



Mathematics Family Letter, Unit 6

Dear Family,

Our class is starting a new unit in math about fractions. Students will be investigating what fractions are and the many ways they can be represented and used. In this unit, we will identify fractions of a whole ($\frac{1}{2}$ of a square, $\frac{1}{4}$ of a rectangle) as well as find fractions of a set ($\frac{1}{2}$ of 12). Students will begin to learn how fractions are expressed in words and represented with numbers. Students will also find fractions that represent a whole ($\frac{3}{3}$, $\frac{5}{5}$), compare unit fractions, and begin the conceptual work of adding fractions with like denominators.

Related Activities to Try at Home

The activities below are related to our work with fractions. Doing the activities together will help enrich your child's mathematical learning.

Flag Hunt Many nations' flags and nautical flags are divided into fractional parts, such as halves, thirds, or fourths. You and your child might like to hunt for flags in books and around your neighborhood. You can find pictures of flags in an encyclopedia, in an atlas, in books about flags (see next page), or on a Web site pertaining to flags. Find flags that are clearly divided into fractional parts and then ask questions such as these: "How much of this flag is blue?" "What color is $\frac{1}{2}$ of that flag?" Your child might like to draw the flags on graph paper, color them in, and then label the fractional parts.

Kitchen Fractions Examples of fractions come up frequently in the kitchen. Involve your child in conversations that involve simple fractions such as $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, and $\frac{1}{4}$. For example, there are often opportunities to measure $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of flour or to cut a sandwich in half.

Finding Fair Shares Your child can practice dividing a set into equal parts to share with a certain number of people. Ask questions such as these: "If you want to share 6 crackers with 3 people, each person would get $\frac{1}{3}$ of the crackers. How many crackers is that?" "How can we share 12 carrots evenly with each of the 4 people in our family so that each person gets $\frac{1}{4}$ of the carrots?"

Missing Pieces Practice finding the fraction of the whole by finding the missing piece of a set. For example, if you have a pizza that is cut into 8 slices and there are two left, you can identify what fraction is left ($\frac{2}{8}$), what fraction is missing ($\frac{6}{8}$), and what fraction would equal the whole pizza ($\frac{8}{8}$). Ask questions like these: "What fraction is left?" "What fraction is missing?" "What fraction would the whole pizza equal?"

Sincerely,

The Second Grade Team