Progressions for the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics (draft)*

12 August 2011

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[0]This document can be read with Preview on a Mac or with the latest version of Adobe Acrobat on a Mac or PC. It does not work with earlier versions of Acrobat.

3–5 Number and Operations—Fractions

Overview

Overview to be written.

Note. Changes such as including relevant equations or replacing with tape diagrams or fraction strips are planned for some diagrams. Some readers may find it helpful to create their own equations or representations.

Grade 3

The meaning of fractions In Grades 1 and 2, students use fraction language to describe partitions of shapes into equal shares.[2.G.3] In Grade 3 they start to develop the idea of a fraction more formally, building on the idea of partitioning a whole into equal parts. The whole can be a shape such as a circle or rectangle, a line segment, or any one finite entity susceptible to subdivision and measurement. In Grade 4, this is extended to include wholes that are collections of objects.

[2.G.3] Partition circles and rectangles into two, three, or four equal shares, describe the shares using the words *halves*, *thirds*, *half of*, *a third of*, etc., and describe the whole as two halves, three thirds, four fourths. Recognize that equal shares of identical wholes need not have the same shape.

Grade 3 students start with unit fractions (fractions with numerator 1), which are formed by partitioning a whole into equal parts and taking one part, e.g., if a whole is partitioned into 4 equal parts then each part is $\frac{1}{4}$ of the whole, and 4 copies of that part make the whole. Next, students build fractions from unit fractions, seeing the numerator 3 of $\frac{3}{4}$ as saying that $\frac{3}{4}$ is the quantity you get by putting 3 of the $\frac{1}{4}$'s together.[3.NF.1] They read any fraction this way, and in particular there is no need to introduce "proper fractions" and "improper fractions" initially; $\frac{5}{3}$ is the quantity you get by combining 5 parts together when the whole is divided into 3 equal parts.

[3.NF.1] Understand a fraction $1/b$ as the quantity formed by 1 part when a whole is partitioned into b equal parts; understand a fraction a/b as the quantity formed by a parts of size $1/b$.

The importance of specifying the whole

Without specifying the whole it is not reasonable to ask what fraction is represented by the shaded area. If the left square is the whole, the shaded area represents the fraction $\frac{3}{2}$; if the entire rectangle is the whole, the shaded area represents $\frac{3}{4}$.

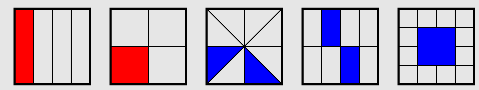
Two important aspects of fractions provide opportunities for the mathematical practice of attending to precision (MP6):

- Specifying the whole.
- Explaining what is meant by "equal parts."

Initially, students can use an intuitive notion of congruence ("same size and same shape") to explain why the parts are equal, e.g., when they divide a square into four equal squares or four equal rectangles.

Students come to understand a more precise meaning for "equal parts" as "parts with equal measurements." For example, when a ruler is partitioned into halves or quarters of an inch, they see that each subdivision has the same length. In area models they reason about the area of a shaded region to decide what fraction of the whole it represents (MP3).

Area representations of $\frac{1}{4}$

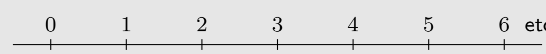


In each representation the square is the whole. The two squares on the left are divided into four parts that have the same size and shape, and so the same area. In the three squares on the right, the shaded area is $\frac{1}{4}$ of the whole area, even though it is not easily seen as one part in a division of the square into four parts of the same shape and size.

The goal is for students to see unit fractions as the basic building blocks of fractions, in the same sense that the number 1 is the basic building block of the whole numbers; just as every whole number is obtained by combining a sufficient number of 1s, every fraction is obtained by combining a sufficient number of unit fractions.

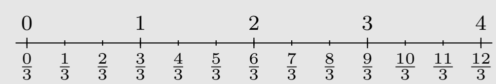
The number line and number line diagrams On the number line, the whole is the *unit interval*, that is, the interval from 0 to 1, measured by length. Iterating this whole to the right marks off the whole numbers, so that the intervals between consecutive whole numbers, from 0 to 1, 1 to 2, 2 to 3, etc., are all of the same length, as shown. Students might think of the number line as an infinite ruler.

The number line



To construct a unit fraction on a number line diagram, e.g. $\frac{1}{3}$, students partition the unit interval into 3 intervals of equal length and recognize that each has length $\frac{1}{3}$. They locate the number $\frac{1}{3}$ on the number line by marking off this length from 0, and locate other fractions with denominator 3 by marking off the number of lengths indicated by the numerator.[3.NF.2]

The number line marked off in thirds



3.NF.2 Understand a fraction as a number on the number line; represent fractions on a number line diagram.

