



# Many Concepts, Few Numbers: A Novel Approach to Math Interventions

*Nancy Dyson*

*University of Delaware*



- ❑ How we arrived at this novel approach
- ❑ How we applied it to basic number sense
- ❑ How we are applying it to fraction sense
- ❑ Your Turn! Q and A and discussion around how YOU might use this approach



## *The Math Problem*

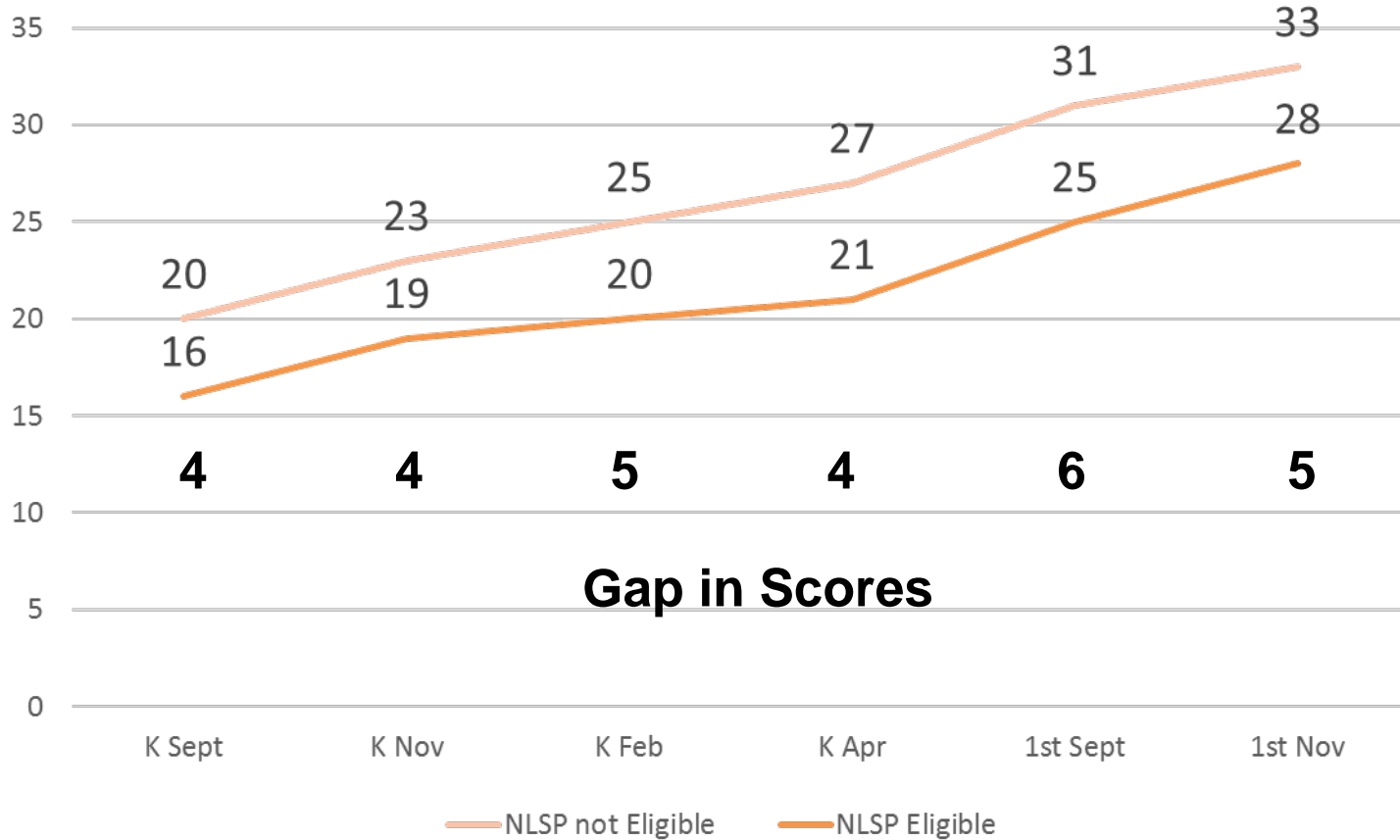
- Poor achievement in math is widespread with serious educational and vocational consequences.
- Students who do not develop foundational mathematics in elementary and middle school, are less likely to graduate from college than higher-achieving students (NMAP, 2008).
- Large math disparities exist between middle- and low-income children *before* they enter school at about five years of age (Jordan & Levine, 2009; National Research Council, 2009).



