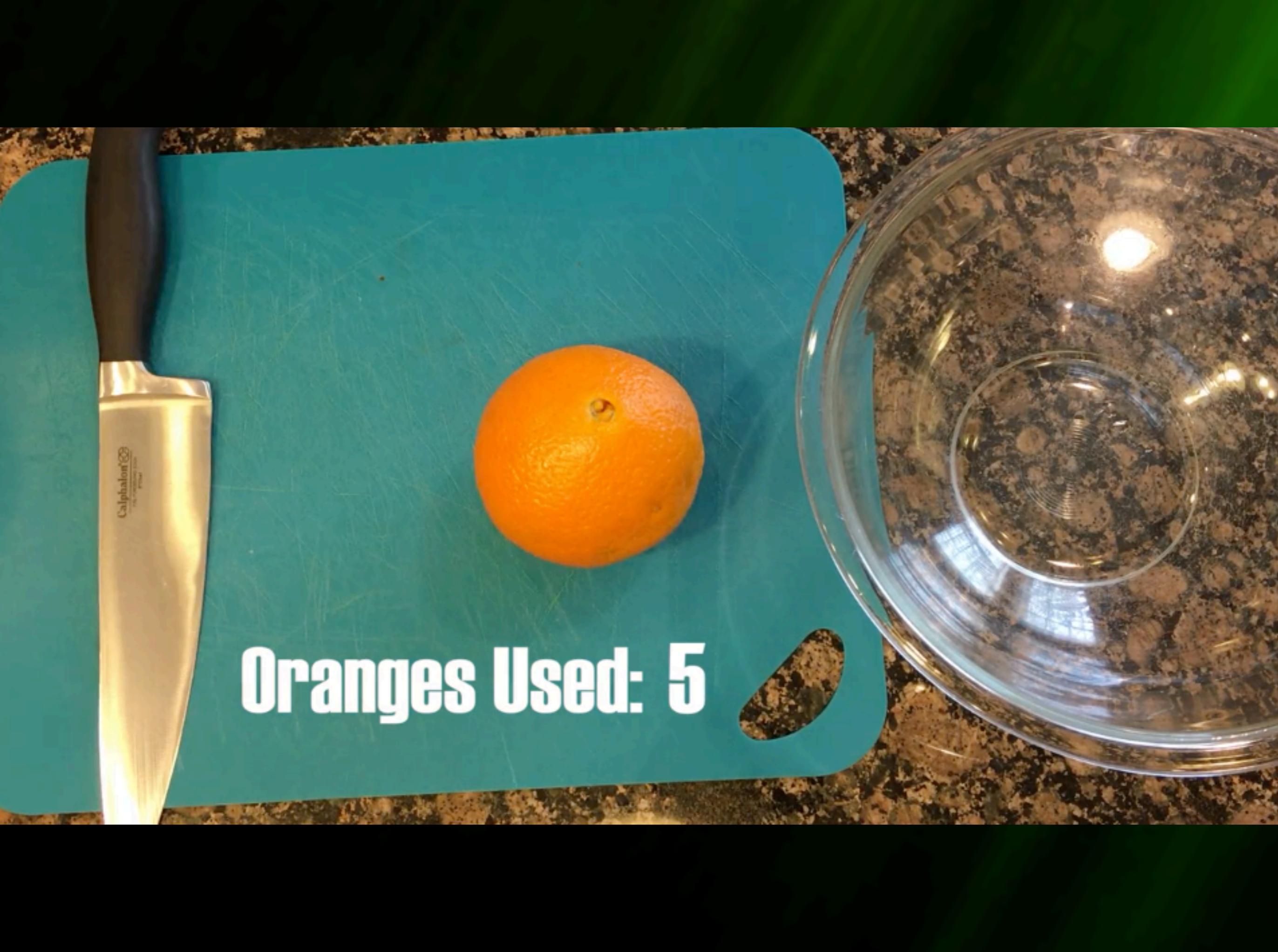
Estimate

**How many orange wedges are in the bowl?**

**What information do you need to know?**

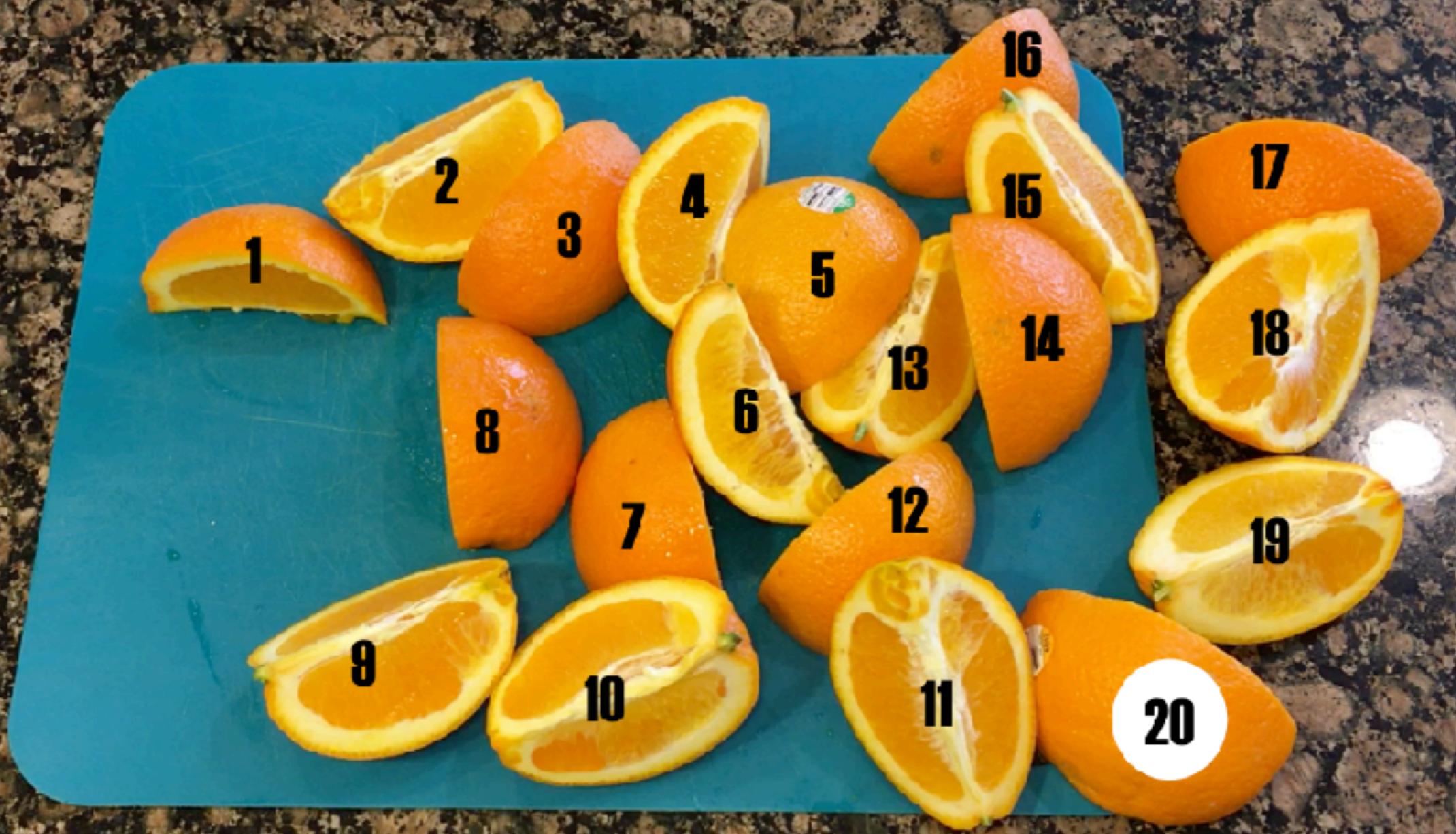


**Each orange wedges is a quarter.**

A kitchen scene featuring a teal cutting board on a granite countertop. A Calphalon knife with a black handle and a stainless steel blade is positioned on the left side of the board. In the center of the board sits a single, whole orange. To the right of the cutting board is a clear glass bowl. The background is a dark green wall.