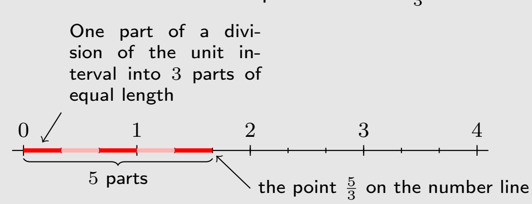
a Represent a fraction $1/b$ on a number line diagram by defining the interval from 0 to 1 as the whole and partitioning it into b equal parts. Recognize that each part has size $1/b$ and that the endpoint of the part based at 0 locates the number $1/b$ on the number line.

b Represent a fraction a/b on a number line diagram by marking off a lengths $1/b$ from 0. Recognize that the resulting interval has size a/b and that its endpoint locates the number a/b on the number line.

Students sometimes have difficulty perceiving the unit on a number line diagram. When locating a fraction on a number line diagram, they might use as the unit the entire portion of the number line that is shown on the diagram, for example indicating the number 3 when asked to show $\frac{3}{4}$ on a number line diagram marked from 0 to 4. Although number line diagrams are important representations for students as they develop an understanding of a fraction as a number, in the early stages of the NF Progression they use other representations such as area models, tape diagrams, and strips of paper. These, like number line diagrams, can be subdivided, representing an important aspect of fractions.

The number line reinforces the analogy between fractions and whole numbers. Just as 5 is the point on the number line reached by marking off 5 times the length of the unit interval from 0, so $\frac{5}{3}$ is the point obtained in the same way using a different interval as the basic unit of length, namely the interval from 0 to $\frac{1}{3}$.

Number line representation of $\frac{5}{3}$



Equivalent fractions Grade 3 students do some preliminary reasoning about equivalent fractions, in preparation for work in Grade 4. As students experiment on number line diagrams they discover that many fractions label the same point on the number line, and are therefore equal; that is, they are *equivalent fractions*. For example, the fraction $\frac{1}{2}$ is equal to $\frac{2}{4}$ and also to $\frac{3}{6}$. Students can also use fraction strips to see fraction equivalence.[3.NF.3ab]

In particular, students in Grade 3 see whole numbers as fractions, recognizing, for example, that the point on the number line designated by 2 is now also designated by $\frac{2}{1}$, $\frac{4}{2}$, $\frac{6}{3}$, $\frac{8}{4}$, etc. so that[3.NF.3c]

$$2 = \frac{2}{1} = \frac{4}{2} = \frac{6}{3} = \frac{8}{4} = \cdots .$$

Of particular importance are the ways of writing 1 as a fraction:

$$1 = \frac{2}{2} = \frac{3}{3} = \frac{4}{4} = \frac{5}{5} = \cdots .$$

Comparing fractions Previously, in Grade 2, students compared lengths using a standard measurement unit.[2.MD.3] In Grade 3 they build on this idea to compare fractions with the same denominator. They see that for fractions that have the same denominator, the underlying unit fractions are the same size, so the fraction with the greater numerator is greater because it is made of more unit fractions. For example, segment from 0 to $\frac{3}{4}$ is shorter than the segment from 0 to $\frac{5}{4}$ because it measures 3 units of $\frac{1}{4}$ as opposed to 5 units of $\frac{1}{4}$. Therefore $\frac{3}{4} < \frac{5}{4}$.[3.NF.3d]

Students also see that for unit fractions, the one with the larger denominator is smaller, by reasoning, for example, that in order for more (identical) pieces to make the same whole, the pieces must be smaller. From this they reason that for fractions that have the same numerator, the fraction with the smaller denominator is greater. For example, $\frac{2}{5} > \frac{2}{7}$, because $\frac{1}{7} < \frac{1}{5}$, so 2 lengths of $\frac{1}{7}$ is less than 2 lengths of $\frac{1}{5}$.

As with equivalence of fractions, it is important in comparing fractions to make sure that each fraction refers to the same whole.

As students move towards thinking of fractions as points on the number line, they develop an understanding of order in terms of position. Given two fractions—thus two points on the number line—the one to the left is said to be smaller and the one to right is said to be larger. This understanding of order as position will become important in Grade 6 when students start working with negative numbers.

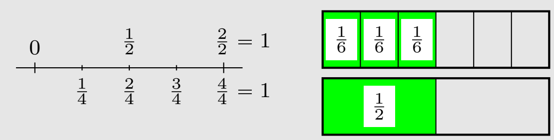
3.NF.3abc Explain equivalence of fractions in special cases, and compare fractions by reasoning about their size.

a Understand two fractions as equivalent (equal) if they are the same size, or the same point on a number line.

b Recognize and generate simple equivalent fractions, e.g., $1/2 = 2/4$, $4/6 = 2/3$. Explain why the fractions are equivalent, e.g., by using a visual fraction model.

c Express whole numbers as fractions, and recognize fractions that are equivalent to whole numbers.

Using the number line and fraction strips to see fraction equivalence

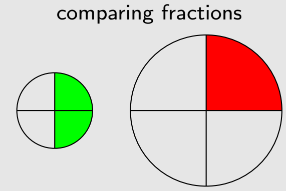


2.MD.3 Estimate lengths using units of inches, feet, centimeters, and meters.