# *Income - Achievement Gap*

## *ECLS 2011*

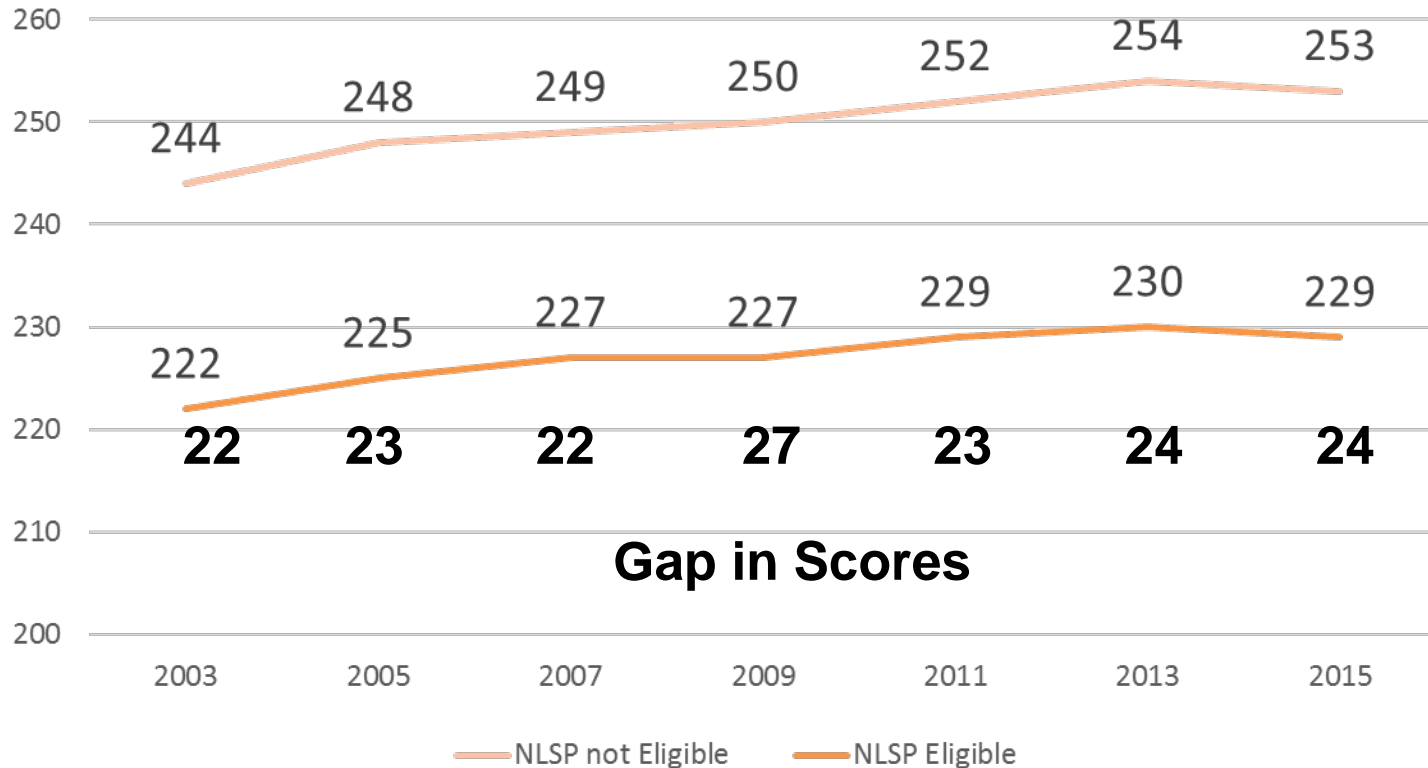
### **K – 1st Grade Number Sense**





# *Income - Achievement Gap*

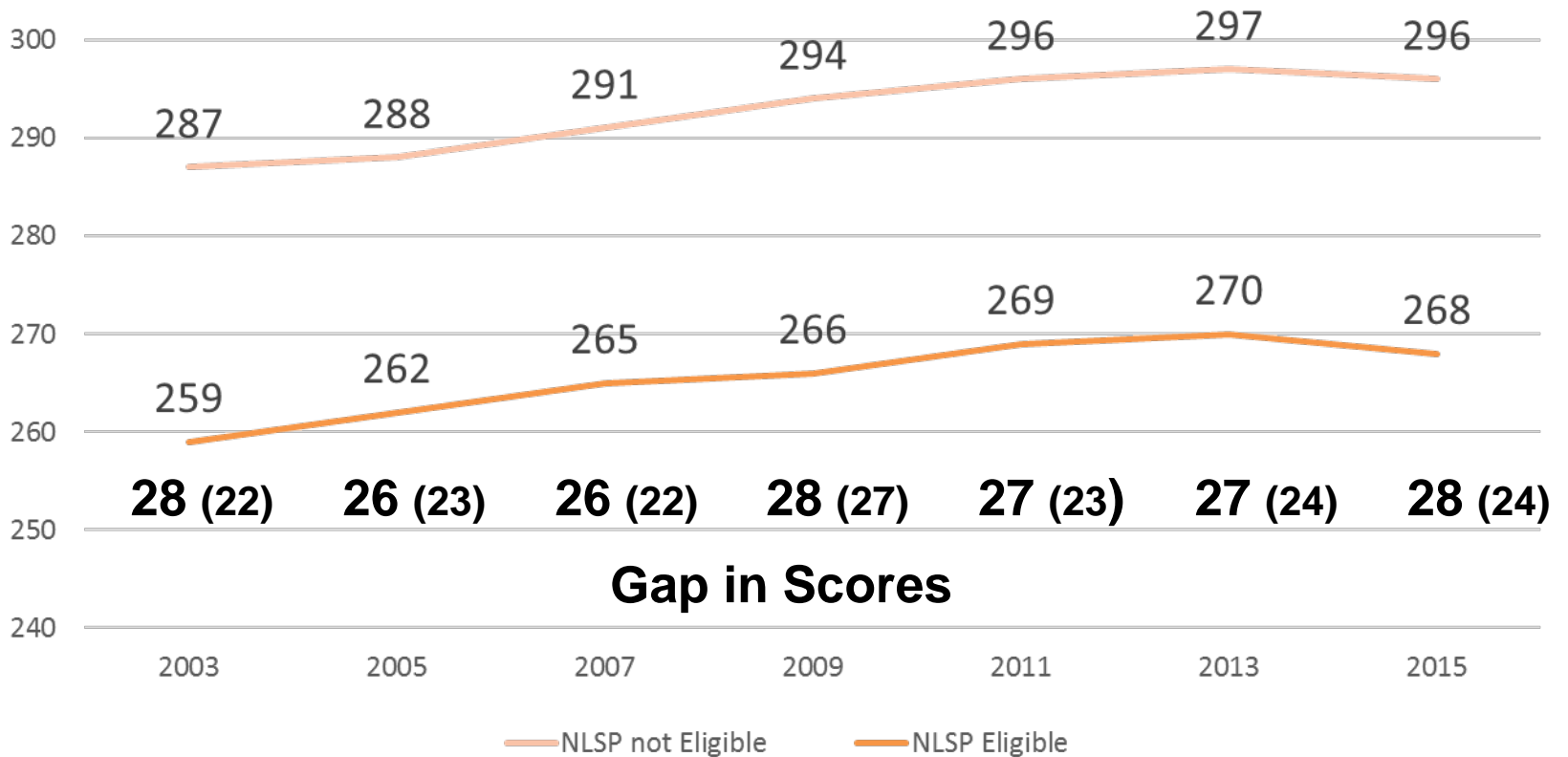
## NAEP Mathematics 2013 Fourth Grade





# Income - Achievement Gap

## NAEP Mathematics 2013 Eighth Grade (4<sup>th</sup> Grade)





# Numbers do not make sense to many children

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glasbergen.com



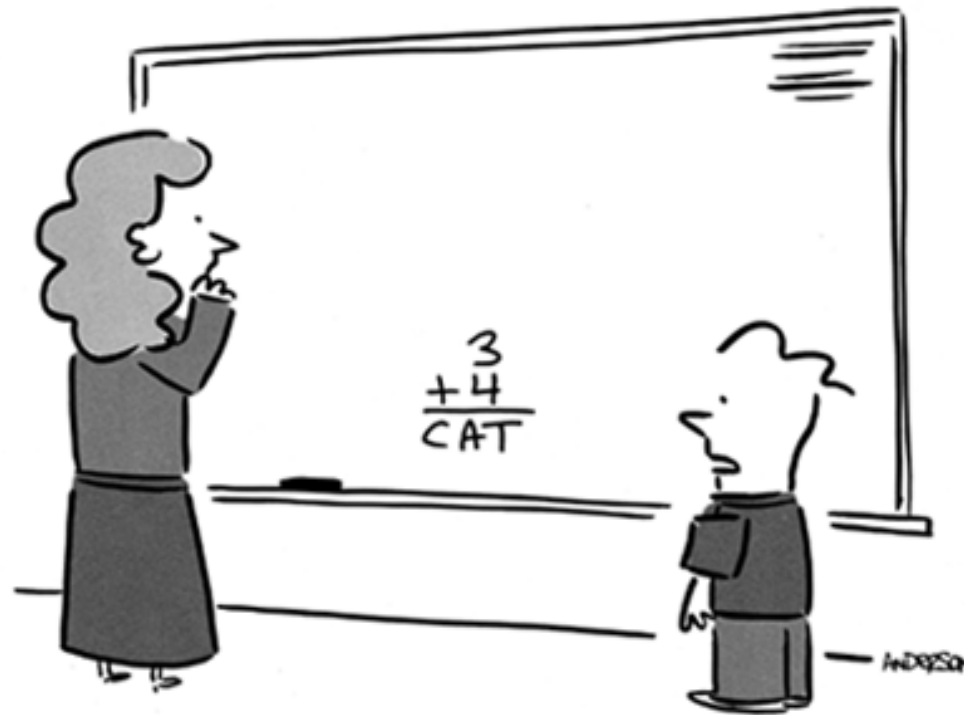
**“First they told me that  $2 + 2 = 4$ .  
Then they told me that  $3 + 1 = 4$ . That’s  
when I lost faith in public education!”**



Many times we are at a loss as to how to help them.

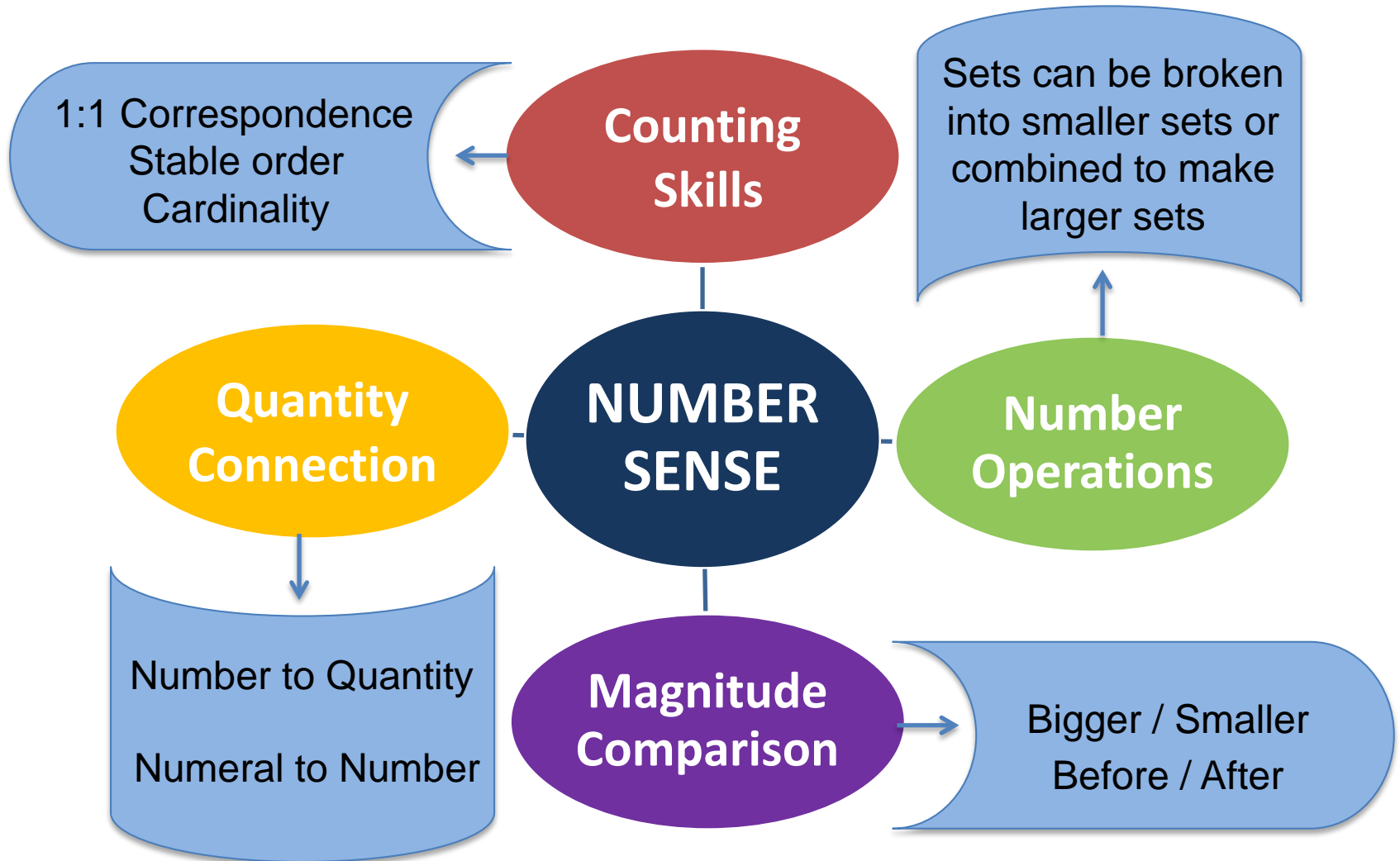
© MARK ANDERSON

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"On the plus side it's something for your PLC to chew on."







