Understand Comparing Fractions

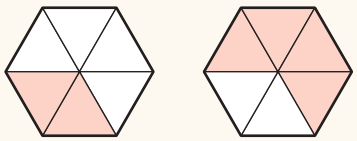
LESSON 24

Dear Family,

This week your child is exploring comparing fractions.

When two fractions have the same denominator, the numerator tells you which is more and which is less.

These fractions are built from the unit fraction $\frac{1}{6}$. So, the fraction with the most parts in the numerator is more.

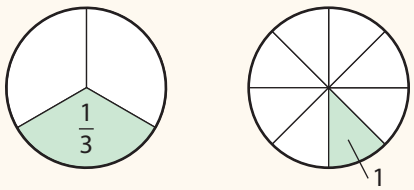


$\frac{2}{6}$ $\frac{4}{6}$

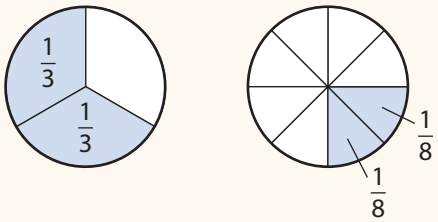
$\frac{4}{6}$ is more than $\frac{2}{6}$ because 4 parts is more than 2 parts when all the parts are equal in size.

If two fractions have the same numerator, then the denominator can tell you which fraction is greater.

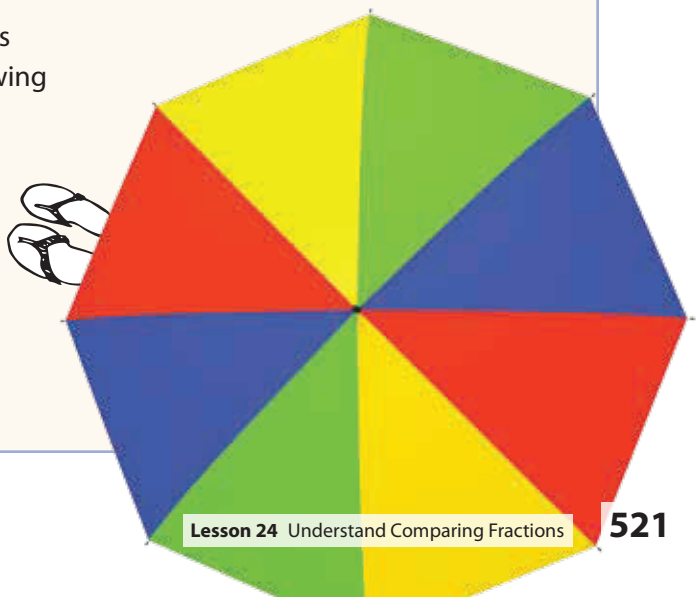
Compare the denominators of $\frac{1}{3}$ and $\frac{1}{8}$. When something is cut into 3 equal pieces, the pieces are larger than if the object is cut into 8 equal pieces. When there are fewer parts, each part is larger. So, $\frac{1}{3}$ is greater than $\frac{1}{8}$.



This also shows that $\frac{2}{3}$ is greater than $\frac{2}{8}$, since 2 large pieces is more than 2 small pieces.



Invite your child to share what he or she knows about comparing fractions by doing the following activity together.



ACTIVITY COMPARING FRACTIONS

Do this activity with your child to understand comparing fractions.

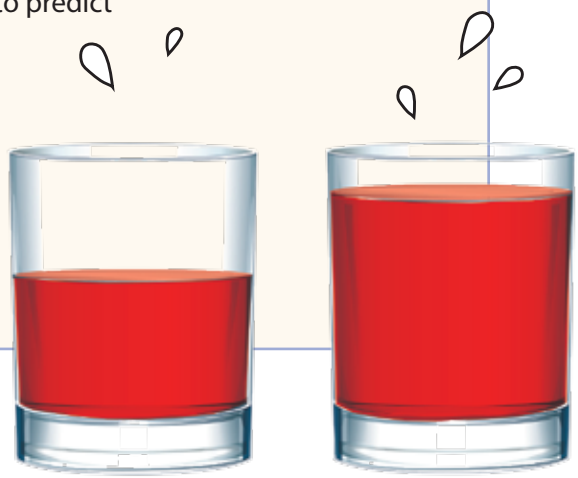
Materials 2 small identical glasses or jars; measuring cups for $\frac{1}{4}$-, $\frac{1}{3}$-, and $\frac{1}{2}$-cup, colored water

Use measured amounts of water to compare fractions. First experiment with fractions that have the same denominator by using only the $\frac{1}{4}$-cup measure.

- Work with your child to pour $\frac{2}{4}$ cup of colored water into one glass (call it Glass *A*) and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup into the other glass (call it Glass *B*). Place them side by side and compare. Which is more, $\frac{2}{4}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$?
- Repeat to compare $\frac{2}{4}$ and $\frac{4}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{4}{4}$, $\frac{2}{4}$ and $\frac{6}{4}$. Talk about how you can predict which will be more even before you measure the water into the glasses.

Now experiment with fractions that have different denominators but have the same numerator.

- Work with your child to pour $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of colored water into one glass (call it Glass *A*) and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup into the other glass (call this Glass *B*). Place them side by side and compare. Which is more, $\frac{1}{3}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$?
- Empty the glasses. Pour $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of water into Glass *A* and $\frac{2}{4}$ cup into Glass *B*. Which is more, $\frac{2}{3}$ or $\frac{2}{4}$? Then compare $\frac{3}{3}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$.
- What pattern do you notice? How can you use that pattern to predict which is more, $\frac{7}{3}$ or $\frac{7}{4}$?
- Continue to experiment with other measurements. For example, use the measuring cups to compare $\frac{3}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ or to compare $\frac{3}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$. Have fun!



Glass *A* **Glass *B***