3.NF.3d Explain equivalence of fractions in special cases, and compare fractions by reasoning about their size.

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.

The importance of referring to the same whole when comparing fractions



A student might think that $\frac{1}{4} > \frac{1}{2}$, because a fourth of the pizza on the right is bigger than a half of the pizza on the left.

Grade 4

Grade 4 students learn a fundamental property of equivalent fractions: multiplying the numerator and denominator of a fraction by the same non-zero whole number results in a fraction that represents the same number as the original fraction. This property forms the basis for much of their other work in Grade 4, including the comparison, addition, and subtraction of fractions and the introduction of finite decimals.

Equivalent fractions Students can use area models and number line diagrams to reason about equivalence.[4.NF.1] They see that the numerical process of multiplying the numerator and denominator of a fraction by the same number, n, corresponds physically to partitioning each unit fraction piece into n smaller equal pieces. The whole is then partitioned into n times as many pieces, and there are n times as many smaller unit fraction pieces as in the original fraction.

This argument, once understood for a range of examples, can be seen as a general argument, working directly from the Grade 3 understanding of a fraction as a point on the number line.

The fundamental property can be presented in terms of division, as in, e.g.

$$\frac{28}{36} = \frac{28 \div 4}{36 \div 4} = \frac{7}{9}.$$

Because the equations $28 \div 4 = 7$ and $36 \div 4 = 9$ tell us that $28 = 4 \times 7$ and $36 = 4 \times 9$, this is the fundamental fact in disguise:

$$\frac{4 \times 7}{4 \times 9} = \frac{7}{9}.$$

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.

Grade 4 students use their understanding of equivalent fractions to compare fractions with different numerators and different denominators.[4.NF.2] For example, to compare $\frac{5}{8}$ and $\frac{7}{12}$ they rewrite both fractions as

$$\frac{60}{96}\left(= \frac{12 \times 5}{12 \times 8}\right) \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{56}{96}\left(= \frac{7 \times 8}{12 \times 8}\right)$$

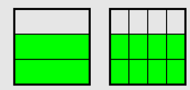
Because $\frac{60}{96}$ and $\frac{56}{96}$ have the same denominator, students can compare them using Grade 3 methods and see that $\frac{56}{96}$ is smaller, so

$$\frac{7}{12} < \frac{5}{8}.$$

Students also reason using benchmarks such as $\frac{1}{2}$ and 1. For example, they see that $\frac{7}{8} < \frac{13}{12}$ because $\frac{7}{8}$ is less than 1 (and is

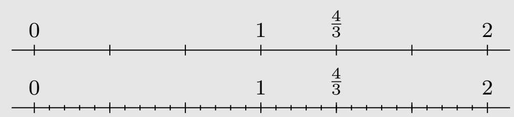
4.NF.1 Explain why a fraction a/b is equivalent to a fraction $(n \times a)/(n \times b)$ by using visual fraction models, with attention to how the number and size of the parts differ even though the two fractions themselves are the same size. Use this principle to recognize and generate equivalent fractions.

Using an area model to show that $\frac{2}{3} = \frac{4 \times 2}{4 \times 3}$



The whole is the square, measured by area. On the left it is divided horizontally into 3 rectangles of equal area, and the shaded region is 2 of these and so represents $\frac{2}{3}$. On the right it is divided into 4×3 small rectangles of equal area, and the shaded area comprises 4×2 of these, and so it represents $\frac{4 \times 2}{4 \times 3}$.

Using the number line to show that $\frac{4}{3} = \frac{5 \times 4}{5 \times 3}$



$\frac{4}{3}$ is 4 parts when each part is $\frac{1}{3}$, and we want to see that this is also 5×4 parts when each part is $\frac{1}{5 \times 3}$. Divide each of the intervals of length $\frac{1}{3}$ into 5 parts of equal length. There are 5×3 parts of equal length in the unit interval, and $\frac{4}{3}$ is 5×4 of these. Therefore $\frac{4}{3} = \frac{5 \times 4}{5 \times 3} = \frac{20}{15}$.

4.NF.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 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.

therefore to the left of 1) but $\frac{13}{12}$ is greater than 1 (and is therefore to the right of 1).

Grade 5 students who have learned about fraction multiplication can see equivalence as "multiplying by 1":

$$\frac{7}{9} = \frac{7}{9} \times 1 = \frac{7}{9} \times \frac{4}{4} = \frac{28}{36}$$

However, although a useful mnemonic device, this does not constitute a valid argument at this grade, since students have not yet learned fraction multiplication.