# *Number Sense Development*

## Quantity Connections

Very young children are sensitive to number  
(Dehaene, 1999)

Habituation studies show even 6 month old children can distinguish between quantities  
(Feigenson, Dehaene, & Spelke, 2004)

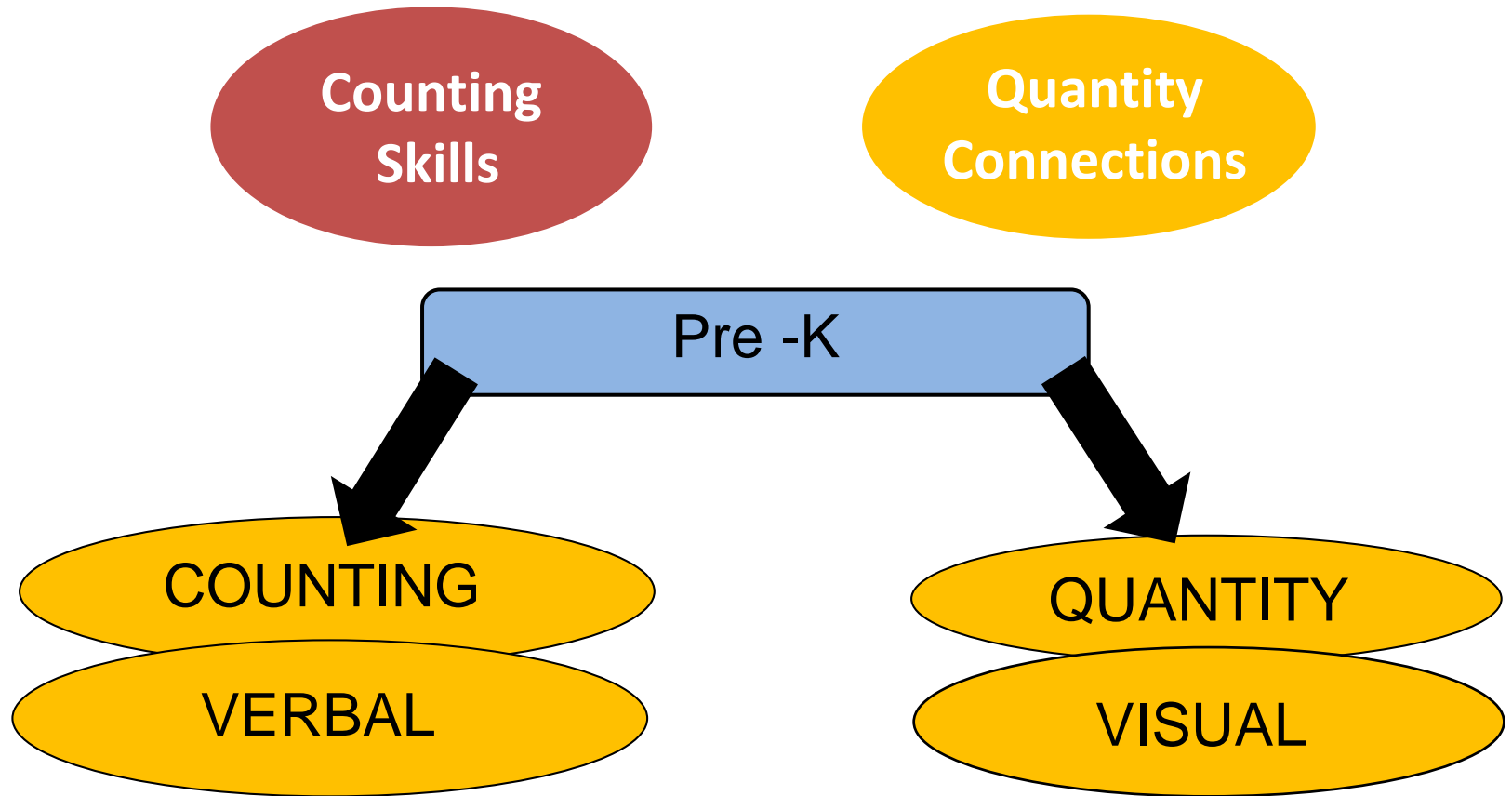
**SUBITIZE** – the ability to recognize small quantities without counting

**Perceptually**  
**Conceptually**



# *Number Sense Development*

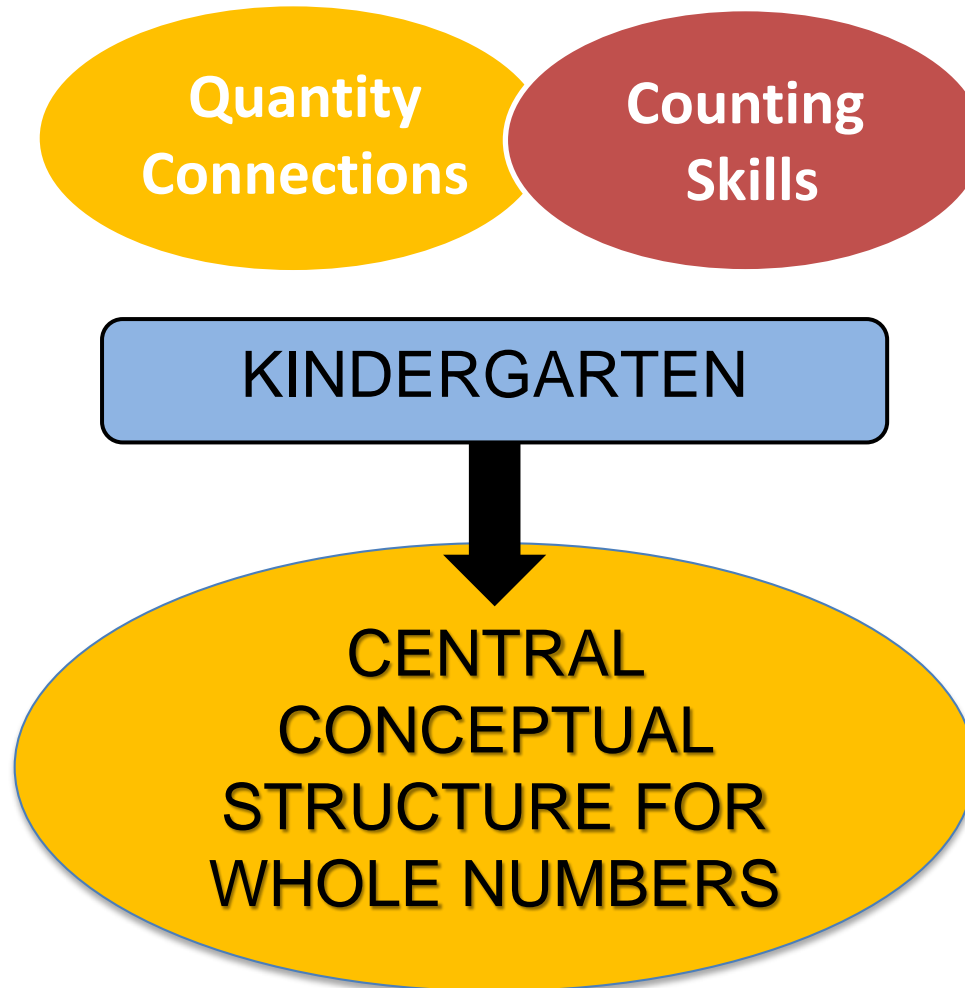
(Griffin & Case, 1997)





# *Number Sense Development*

(Griffin & Case, 1997)