**Oranges Used: 5**





1

2

3

4

5

16

15

17

18

14

13

8

6

7

12

19

9

10

11

20

**Graham had 5 oranges and cut them into quarters.**

**How many orange wedges did Graham have?**

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Task Planning Page

Learning Targets:		
Questions and Look-fors:		
Strategy	Who and What	Order
Notes:		

Anticipating → Monitoring → Selecting → Sequencing → Connecting

**5 oranges**

**Each wedge is a quarter**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **S1**

1. What did you notice?  
20

2. What do you wonder?  
Draw a picture to show your thinking:

$$\frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} = \frac{4}{4} = 1$$

$$\frac{4}{4} + \frac{8}{4} + \frac{12}{4} + \frac{16}{4} = \frac{20}{4}$$

$\frac{20}{4} = \text{wedges}$

3. Main Question  
Use numbers to show your thinking:

Answer: 5

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **S2**

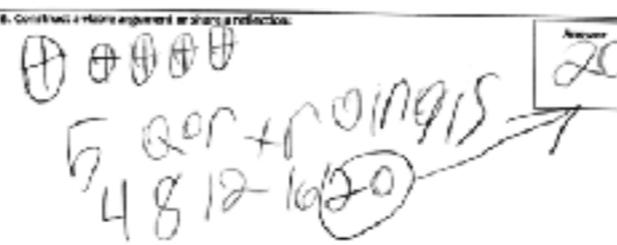
1. What did you notice?  
Owning's glass bowl

2. What do you wonder?  
how many wedges?

3. Main Question  
how many wedges?

4. Make an estimate.  


5. What information do you need?  
How big is the peisis

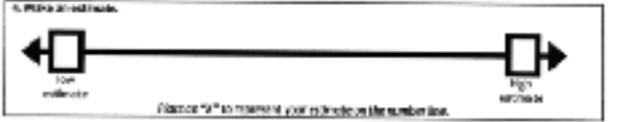
6. Construct a viable argument or share a reflection.  


Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **S3**

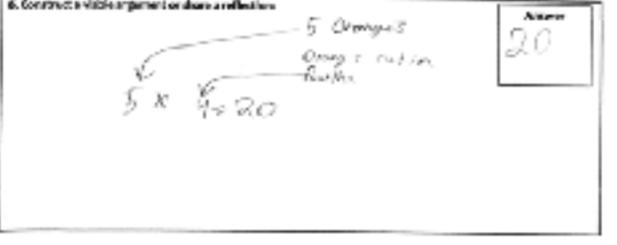
1. What did you notice?  
Bowl's oranges oranges wedges

2. What do you wonder?  
how many whole oranges?

3. Main Question  
how many wedges?

4. Make an estimate.  


5. What information do you need?  
size of the size of the wedges?

6. Construct a viable argument or share a reflection.  


Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **S4**

1. What did you notice?  
6

2. What do you wonder?  
Draw a picture to show your thinking:



3. Main Question  
Use numbers to show your thinking:

$$4 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 4 = 20$$

Answer: 20

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **S5**

1. What did you notice?  
Bowl Orange

2. What do you wonder?  
why?

3. Main question  
How many wedges

4. Make an estimate.  


5. What information do you need?

6. Construct a viable argument or share a reflection.  


Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **S6**

1. What did you notice?  
Oranges, wedges, bowl, counter, hands  
Two wedges outside the bowl

2. What do you wonder?  
How many wedges?

3. Main Question  
How many wedges?

4. Make an estimate.  


5. What information do you need?  
Size of wedges? Number of oranges?

6. Construct a viable argument or share a reflection.  

$$20 \div 4 = 5$$

Answer: 20

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **S1**

Answer: **20**

Draw a picture to show your thinking:

$$\frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} = \frac{4}{4} = 1$$

$$\frac{4}{4} + \frac{8}{4} + \frac{12}{4} + \frac{16}{4} = \frac{20}{4}$$

$\frac{20}{4} = \text{wedges}$

Use numbers to show your thinking:

Answer: **5**

## 2b-Skip Counting

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **S2**

1. What did you read?  
Owning's glass bowl

2. What do you wonder?  
how many wedges?

3. Main Question  
how many wedges?

4. Make an estimate.

Answer: **20**

5. What information do you need?  
How big is the peis is

6. Construct a viable argument or share a reflection.

⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕ ⊕  
5 per + 10 oranges  
4 8 12 16 20

## 2a-Skip Counting

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **S3**

1. What did you read?  
Boris' oranges, oranges wedges

2. What do you wonder?  
how many whole oranges?

3. Main Question  
how many wedges?

4. Make an estimate.

5. What information do you need?  
size of the size of the wedges?

6. Construct a viable argument or share a reflection.

5 Oranges  
Orange cut in  
halves  
 $5 \times 4 = 20$

Answer: **20**

## 3a-Multiplicative

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **S4**

Answer: **6**

Draw a picture to show your thinking:

Use numbers to show your thinking:

$$4 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 4 = 20$$

Answer: **5**

## 1b-Counting Up

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **S5**

1. What did you read?  
Boris' Orange

2. What do you wonder?  
why?

3. Main question  
How many wedges

4. Make an estimate.

5. What information do you need?

6. Construct a viable argument or share a reflection.

Answer: **20**

## 1-Counting Up

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ **S6**

1. What did you read?  
Oranges, wedges, bowl, counter, hands  
Two wedges outside the bowl

2. What do you wonder?  
How many wedges?

3. Main Question  
How many wedges?

4. Make an estimate.

5. What information do you need?  
Size of wedges? Number of oranges?

6. Construct a viable argument or share a reflection.

$20 \div 4 = 5$

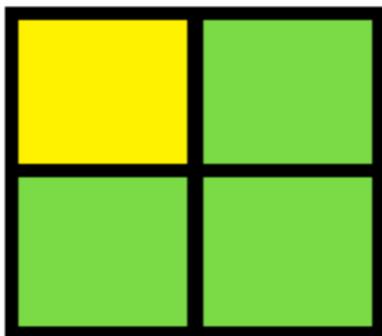
Answer: **20**

## 3b-Multiplicative

# Unit Fractions

# Representation of a Fraction

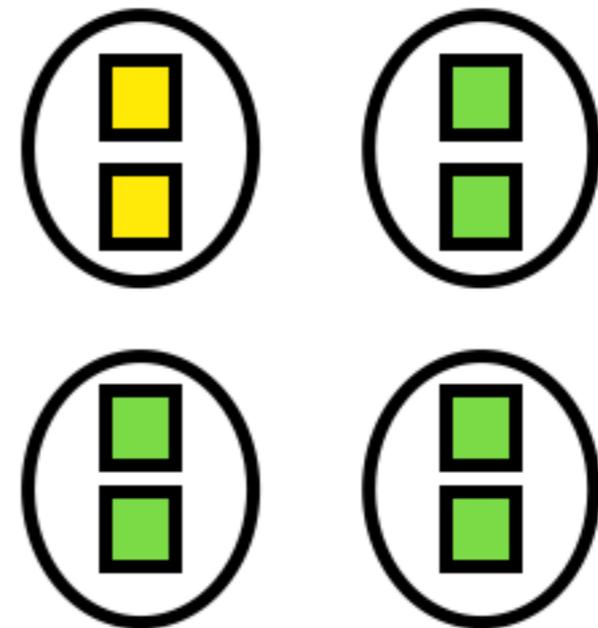
Area



Length



Set



unit fraction  $\frac{1}{a}$

**Say this fraction**

$$\frac{3}{4}$$

**Say this fraction**

$$\frac{3}{4}$$

**three one-fourths**

$$3 = 1 + 1 + 1$$

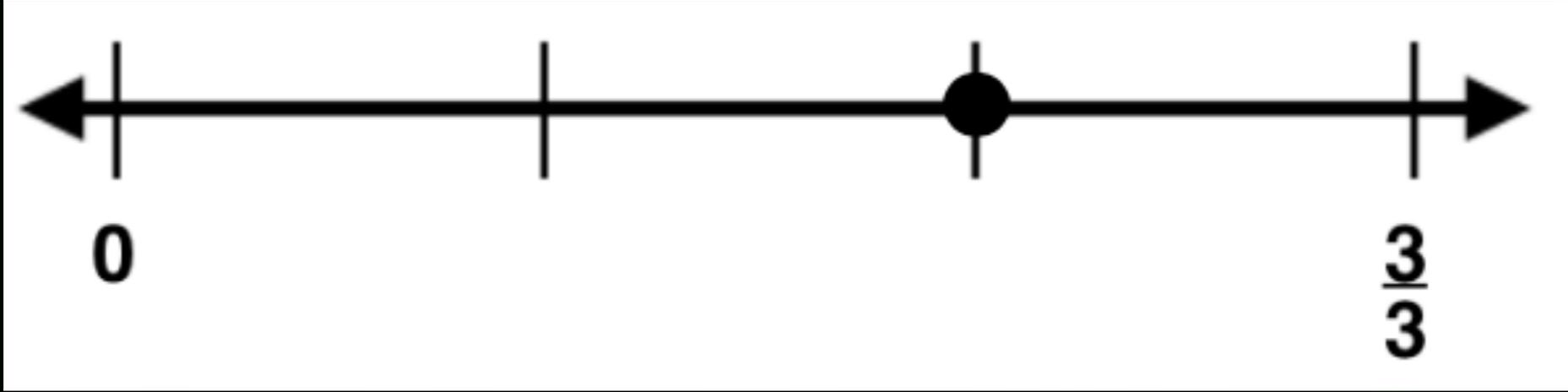
$$3 = 1 + 1 + 1$$

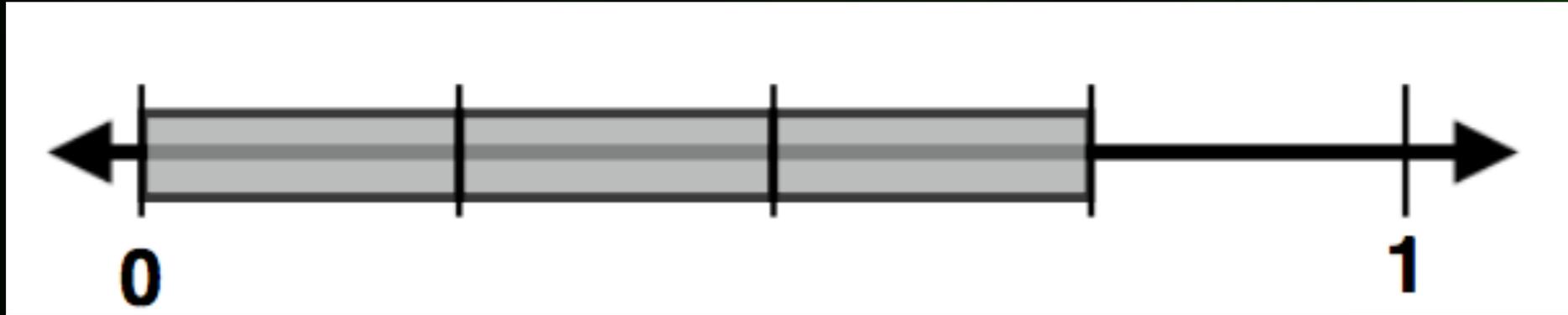
$$\frac{3}{4} = \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{4}$$