Adding and subtracting fractions The meaning of addition is the same for both fractions and whole numbers, even though algorithms for calculating their sums can be different. Just as the sum of 4 and 7 can be seen as the length of the segment obtained by joining together two segments of lengths 4 and 7, so the sum of $\frac{2}{3}$ and $\frac{8}{5}$ can be seen as the length of the segment obtained joining together two segments of length $\frac{2}{3}$ and $\frac{8}{5}$. It is not necessary to know how much $\frac{2}{3} + \frac{8}{5}$ is exactly in order to know what the sum means. This is analogous to understanding 51×78 as 51 groups of 78, without necessarily knowing its exact value.

This simple understanding of addition as putting together allows students to see in a new light the way fractions are built up from unit fractions. The same representation that students used in Grade 4 to see a fraction as a point on the number line now allows them to see a fraction as a sum of unit fractions: just as $5 = 1+1+1+1+1$, so

$$\frac{5}{3} = \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3}$$

because $\frac{5}{3}$ is the total length of 5 copies of $\frac{1}{3}$.[4.NF.3]

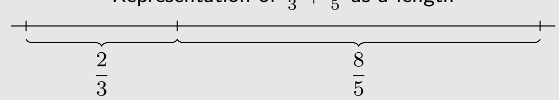
Armed with this insight, students decompose and compose fractions with the same denominator. They add fractions with the same denominator:[4.NF.3c]

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{7}{5} + \frac{4}{5} &= \overbrace{\frac{1}{5} + \cdots \frac{1}{5}}^{7} + \overbrace{\frac{1}{5} + \cdots \frac{1}{5}}^{4} \\ &= \frac{\overbrace{1 + 1 + \cdots + 1}^{7+4}}{5} \\ &= \frac{7+4}{5}.\end{aligned}$$

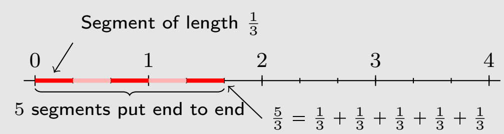
Using the understanding gained from work with whole numbers of the relationship between addition and subtraction, they also subtract fractions with the same denominator. For example, to subtract $\frac{5}{6}$ from $\frac{17}{6}$, they decompose

$$\frac{17}{6} = \frac{12}{6} + \frac{5}{6}, \quad \text{so} \quad \frac{17}{6} - \frac{5}{6} = \frac{17-5}{6} = \frac{12}{6} = 2.$$

Representation of $\frac{2}{3} + \frac{8}{5}$ as a length



Using the number line to see that $\frac{5}{3} = \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3}$



4.NF.3 Understand a fraction a/b with $a > 1$ as a sum of fractions $1/b$.

a Understand addition and subtraction of fractions as joining and separating parts referring to the same whole.

b Decompose a fraction into a sum of fractions with the same denominator in more than one way, recording each decomposition by an equation. Justify decompositions, e.g., by using a visual fraction model.

c Add and subtract mixed numbers with like denominators, e.g., by replacing each mixed number with an equivalent fraction, and/or by using properties of operations and the relationship between addition and subtraction.

Students also compute sums of whole numbers and fractions, by representing the whole number as an equivalent fraction with the same denominator as the fraction, e.g.

$$7\frac{1}{5} = 7 + \frac{1}{5} = \frac{35}{5} + \frac{1}{5} = \frac{36}{5}.$$

Students use this method to add mixed numbers with like denominators.• Converting a mixed number to a fraction should not be viewed as a separate technique to be learned by rote, but simply as a case of fraction addition.

• A mixed number is a whole number plus a fraction smaller than 1, written without the $+$ sign, e.g. $5\frac{3}{4}$ means $5 + \frac{3}{4}$ and $7\frac{1}{5}$ means $7 + \frac{1}{5}$.

Similarly, converting an improper fraction to a mixed number is a matter of decomposing the fraction into a sum of a whole number and a number less than 1.[4.NF.3b] Students can draw on their knowledge from Grade 3 of whole numbers as fractions. For example, knowing that $1 = \frac{3}{3}$, they see

$$\frac{5}{3} = \frac{3}{3} + \frac{2}{3} = 1 + \frac{2}{3} = 1\frac{2}{3}.$$

4.NF.3b Understand a fraction a/b with $a > 1$ as a sum of fractions $1/b$.

- b Decompose a fraction into a sum of fractions with the same denominator in more than one way, recording each decomposition by an equation. Justify decompositions, e.g., by using a visual fraction model.

Repeated reasoning with examples that gain in complexity leads to a general method involving the Grade 4 NBT skill of finding quotients and remainders.[4.NBT.6] For example,

$$\frac{47}{6} = \frac{(7 \times 6) + 5}{6} = \frac{7 \times 6}{6} + \frac{5}{6} = 7 + \frac{5}{6} = 7\frac{5}{6}.$$

4.NBT.6 Find whole-number quotients and remainders with up to four-digit dividends and one-digit divisors, using strategies based on place value, the properties of operations, and/or the relationship between multiplication and division. Illustrate and explain the calculation by using equations, rectangular arrays, and/or area models.