# *Number Sense Development*

Magnitude  
Comparison

## MENTAL NUMBER LIST



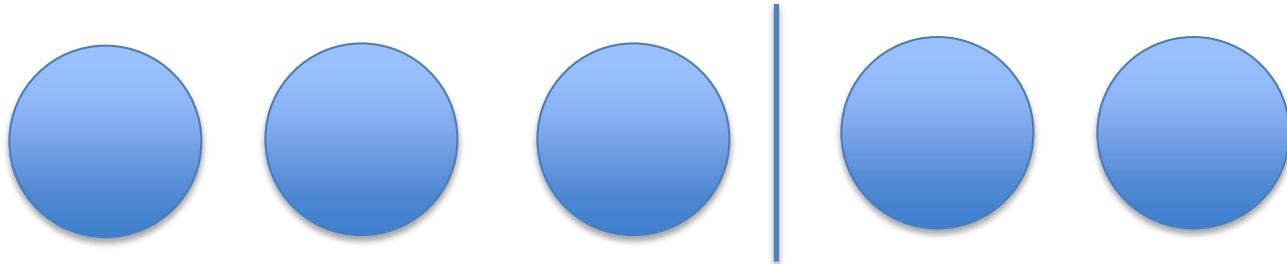
As you go up the list, the quantities get larger

Each number is one more than the number before it and one less than the number after it. (Baroody, Eiland, & Thompson, 2009)



# *Number Sense Development*

Number  
Operations

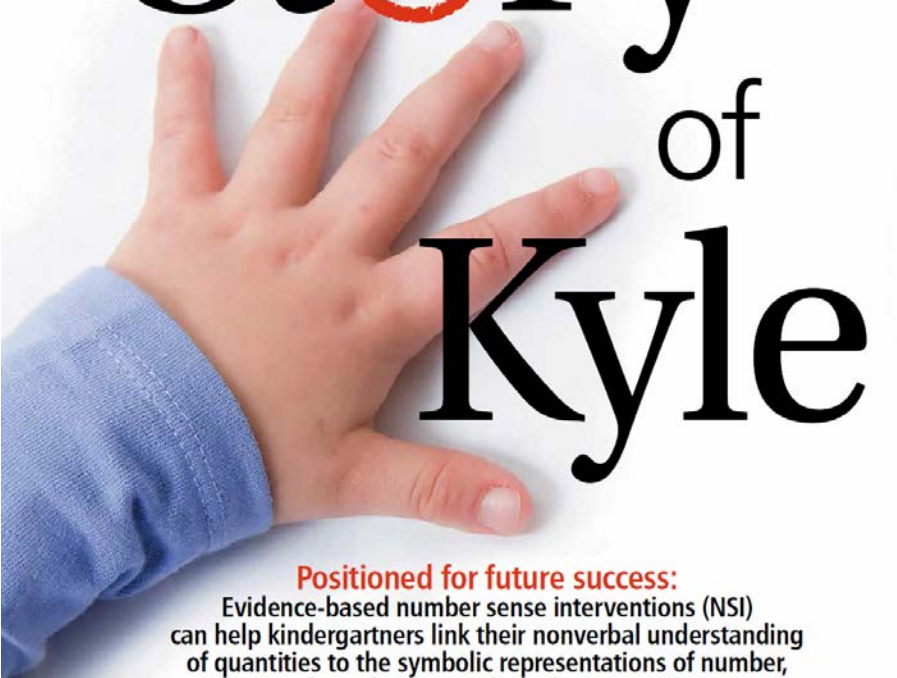


$$3+2=5$$



*Developing Number Sense in Children at  
Risk for Mathematics Learning  
Disabilities*

funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human  
Development (5R01HD059170),  
Nancy C. Jordan, Principal Investigator  
2009 - 2014



# The Story of Kyle

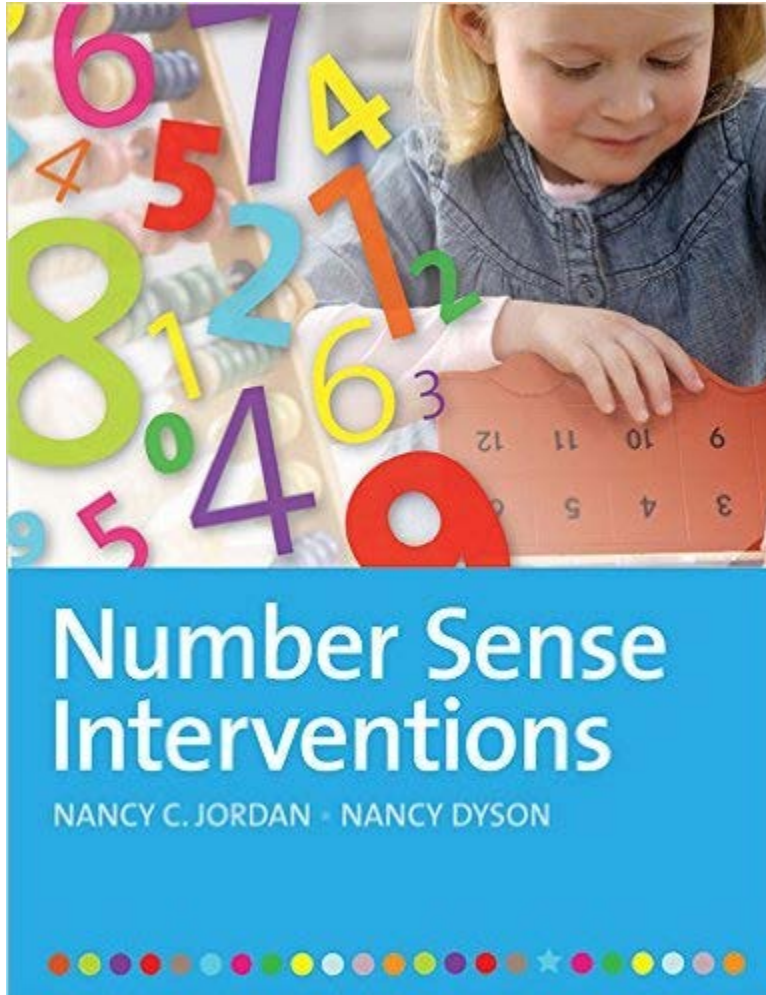
TCM February 2015  
Dyson, Jordan, Hassinger-Das

**Positioned for future success:**

Evidence-based number sense interventions (NSI) can help kindergartners link their nonverbal understanding of quantities to the symbolic representations of number, number relations, and number operations.

By Nancy I. Dyson, Nancy C. Jordan, and Brenna L. Hassinger-Das





Brookes Publishing

Also Available from Amazon





# *Number Sense Development*

Magnitude  
Comparison

## MENTAL NUMBER LIST

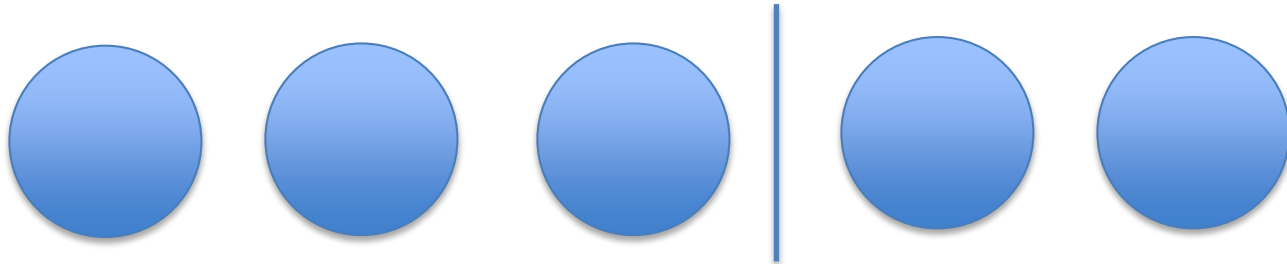


As you go up the list, the quantities get larger



# *Number Sense Development*

Number  
Operations



$$3+2=5$$



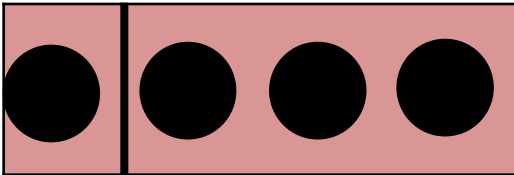
# *Number Sense Development*

Number  
Operations

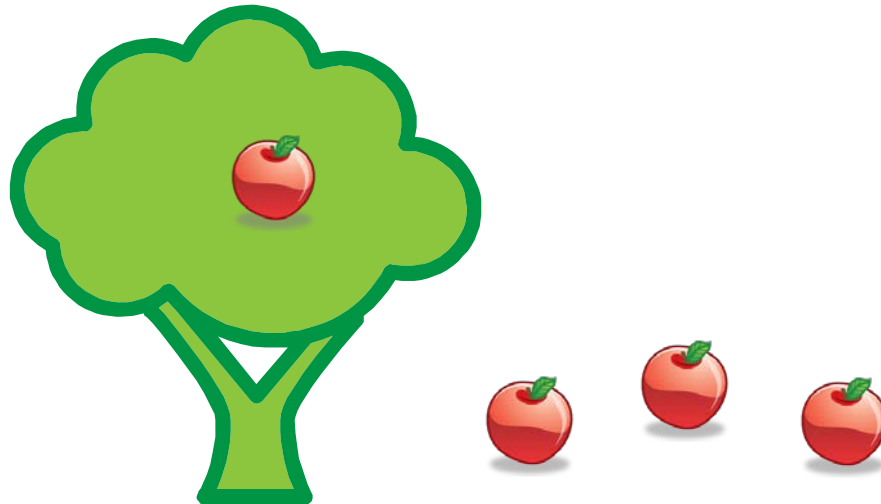
Combinations

$$1 + 3 = 4$$

Partners



Story problems





# *Intervention Study by Year*

20 Lesson intervention - Each Lesson 30 minutes

Year one:

- Intervention successful with at-risk students
- Schools serving low-income communities

Year two:

- Intervention successful with at-risk students
- Schools serving low-income communities

Year three:

- Targeted at-risk students with low numeracy
- Successful but effect sizes much smaller

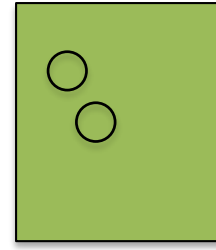
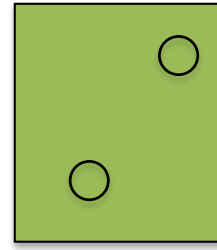
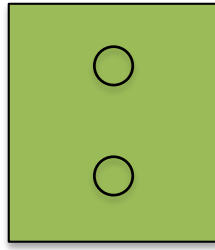
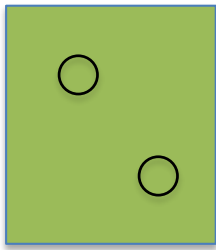
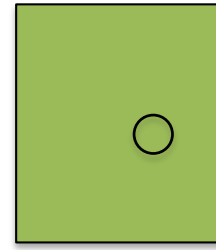
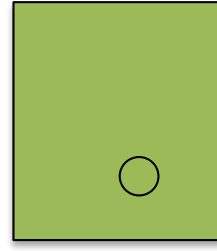
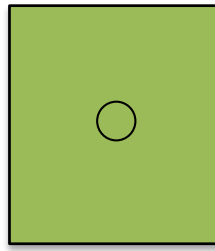
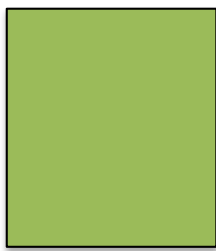
Year four:

- Targeted at-risk students with low numeracy
- Revised intervention
- Successful with large effect sizes

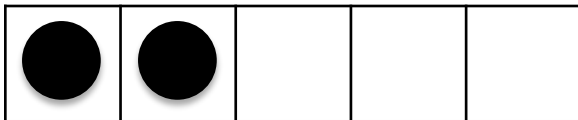


# *Many Concepts - Few Numbers*

## *0, 1, 2*



SUBITIZING DOT CARDS



FIVE FRAMES

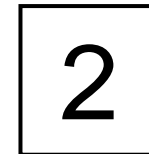
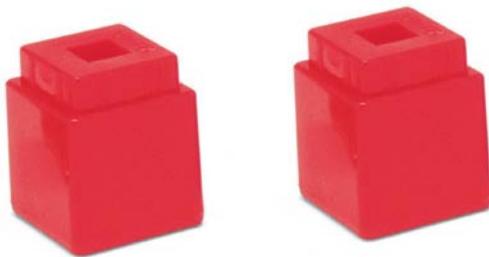
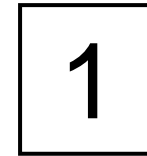
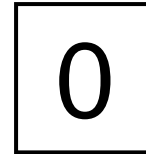


SUBITIZING FINGERS





## QUANTITY CONNECTIONS

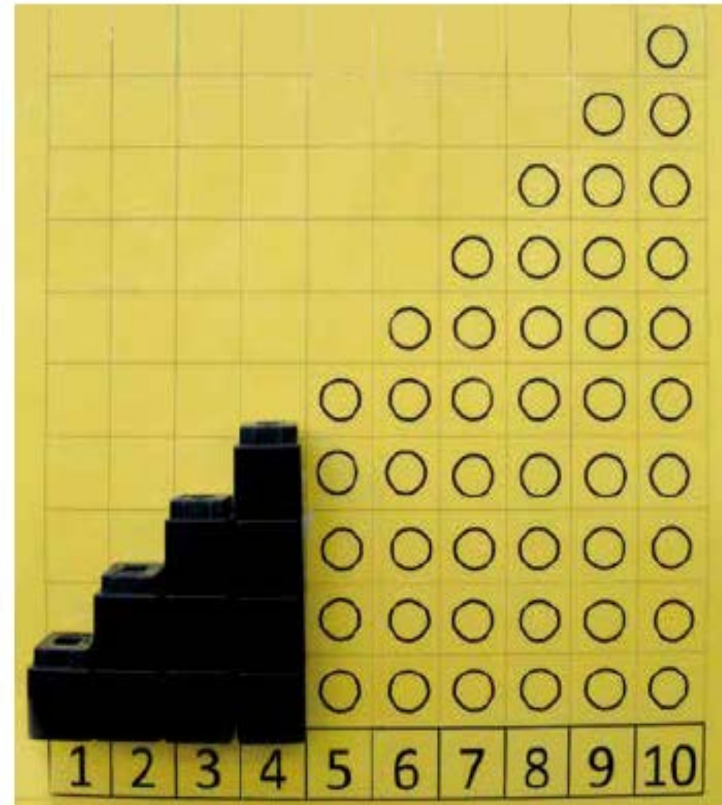
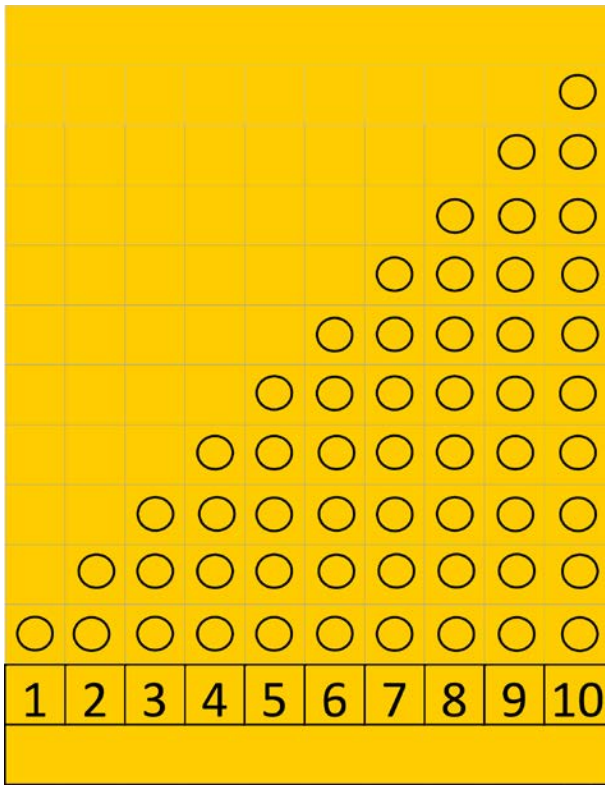