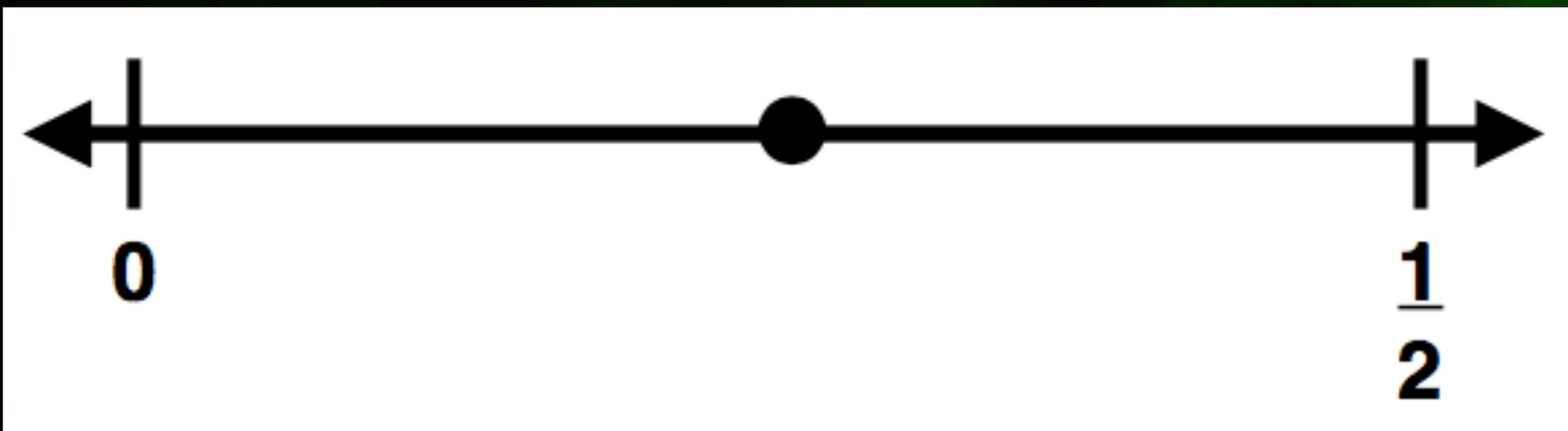


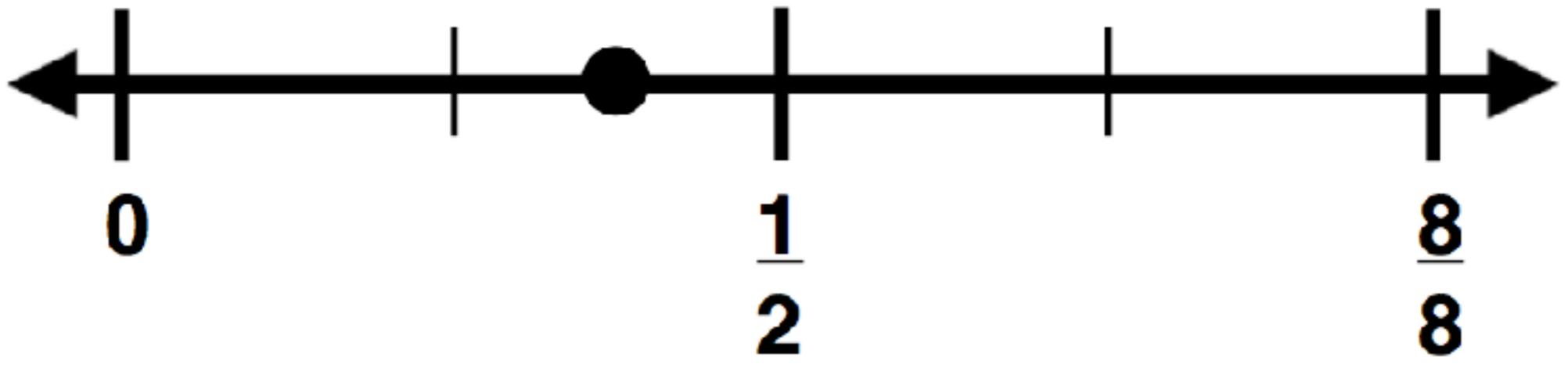






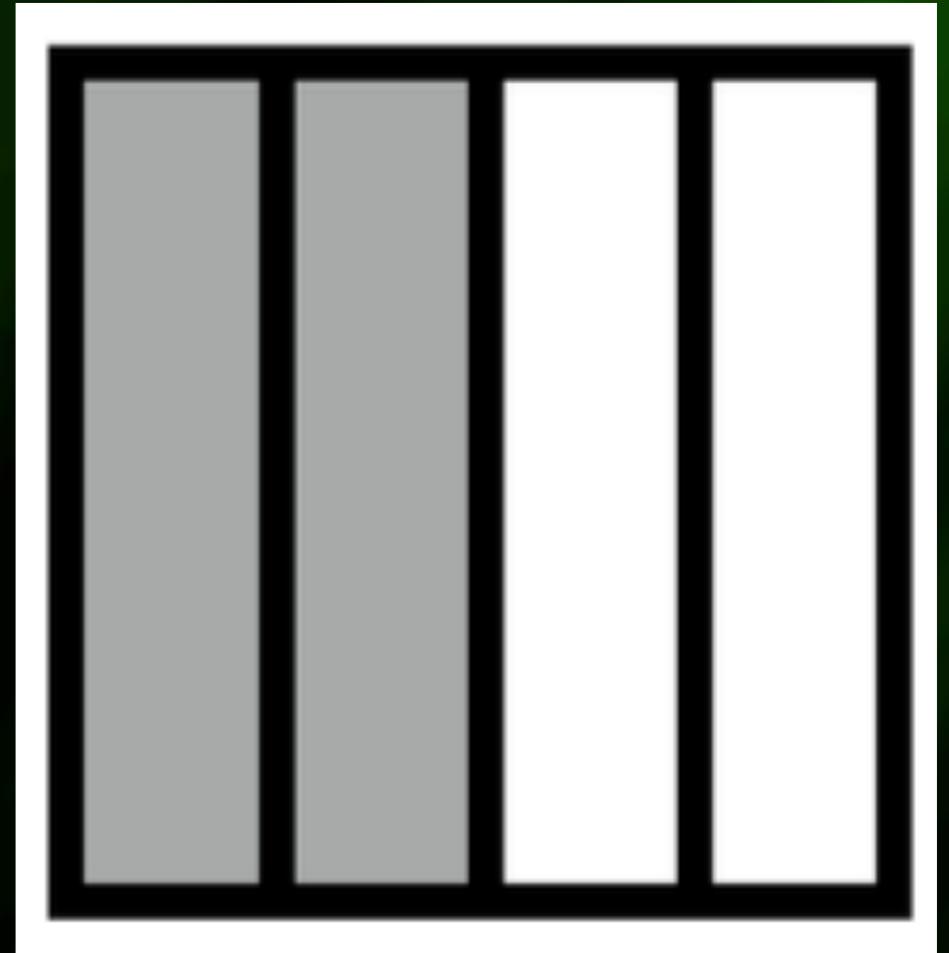




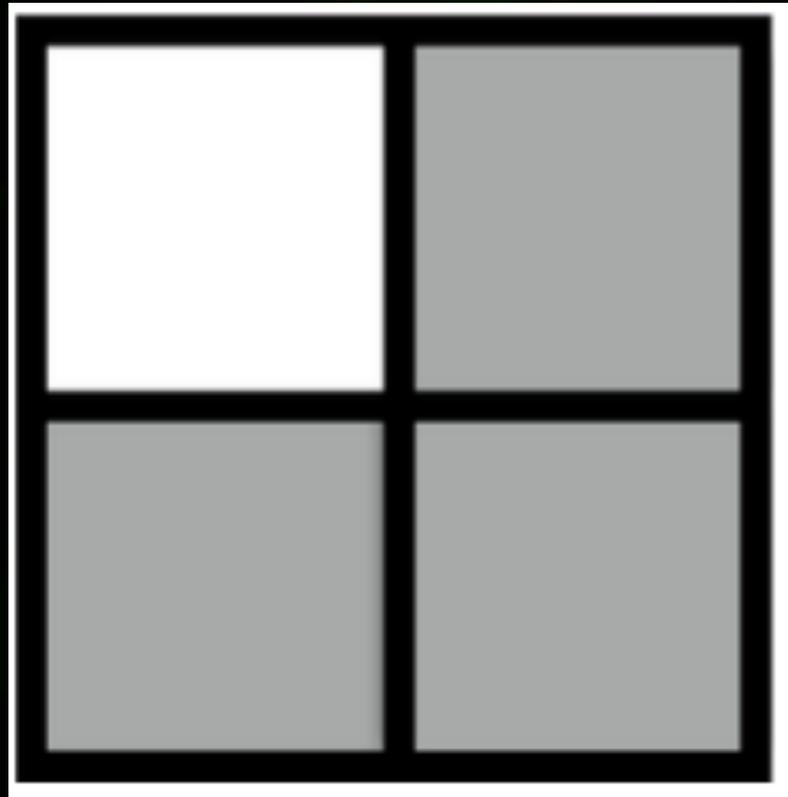




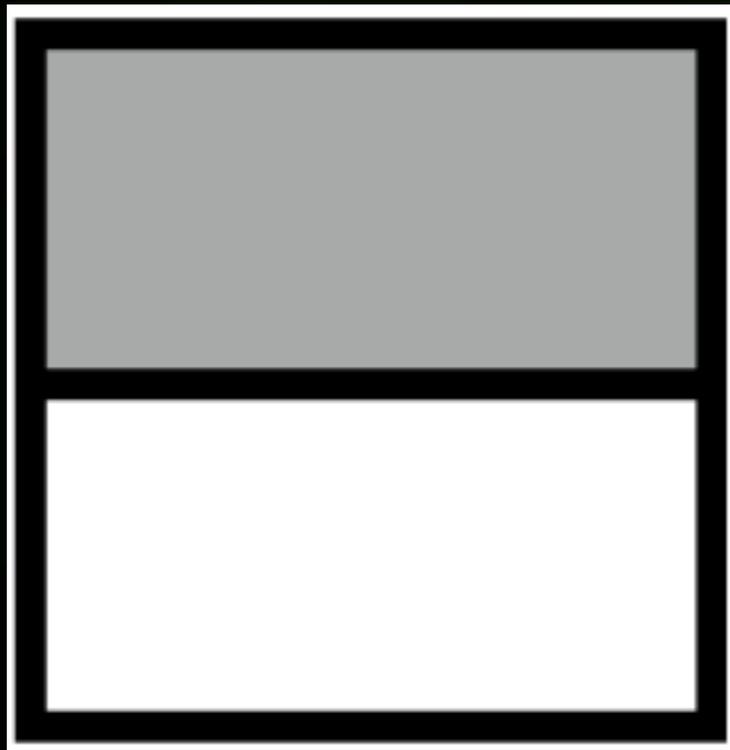
What's the Sum?