When solving word problems students learn to attend carefully to the underlying unit quantities. In order to formulate an equation of the form $A + B = C$ or $A - B = C$ for a word problem, the numbers A, B, and C must all refer to the same (or equivalent) wholes or unit amounts.[4.NF.3d] For example, students understand that the problem

> Bill had $\frac{2}{3}$ of a cup of juice. He drank $\frac{1}{2}$ of his juice. How much juice did Bill have left?

cannot be solved by subtracting $\frac{2}{3} - \frac{1}{2}$ because the $\frac{2}{3}$ refers to a cup of juice, but the $\frac{1}{2}$ refers to the amount of juice that Bill had, and not to a cup of juice. Similarly, in solving

> If $\frac{1}{4}$ of a garden is planted with daffodils, $\frac{1}{3}$ with tulips, and the rest with vegetables, what fraction of the garden is planted with flowers?

students understand that the sum $\frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{4}$ tells them the fraction of the garden that was planted with flowers, but not the number of flowers that were planted.

4.NF.3d Understand a fraction a/b with $a > 1$ as a sum of fractions $1/b$.

- d Solve word problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions referring to the same whole and having like denominators, e.g., by using visual fraction models and equations to represent the problem.

Multiplication of a fraction by a whole number Previously in Grade 3, students learned that 3×7 can be represented as the number of objects in 3 groups of 7 objects, and write this as $7 + 7 + 7$. Grade 4 students apply this understanding to fractions, seeing

$$\frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} \quad \text{as} \quad 5 \times \frac{1}{3}.$$

In general, they see a fraction as the numerator times the unit fraction with the same denominator,[4.NF.4a] e.g.,

$$\frac{7}{5} = 7 \times \frac{1}{5}, \qquad \frac{11}{3} = 11 \times \frac{1}{3}.$$

The same thinking, based on the analogy between fractions and whole numbers, allows students to give meaning to the product of a whole number and a fraction,[4.NF.4b] e.g., they see

$$3 \times \frac{2}{5} \quad \text{as} \quad \frac{2}{5} + \frac{2}{5} + \frac{2}{5} = \frac{3 \times 2}{5} = \frac{6}{5}.$$

Students solve word problems involving multiplication of a fraction by a whole number.[4.NF.4c]

> If a bucket holds $2\frac{3}{4}$ gallons and 43 buckets of water fill a tank, how much does the tank hold?

The answer is $43 \times 2\frac{3}{4}$ gallons, which is

$$43 \times \left(2 + \frac{3}{4}\right) = 43 \times \frac{11}{4} = \frac{473}{4} = 118\frac{1}{4} \text{ gallons}$$

Decimals Fractions with denominator 10 and 100, called *decimal fractions*, arise naturally when student convert between dollars and cents, and have a more fundamental importance, developed in Grade 5, in the base 10 system. For example, because there are 10 dimes in a dollar, 3 dimes is $\frac{3}{10}$ of a dollar; and it is also $\frac{30}{100}$ of a dollar because it is 30 cents, and there are 100 cents in a dollar. Such reasoning provides a concrete context for the fraction equivalence

$$\frac{3}{10} = \frac{3 \times 10}{10 \times 10} = \frac{30}{100}.$$

Grade 3 students learn to add decimal fractions by converting them to fractions with the same denominator, in preparation for general fraction addition in Grade 5:[4.NF.5]

$$\frac{3}{10} + \frac{27}{100} = \frac{30}{100} + \frac{27}{100} = \frac{57}{100}.$$

They can interpret this as saying that 3 dimes together with 27 cents make 57 cents.

Fractions with denominators equal to 10, 100, etc., such

$$\frac{27}{10}, \quad \frac{27}{100}, \quad \text{etc.}$$

can be written by using a *decimal point* as[4.NF.6]

$$2.7, \quad 0.27.$$

The number of digits to the right of the decimal point indicates the number of zeros in the denominator, so that $2.70 = \frac{270}{100}$ and

[4.NF.4] Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication to multiply a fraction by a whole number.

a Understand a fraction a/b as a multiple of $1/b$.

b Understand a multiple of a/b as a multiple of $1/b$, and use this understanding to multiply a fraction by a whole number.

c Solve word problems involving multiplication of a fraction by a whole number, e.g., by using visual fraction models and equations to represent the problem.

[4.NF.5] Express a fraction with denominator 10 as an equivalent fraction with denominator 100, and use this technique to add two fractions with respective denominators 10 and 100.[1]

[4.NF.6] Use decimal notation for fractions with denominators 10 or 100.

$2.7 = \frac{27}{10}$. Students use their ability to convert fractions to reason that $2.70 = 2.7$ because

$$2.70 = \frac{270}{100} = \frac{10 \times 27}{10 \times 10} = \frac{27}{10} = 2.7.$$

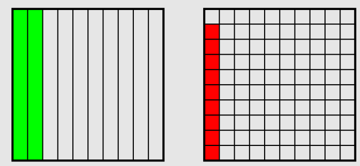
Students compare decimals using the meaning of a decimal as a fraction, making sure to compare fractions with the same denominator. For example, to compare 0.2 and 0.09, students think of them as 0.20 and 0.09 and see that $0.20 > 0.09$ because[4.NF.7]

$$\frac{20}{100} > \frac{9}{100}.$$

The argument using the meaning of a decimal as a fraction generalizes to work with decimals in Grade 5 that have more than two digits, whereas the argument using a visual fraction model, shown in the margin, does not. So it is useful for Grade 4 students to see such reasoning.