INTERLOCKING CUBES

NUMBER RECOGNITION  
CARDS

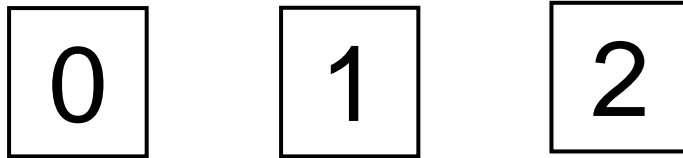


# MAGNITUDE COMPARISON





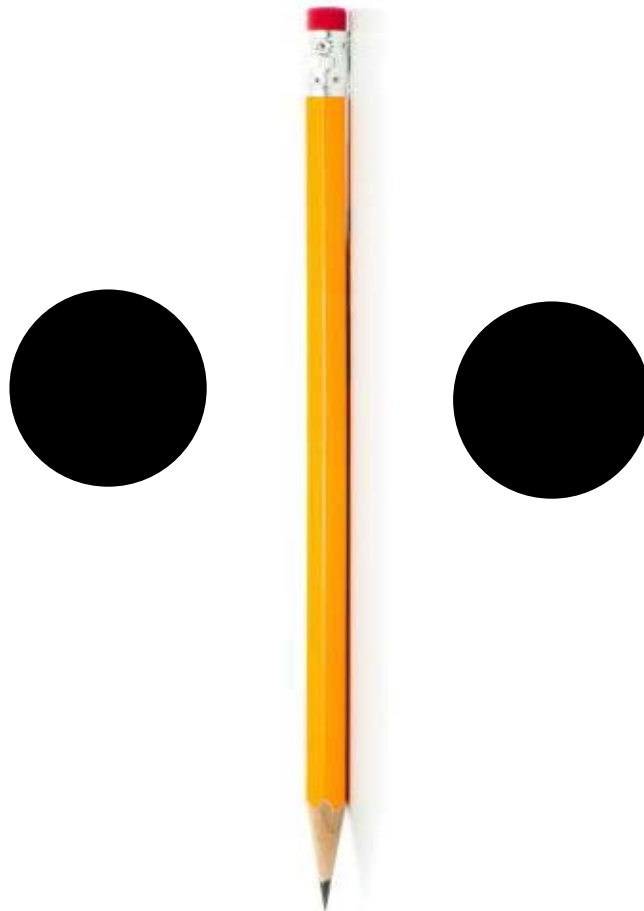
## MAGNITUDE COMPARISON CARD GAMES

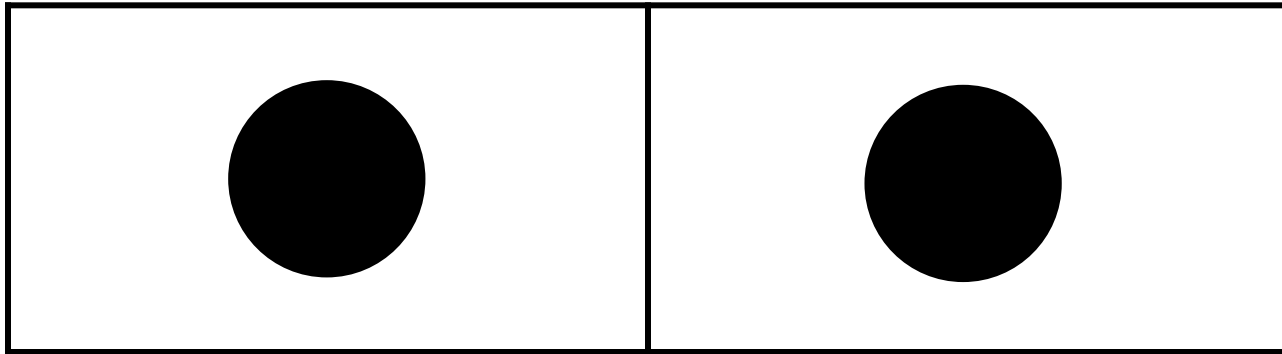


- Hold up two cards – “Which is Bigger?”
- Hold up one card – “What number comes before \_\_\_\_\_, what number comes after \_\_\_\_\_.”
- Put out all the cards – “Put these cards in order from smallest to largest.”



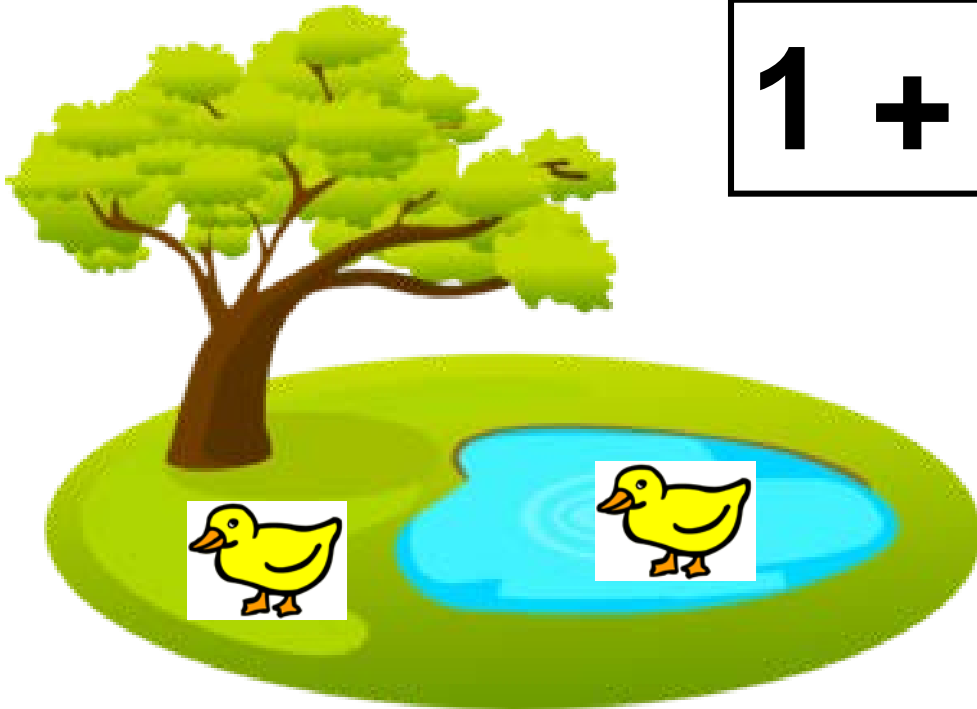
# NUMBER OPERATIONS





$$1 + 1 = 2$$

$$2 - 1 = 1$$





## INTRODUCING MORE NUMBERS

- Introduce one new number at a time
- Stop at 5 - ensure mastery before moving on
- Numbers 6 and above - 5 and 1,2,3,4,5
  - Fingers on 2 hands
  - Different color cubes above 5 on Cardinality Chart
  - Move to Ten Frame



## INTRODUCING MORE NUMBERS

- Stop at 10 – ensure mastery
  - Move from Cardinality Chart to Number List
  - Play Number List Games
  - Before/After Games
  - Bigger Smaller
- Numbers above 10 – 20    10 and 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
  - Use cubes to create sticks of 10
  - Use stick of 10 *and* n single cubes to build the number
  - Use Decade and Unit cards to *build* the numeral



# Center for Improving the Learning of Fractions

Principal Investigator: Dr. Nancy C. Jordan

Goals of the Center:

Conduct longitudinal analyses from 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade to...

- study the development of fraction knowledge
- examine predictors of fraction achievement
- assess how proficiency with whole number operations contribute to the ability to understand and operate with rational numbers.