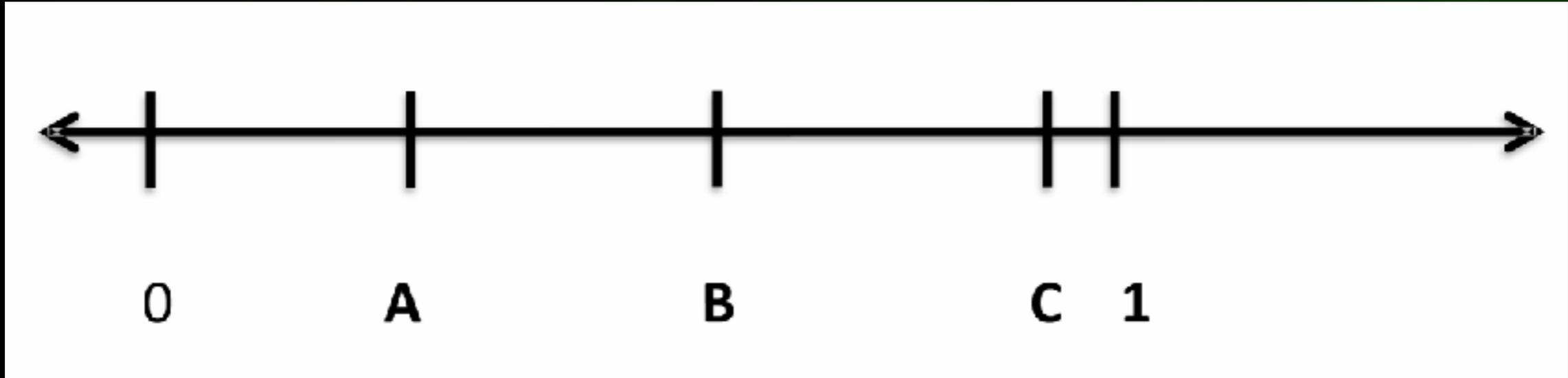


# What's the Sum?



# What's the Sum?

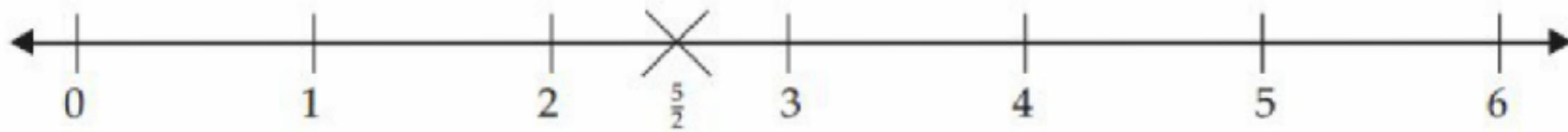






## Dotty Pairs Game

The students play in pairs. One student takes dots, the other takes crosses. Place the cards (cards 1–6, two lots, see Material Master 4-1) face down in a pile. The players take turns turning over two cards. The numbers are used to form a fraction, e.g., 2 and 5 are turned over, so  $\frac{5}{2}$  or  $\frac{2}{5}$  can be made. One fraction is chosen, made with the fraction pieces, if necessary, and marked on a 0–6 number line with the player's identifying mark (dot or cross).



Players take turns. The aim of the game is to get three of their marks uninterrupted by their opponent's marks on the number line. If a player chooses a fraction that is equivalent to a mark that is already there, they miss that turn.

NB: A fraction such as  $\frac{4}{1}$  can be made using the cards. Students may not be familiar with fractions in this form and the meaning of the numerator and denominator will need to be explored with the fraction circles.