4.NF.7 Compare two decimals to hundredths by reasoning about their size. Recognize that comparisons are valid only when the two decimals refer to the same whole. Record the results of comparisons with the symbols $>$, $=$, or $<$, and justify the conclusions, e.g., by using a visual model.

Seeing that $0.2 > 0.09$ using a visual fraction model



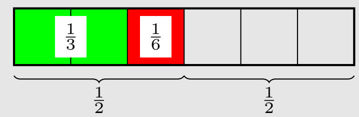
The shaded region on the left shows 0.2 of the unit square, since it is two parts when the square is divided int 10 parts of equal area. The shaded region on the right shows 0.09 of the unit square, since it is 9 parts when the unit is divided into 100 parts of equal area.

Grade 5

Adding and subtracting fractions In Grade 4, students calculate sums of fractions with different denominators where one denominator is a divisor of the other, so that only one fraction has to be changed. For example, they might have used a fraction strip to reason that

$$\frac{1}{3}+\frac{1}{6}=\frac{2}{6}+\frac{1}{6}=\frac{3}{6}=\frac{1}{2},$$

Using a fraction strip to show that $\frac{1}{3}+\frac{1}{6}=\frac{1}{2}$



and in working with decimals they added fractions with denominators 10 and 100, such as

$$\frac{2}{10}+\frac{7}{100}=\frac{20}{100}+\frac{7}{100}=\frac{27}{100}.$$

They understand the process as expressing both summands in terms of the same unit fraction so that they can be added. Grade 5 students extend this reasoning to situations where it is necessary to re-express both fractions in terms of a new denominator.[5.NF.1] For example, in calculating $\frac{2}{3}+\frac{5}{4}$ they reason that if each third in $\frac{2}{3}$ is subdivided into fourths, and if each fourth in $\frac{5}{4}$ is subdivided into thirds, then each fraction will be a sum of unit fractions with denominator $3\times 4=4\times 3=12$:

$$\frac{2}{3}+\frac{5}{4}=\frac{2\times 4}{3\times 4}+\frac{5\times 3}{4\times 3}=\frac{8}{12}+\frac{15}{12}=\frac{23}{12}.$$

5.NF.1 Add and subtract fractions with unlike denominators (including mixed numbers) by replacing given fractions with equivalent fractions in such a way as to produce an equivalent sum or difference of fractions with like denominators.

In general two fractions can be added by subdividing the unit fractions in one using the denominator of the other:

$$\frac{a}{b}+\frac{c}{d}=\frac{a\times d}{b\times d}+\frac{c\times b}{d\times b}=\frac{ad+bc}{bd}.$$

It is not necessary to find a least common denominator to calculate sums of fractions, and in fact the effort of finding a least common denominator is a distraction from understanding algorithms for adding fractions.

Students make sense of fractional quantities when solving word problems, estimating answers mentally to see if they make sense.[5.NF.2] For example in the problem

5.NF.2 Solve word problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions referring to the same whole, including cases of unlike denominators, e.g., by using visual fraction models or equations to represent the problem. Use benchmark fractions and number sense of fractions to estimate mentally and assess the reasonableness of answers.

> Ludmilla and Lazarus each have a lemon. They need a cup of lemon juice to make hummus for a party. Ludmilla squeezes $\frac{1}{2}$ a cup from hers and Lazarus squeezes $\frac{2}{5}$ of a cup from his. How much lemon juice to they have? Is it enough?

students estimate that there is almost but not quite one cup of lemon juice, because $\frac{2}{5}<\frac{1}{2}$. They calculate $\frac{1}{2}+\frac{2}{5}=\frac{9}{10}$, and see this as $\frac{1}{10}$ less than 1, which is probably a small enough shortfall that it will not ruin the recipe. They detect an incorrect result such as $\frac{2}{5}+\frac{2}{5}=\frac{3}{7}$ by noticing that $\frac{3}{7}<\frac{1}{2}$.

Multiplying and dividing fractions In Grade 4 students connected fractions with addition and multiplication, understanding that

$$\frac{5}{3} = \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{3} = 5 \times \frac{1}{3}.$$

In Grade 5, they connect fractions with division, understanding that

$$5 \div 3 = \frac{5}{3},$$

or, more generally, $\frac{a}{b} = a \div b$ for whole numbers a and b, with b not equal to zero.[5.NF.3] They can explain this by working with their understanding of division as equal sharing (see figure in margin). They also create story contexts to represent problems involving division of whole numbers. For example, they see that

> If 9 people want to share a 50-pound sack of rice equally by weight, how many pounds of rice should each person get?

can be solved in two ways. First, they might partition each pound among the 9 people, so that each person gets $50 \times \frac{1}{9} = \frac{50}{9}$ pounds. Second, they might use the equation $9 \times 5 = 45$ to see that each person can be given 5 pounds, with 5 pounds remaining. Partitioning the remainder gives $5\frac{5}{9}$ pounds for each person.