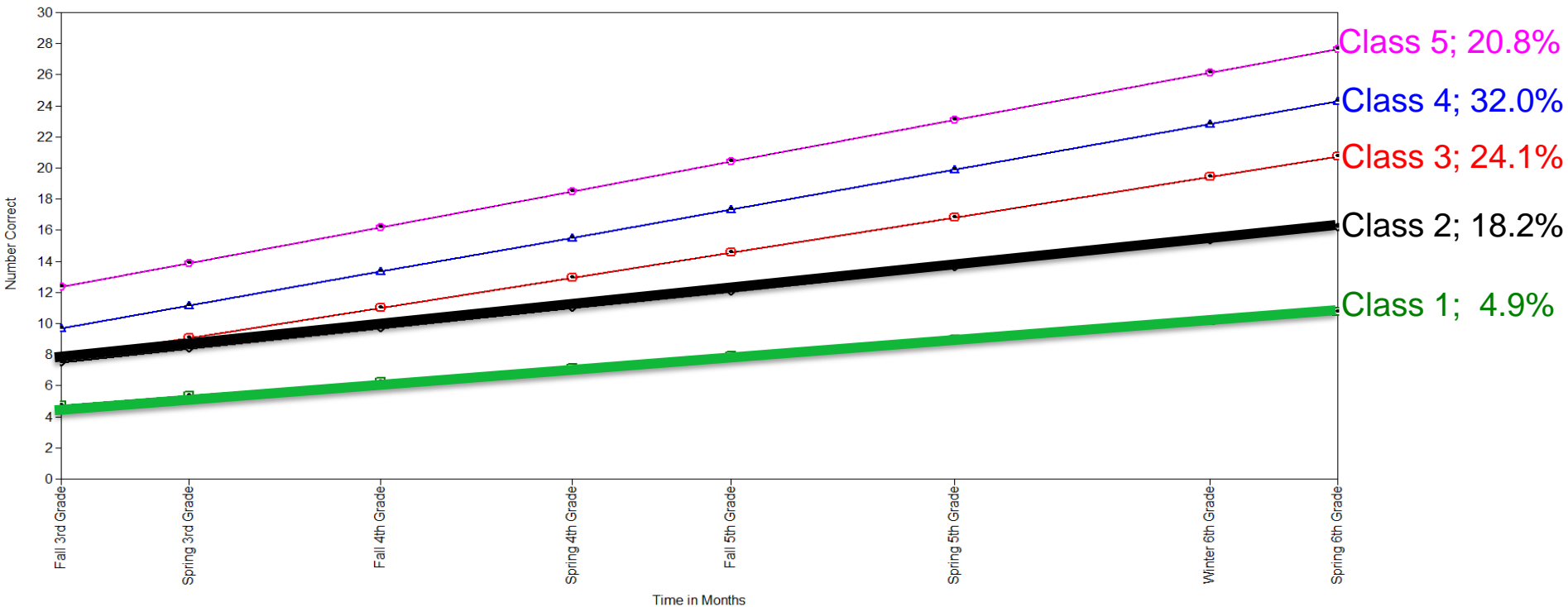




# Latent Class Analysis

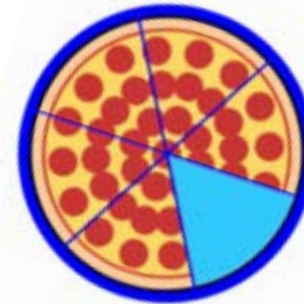
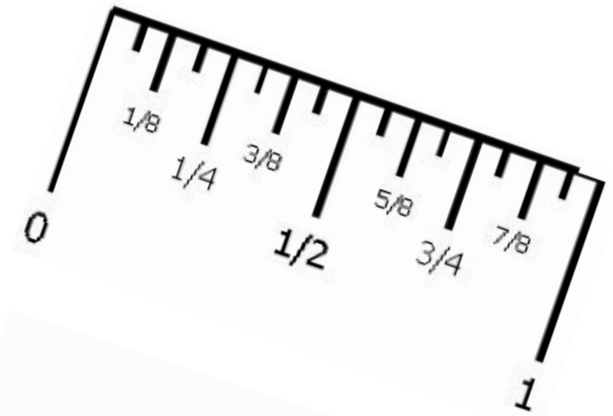
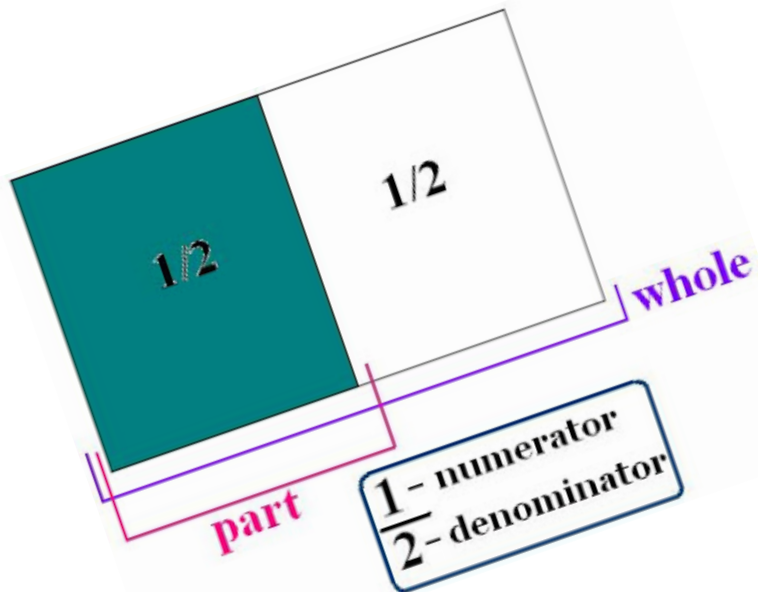
## Fraction Concepts

Hansen, N., Jordan, N. C., & Rodrigues, J. (2016)





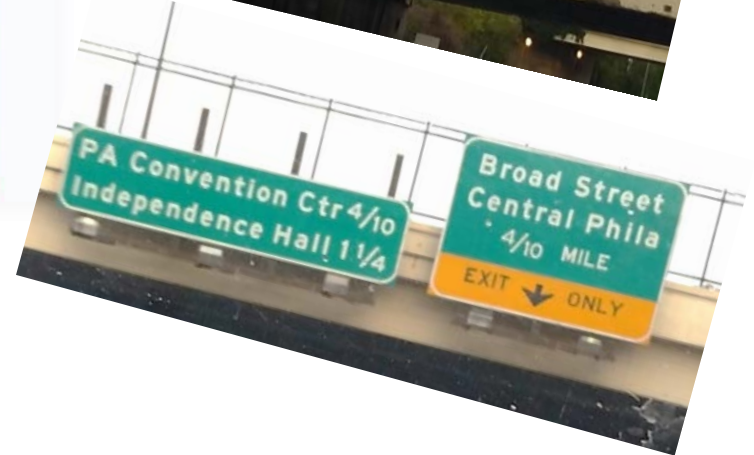
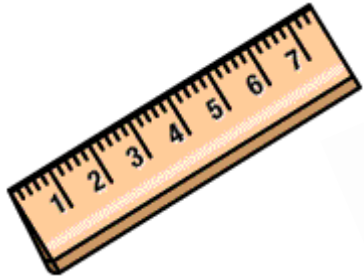
# Developing a Fraction Sense Intervention for Struggling Middle School Students





# Fractions are Important!

Students will need fractions for every day problem solving



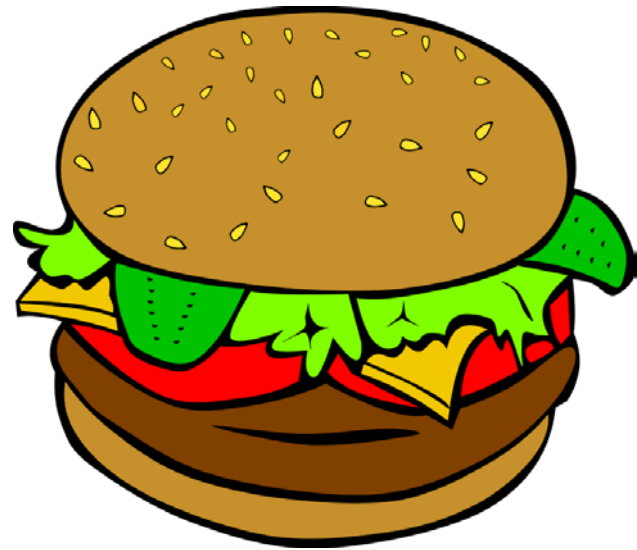




## Fractions do not make sense even to many adults!


$\frac{1}{3}$  pounder OR  $\frac{1}{4}$  pounder

Which has more beef?





## Why Fractions are Hard!

WHOLE NUMBERS	FRACTIONS
Only one numeral for each whole number magnitude	An infinite number of fractions can represent a given magnitude
0, 1, 2, 3, 4, .....	$1/2 = 2/4 = 4/8 = 5/10 = \dots\dots$
Each counting number is one more than the number before it.	There are an infinite number of fractions between any two numbers and the increment varies between fractions.
$0+1=1, 1+1=2, 2+1=3, 3+1=4, \dots$	
The magnitude of the number increases as you count higher.	The magnitude of a fraction increases as the numerator counts higher ( <i>if the denominator stays the same</i> ).
$1 < 2 < 3 < 4$	$1/4 < 2/4 < 3/4 < 4/4$



## Why Fractions are Hard!

### WHOLE NUMBERS

The magnitude of the number increases as you count higher.

$$1 < 2 < 3 < 4$$

The product of two whole numbers is always greater than (or equal to) either factor.

$$2 \times 3 = 6$$

### FRACTIONS

The magnitude of a fraction *decreases* as the denominator counts higher (if the numerator stays the same).