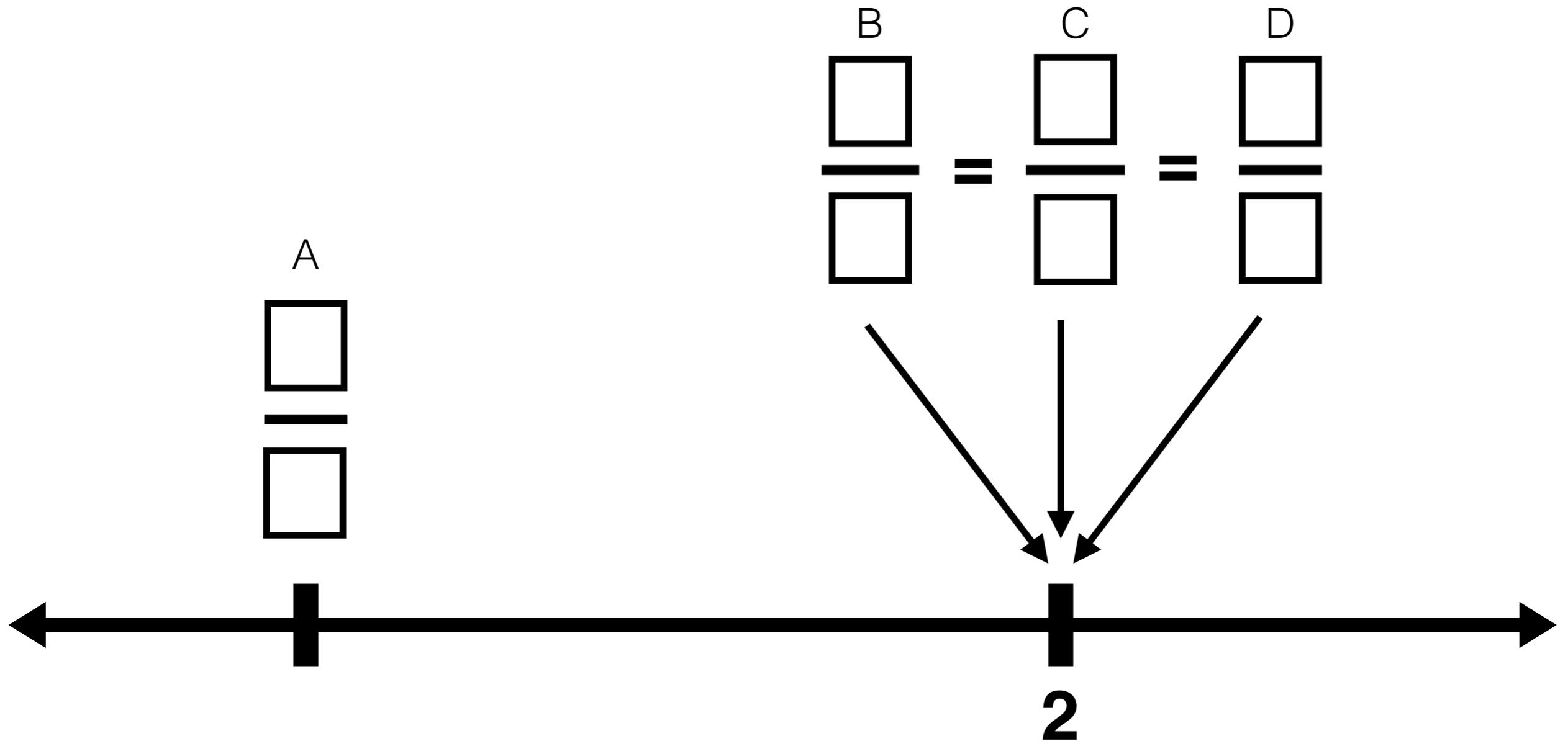


**random dice roller**

**Open Middle**

# Open Middle

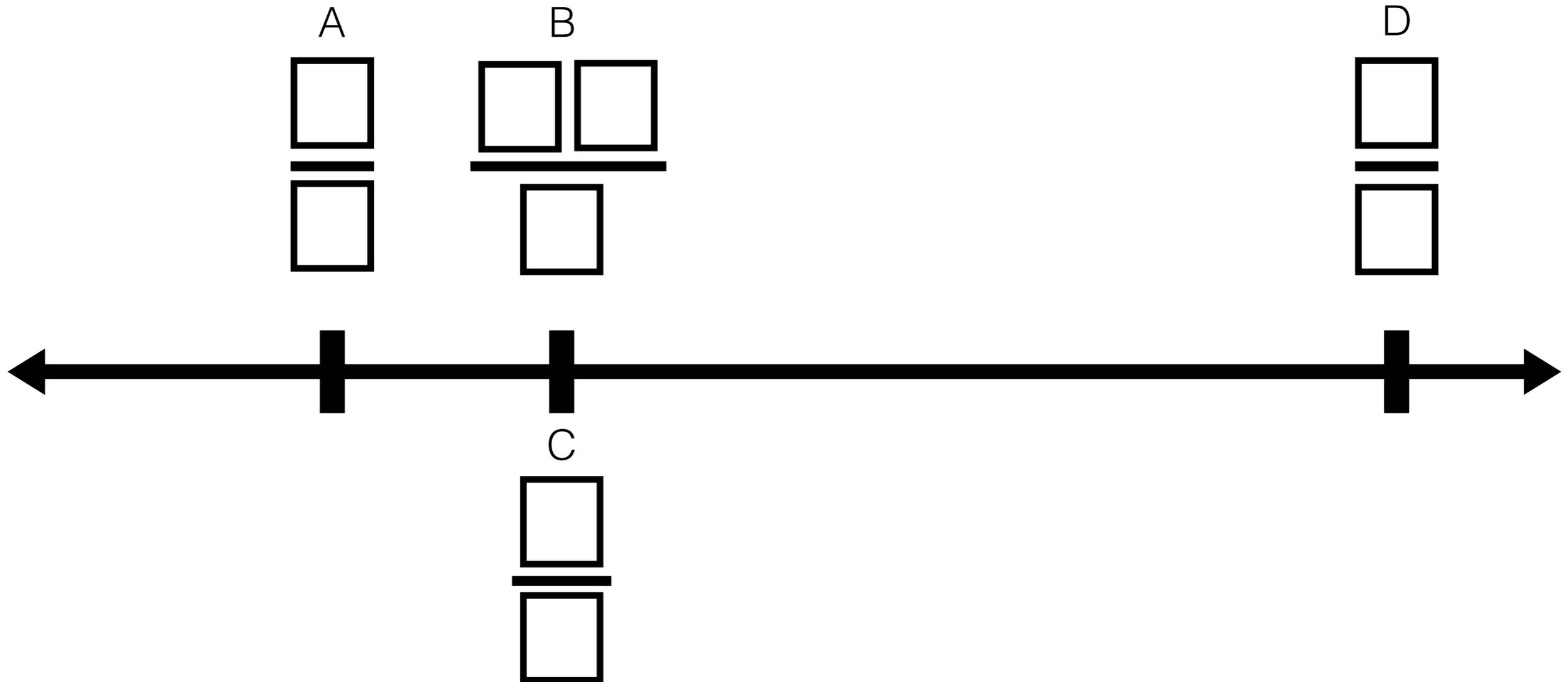
**Directions:** Using the whole numbers 1-9 no more than one time each, create and place 4 fractions on the number line in the correct order. A is less than 2. Fractions B, C, and D equal 2.



# Open Middle

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.4.NF.A.2

**Directions:** Using the whole numbers 1-9 once each, create and place 4 fractions *greater than 1* on the number line in the correct order. (*fractions B & C are equal*)



$$\frac{1}{20}$$

$$\frac{20}{25}$$

$$\frac{2}{3}$$

$$\frac{5}{4}$$

# Equivalent Fractions

# Equal Fraction

$$\frac{2}{3} = \frac{\blacksquare}{\blacksquare}$$

$$\frac{3}{4} = \frac{\blacksquare}{\blacksquare}$$

$$\frac{2}{6} = \frac{\blacksquare}{\blacksquare}$$

# Equal Fraction

$$\frac{2}{3} = \frac{5}{6} \quad \frac{3}{4} = \frac{7}{8}$$

$$\frac{2}{6} = \frac{5}{9}$$

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. Draw a rectangular fraction model to find the sum. Simplify your answer, if possible.

a.  $\frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{3} =$

b.  $\frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{5} =$

*It is possible to over-emphasize the importance of simplifying fractions in this way. There is no mathematical reason why fractions must be written in simplified form, although it may be convenient to do so in some cases.*

**What about “the test”?**

$\frac{3}{6} + \frac{1}{6}$  is equal to which of the following?