Students have, since Grade 1, been using language such as "third of" to describe one part when a whole is partitioned into three parts. With their new understanding of the connection between fractions and division, students now see that $\frac{5}{3}$ is one third of 5, which leads to the meaning of multiplication by a unit fraction:

$$\frac{1}{3} \times 5 = \frac{5}{3}.$$

This in turn extends to multiplication of any quantity by a fraction.[5.NF.4a] Just as

$$\frac{1}{3} \times 5 \text{ is one part when } 5 \text{ is partitioned into } 3 \text{ parts,}$$

so

$$\frac{4}{3} \times 5 \text{ is 4 parts when } 5 \text{ is partitioned into } 3 \text{ parts.}$$

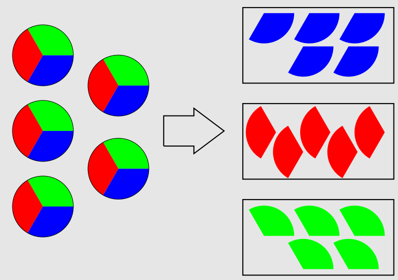
Using this understanding of multiplication by a fraction, students develop the general formula for the product of two fractions,

$$\frac{a}{b} \times \frac{c}{d} = \frac{ac}{bd},$$

for whole numbers a, b, c, d, with b, d not zero. Grade 5 students need not express the formula in this general algebraic form, but rather reason out many examples using fraction strips and number line diagrams.

5.NF.3 Interpret a fraction as division of the numerator by the denominator ($a/b = a \div b$). Solve word problems involving division of whole numbers leading to answers in the form of fractions or mixed numbers, e.g., by using visual fraction models or equations to represent the problem.

How to share 5 objects equally among 3 shares:
$5 \div 3 = 5 \times \frac{1}{3} = \frac{5}{3}$

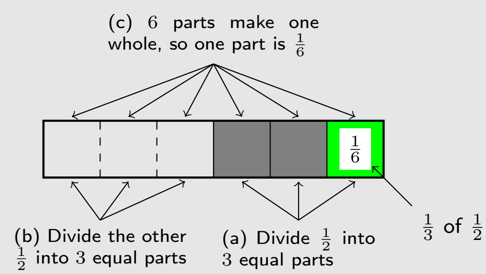


If you divide 5 objects equally among 3 shares, each of the 5 objects should contribute $\frac{1}{3}$ of itself to each share. Thus each share consists of 5 pieces, each of which is $\frac{1}{3}$ of an object, and so each share is $5 \times \frac{1}{3} = \frac{5}{3}$ of an object.

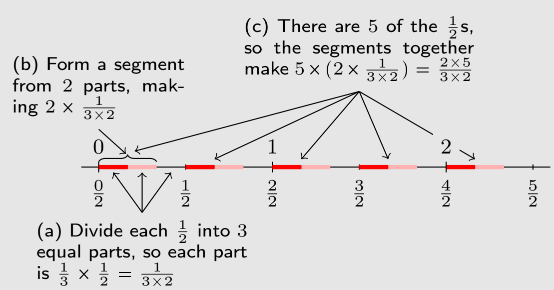
5.NF.4a Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication to multiply a fraction or whole number by a fraction.

a Interpret the product $(a/b) \times q$ as a parts of a partition of q into b equal parts; equivalently, as the result of a sequence of operations $a \times q \div b$.

Using a fraction strip to show that $\frac{1}{3} \times \frac{1}{2} = \frac{1}{6}$



Using a number line to show that $\frac{2}{3} \times \frac{5}{2} = \frac{2\times5}{3\times2}$



For more complicated examples, an area model is useful, in which students work with a rectangle that has fractional side lengths, dividing it up into rectangles whose sides are the corresponding unit fractions.

Students also understand fraction multiplication by creating story contexts. For example, to explain

$$\frac{2}{3} \times 4 = \frac{8}{3},$$

they might say

> Ron and Hermione have 4 pounds of Bertie Bott's Every Flavour Beans. They decide to share them 3 ways, saving one share for Harry. How many pounds of beans do Ron and Hermione get?

Using the relationship between division and multiplication, students start working with simple fraction division problems. Having seen that division of a whole number by a whole number, e.g. $5 \div 3$, is the same as multiplying the number by a unit fraction, $\frac{1}{3} \times 5$, they now extend the same reasoning to division of a unit fraction by a whole number, seeing for example that[5.NF.7a]

$$\frac{1}{6} \div 3 = \frac{1}{6 \times 3} = \frac{1}{18}.$$

Also, they reason that since there are 6 portions of $\frac{1}{6}$ in 1, there must be 3×6 in 3, and so[5.NF.7b]

$$3 \div \frac{1}{6} = 3 \times 6 = 18.$$

Students use story problems to make sense of division problems:[5.NF.7c]

> How much chocolate will each person get if 3 people share $\frac{1}{2}$ lb of chocolate equally? How many $\frac{1}{3}$-cup servings are in 2 cups of raisins?

Students attend carefully to the underlying unit quantities when solving problems. For example, if $\frac{1}{2}$ of a fund-raiser's funds were raised by the 6th grade, and if $\frac{1}{3}$ of the 6th grade's funds were raised by Ms. Wilkin's class, then $\frac{1}{3} \times \frac{1}{2}$ gives the fraction of the fund-raiser's funds that Ms. Wilkin's class raised, but it does not tell us how much money Ms. Wilkin's class raised.[5.NF.6]

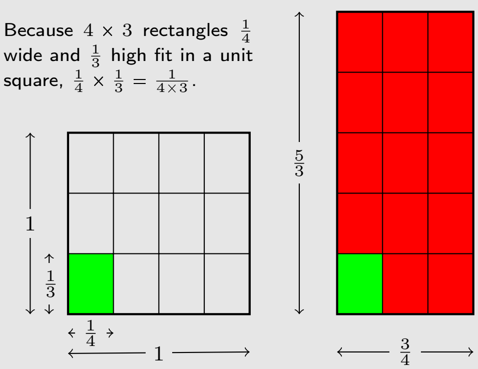
Multiplication as scaling In preparation for Grade 6 work in ratios and proportional reasoning, students learn to see products such as 5×3 or $\frac{1}{2} \times 3$ as expressions that can be interpreted in terms of a quantity, 3, and a scaling factor, 5 or $\frac{1}{2}$. Thus, in addition to knowing that $5 \times 3 = 15$, they can also say that 5×3 is 5 times as big as 3, without evaluating the product. Likewise, they see $\frac{1}{2} \times 3$ as half the size of 3.[5.NF.5a]

5.NF.4b Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication to multiply a fraction or whole number by a fraction.

b Find the area of a rectangle with fractional side lengths by tiling it with unit squares of the appropriate unit fraction side lengths, and show that the area is the same as would be found by multiplying the side lengths. Multiply fractional side lengths to find areas of rectangles, and represent fraction products as rectangular areas.

Using an area model to show that $\frac{3}{4} \times \frac{5}{3} = \frac{3 \times 5}{4 \times 3}$

Because 4×3 rectangles $\frac{1}{4}$ wide and $\frac{1}{3}$ high fit in a unit square, $\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{1}{3} = \frac{1}{4 \times 3}$.



The rectangle of width $\frac{3}{4}$ and height $\frac{5}{3}$ is tiled with 3×5 rectangles of area $\frac{1}{4 \times 3}$, so has area $\frac{3 \times 5}{4 \times 3}$.

5.NF.7abc Apply and extend previous understandings of division to divide unit fractions by whole numbers and whole numbers by unit fractions.[2]

a Interpret division of a unit fraction by a non-zero whole number, and compute such quotients.

b Interpret division of a whole number by a unit fraction, and compute such quotients.

c Solve real world problems involving division of unit fractions by non-zero whole numbers and division of whole numbers by unit fractions, e.g., by using visual fraction models and equations to represent the problem.

5.NF.6 Solve real world problems involving multiplication of fractions and mixed numbers, e.g., by using visual fraction models or equations to represent the problem.

5.NF.5a Interpret multiplication as scaling (resizing), by:

a Comparing the size of a product to the size of one factor on the basis of the size of the other factor, without performing the indicated multiplication.

The understanding of multiplication as scaling is an important opportunity for students to reasonin abstractly (MP2). Previous work with multiplication by whole numbers enables students to see multiplication by numbers bigger than 1 as producing a larger quantity, as when a recipe is doubled, for example. Grade 5 work with multiplying by unit fractions, and interpreting fractions in terms of division, enables students to see that multiplying a quantity by a number smaller than 1 produces a smaller quantity, as when the budget of a large state university is multiplied by $\frac{1}{2}$, for example.[5.NF.5b]

The special case of multiplying by 1, which leaves a quantity unchanged, can be related to fraction equivalence by expressing 1 as $\frac{n}{n}$, as explained on page 6.

5.NF.5b Interpret multiplication as scaling (resizing), by:

b Explaining why multiplying a given number by a fraction greater than 1 results in a product greater than the given number (recognizing multiplication by whole numbers greater than 1 as a familiar case); explaining why multiplying a given number by a fraction less than 1 results in a product smaller than the given number; and relating the principle of fraction equivalence $a/b = (n \times a)/(n \times b)$ to the effect of multiplying a/b by 1.