a.  $\frac{4}{12}$

b.  $\frac{8}{12}$

c.  $\frac{3}{6}$

d. None of the above



**Simplifying**

**Equivalence**



# Comparing Fractions



**Which girl ate more apple?**



**Slices: 10**

**Slices: 7**



**twelfths**

**Pause**

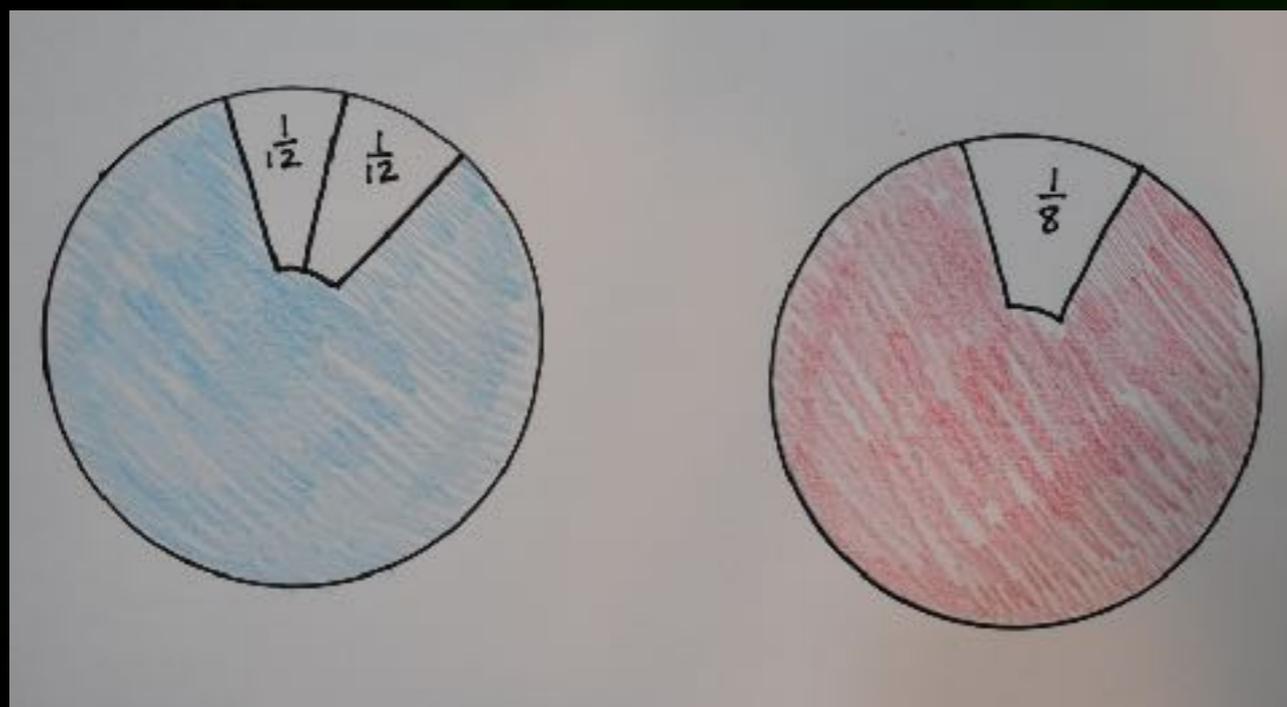
**||**



**eighths**

# Apple Eat Off

## Act-3



Big sister ate  $\frac{5}{8}$  of an apple and

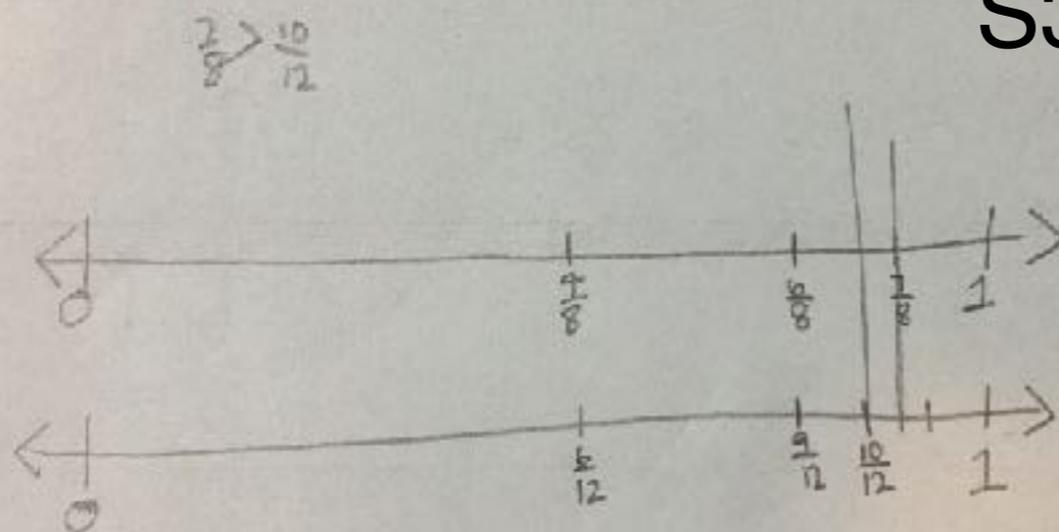
little sister ate  $\frac{10}{12}$

$\frac{7}{8}$  of an apple. Which sister ate

more apple?

6. Construct a viable argument or share a reflection:

S3



6. Construct a viable argument or share a reflection:

S4

$$\frac{10}{12} \times 2 = \frac{20}{24}$$
$$\frac{7}{8} \times 3 = \frac{21}{24}$$
$$\frac{20}{24} < \frac{21}{24}$$
$$\frac{10}{12} < \frac{7}{8}$$

6. Construct a viable argument or share a reflection:

S1

$\frac{7}{8}$        $\frac{10}{12}$        $\frac{1}{8}$  is a smaller piece left over

$\frac{1}{8}$        $\frac{2}{12} = \frac{1}{6}$        $\frac{7}{8} > \frac{10}{12}$

**It Takes 3 to Prove it to Me**

$$\frac{1}{4}$$

$$\frac{3}{4}$$

Common Denominator



Unit Fraction Understanding

$$\frac{5}{6}$$

$$\frac{3}{4}$$

Missing Parts

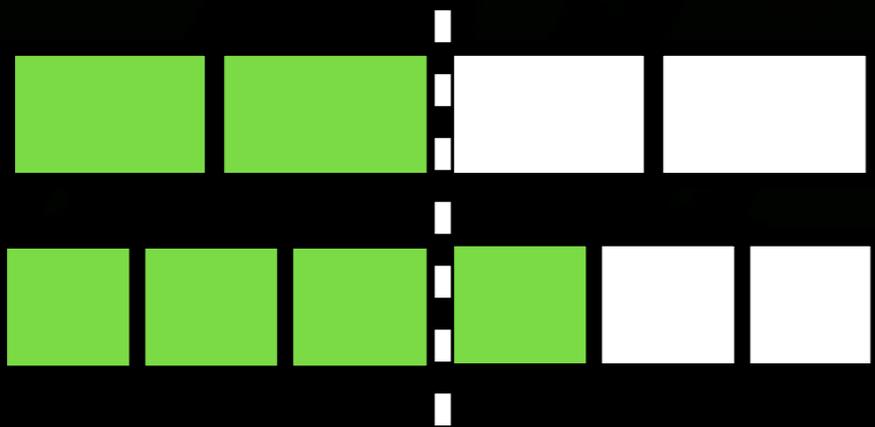


Unit Fraction Understanding

$$\frac{2}{4}$$

$$\frac{4}{6}$$

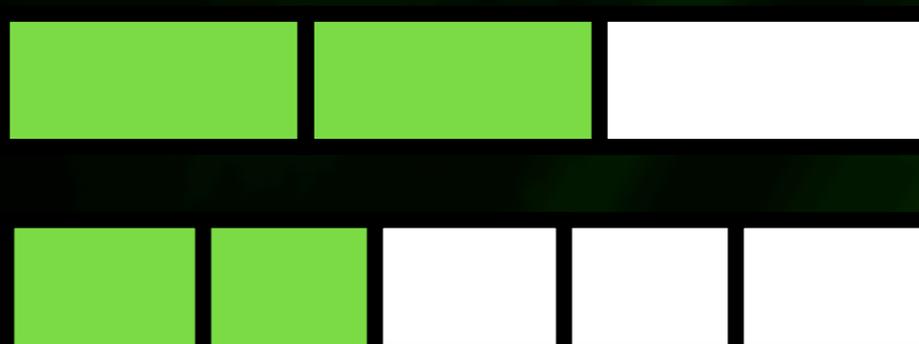
Benchmark



$$\frac{2}{3}$$

$$\frac{2}{5}$$

Common Numerator



Unit Fraction Understanding

$$\frac{8}{11}$$

$$\frac{4}{7}$$

$$\frac{8}{11}$$

$$\frac{8}{14}$$

# Comparing Fractions

## CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.3.NF.A.3.D

Compare two fractions with the same numerator or the same denominator by reasoning about their size. Recognize that comparisons are valid only when the two fractions refer to the same whole. Record the results of comparisons with the symbols  $>$ ,  $=$ , or  $<$ , and justify the conclusions, e.g., by using a visual fraction model.

## CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.4.NF.A.2

Compare two fractions with different numerators and different denominators, e.g., by creating common denominators or numerators, or by comparing to a benchmark fraction such as  $\frac{1}{2}$ . Recognize that comparisons are valid only when the two fractions refer to the same whole. Record the results of comparisons with symbols  $>$ ,  $=$ , or  $<$ , and justify the conclusions, e.g., by using a visual fraction model.

# Making Sense Series

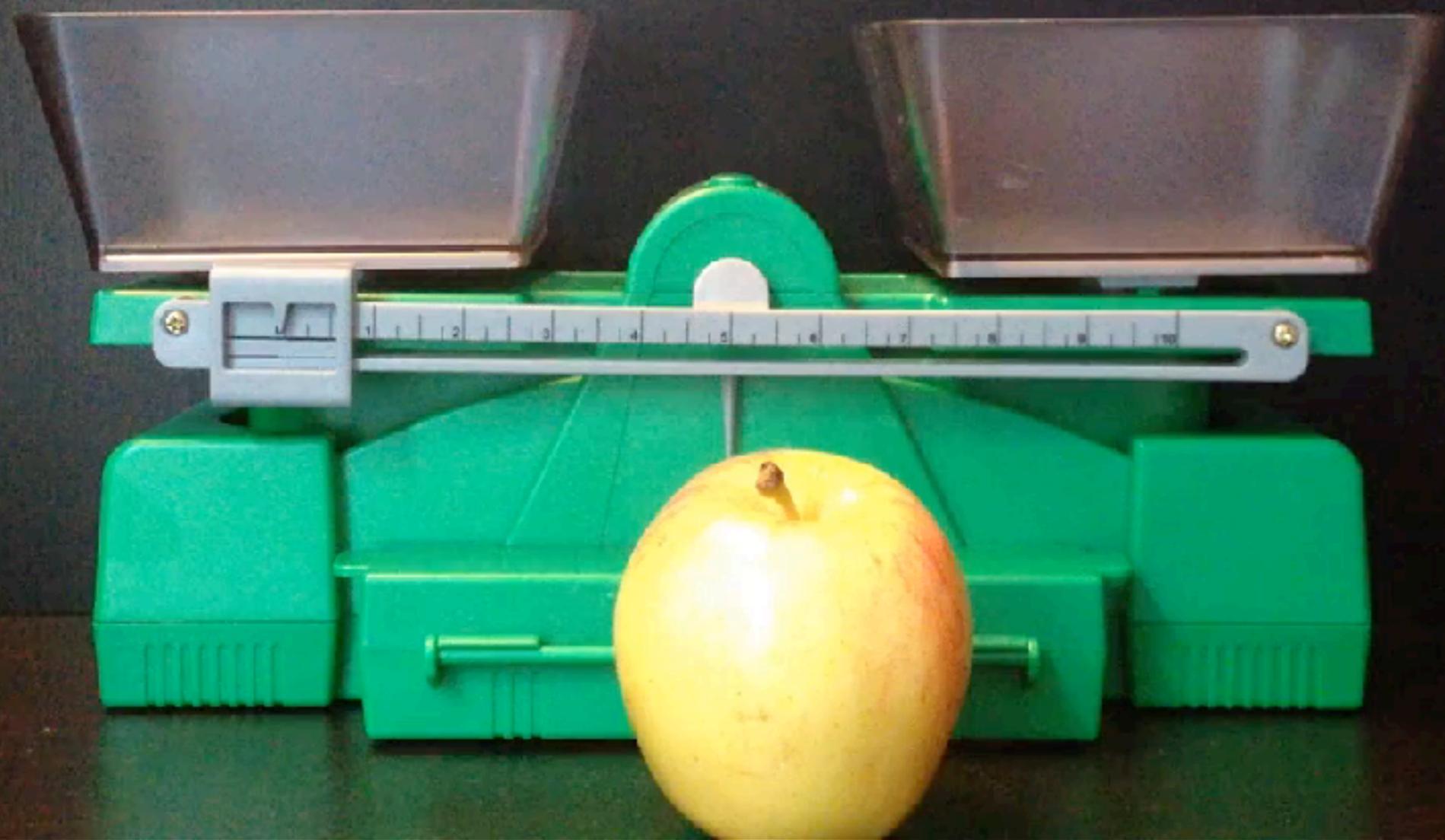
The Progression of Fractions  
Meaning, Equivalence, & Comparison

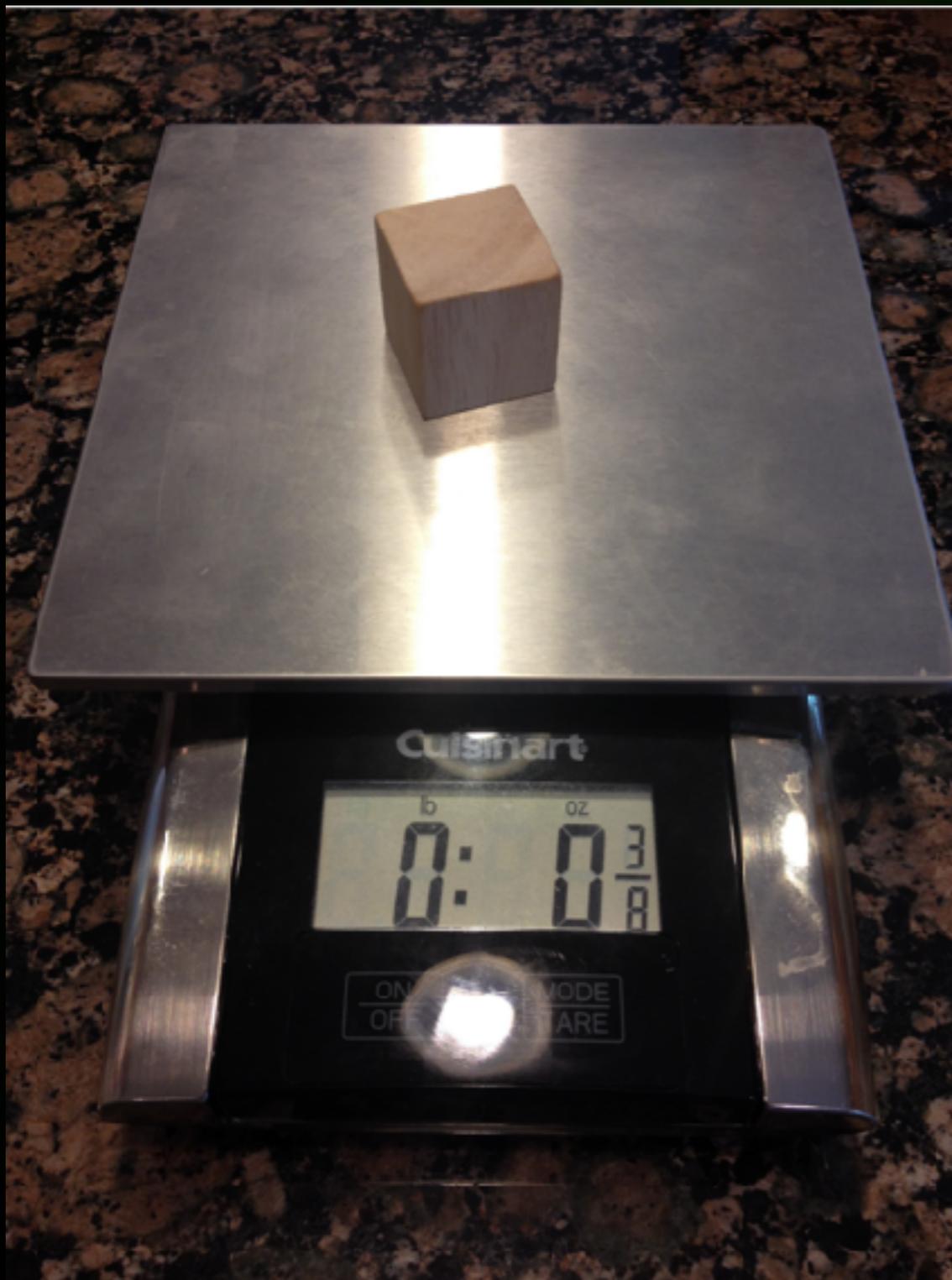
created by Graham Fletcher

 @gfletchy

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# A Task







0:00 / 0:14



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