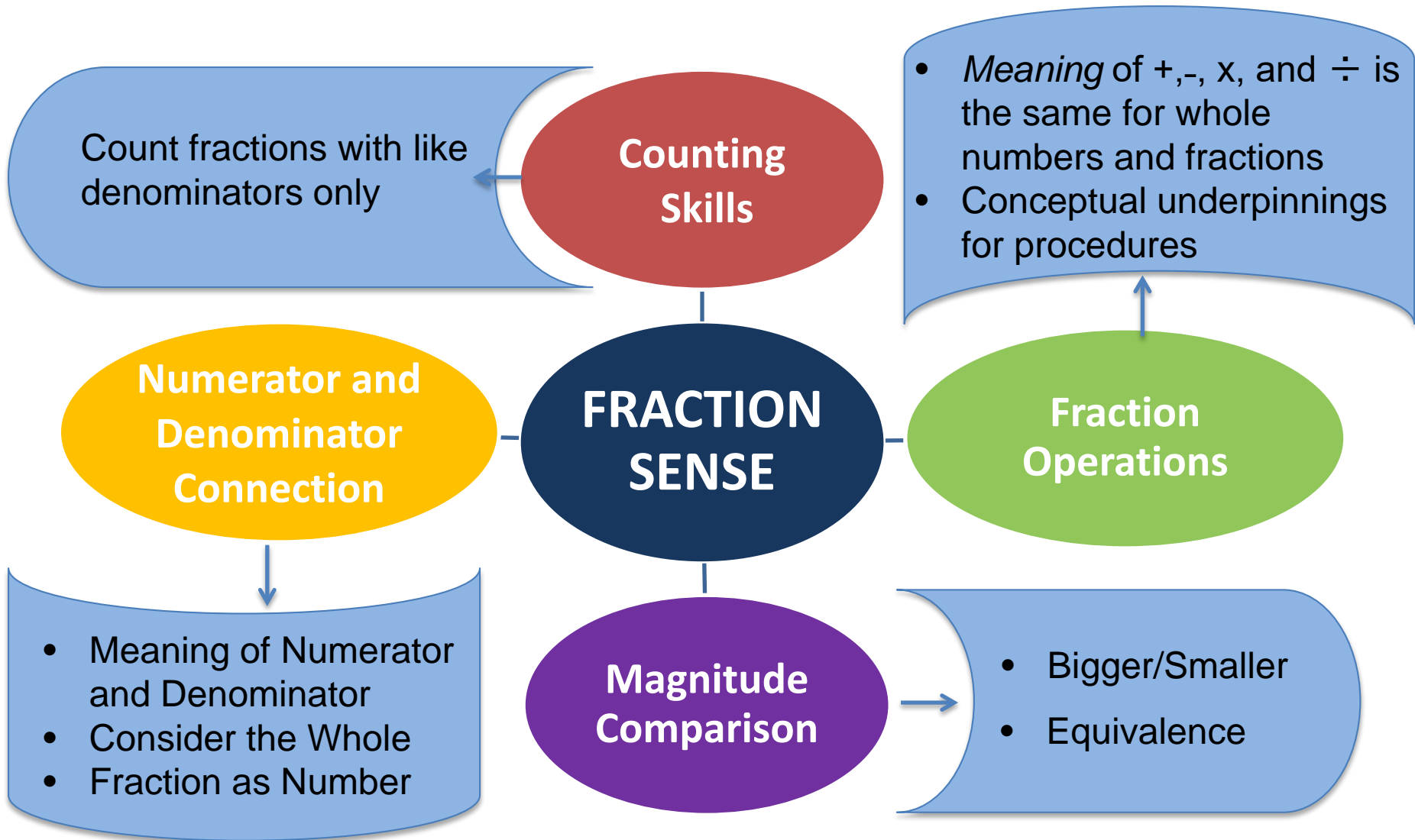
$$1/1 > 1/2 > 1/3 > 1/4$$

But what about when they both change?!?

$$2/4 < 3/5 \quad 3/5 < 2/3$$

The product of two fractions can be less than either factor.

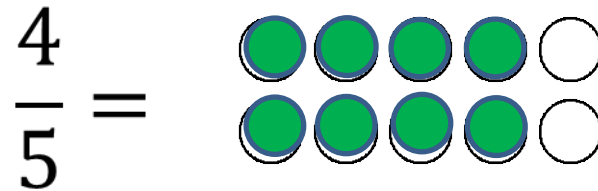
$$1/2 \times 3/4 = 3/8$$



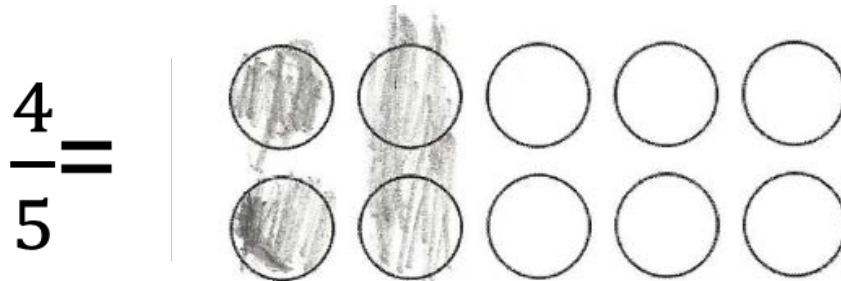




# Examples of Misconceptions

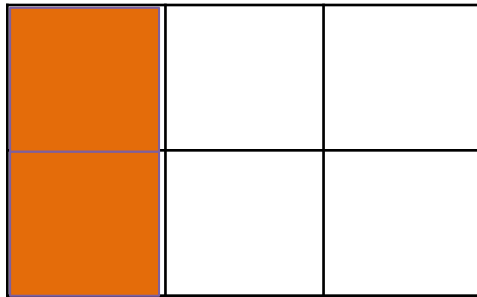


**Most common incorrect response**



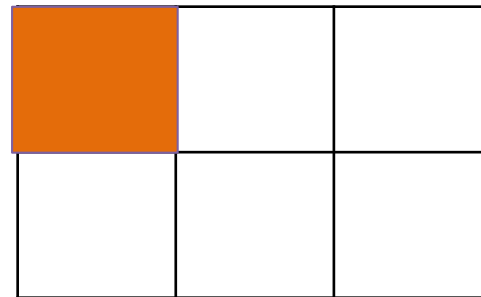


# Examples of Misconceptions



Shade  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the rectangle above.

**Most Common  
Incorrect Response:**

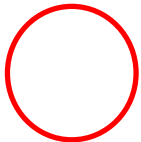




## Examples of Misconceptions

In which of the following are the three fractions arranged from least to greatest?

A.





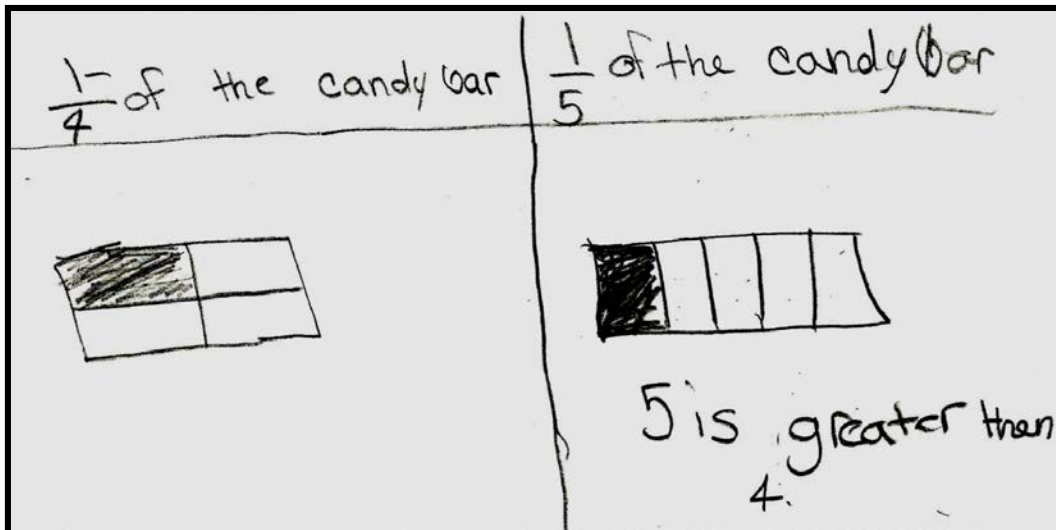
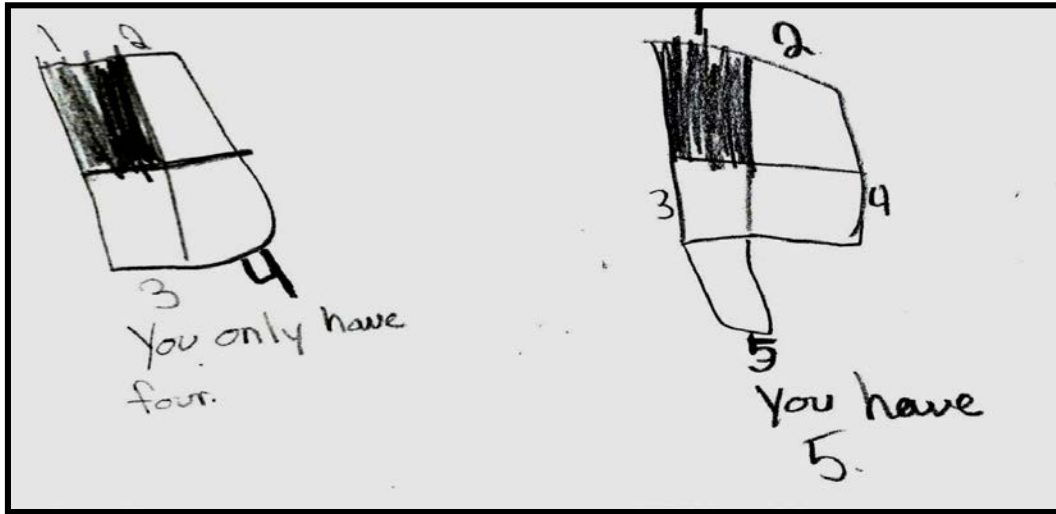
## Examples of Misconceptions

Mark says  $\frac{1}{4}$  of his candy bar is smaller than  $\frac{1}{5}$  of the same candy bar. Is Mark right? Explain.





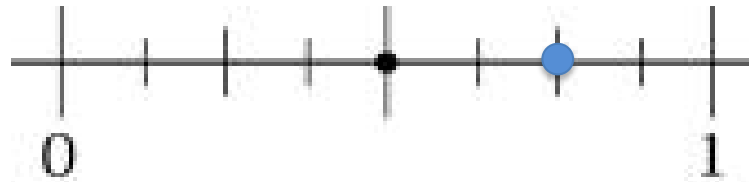
## Comparing $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{5}$



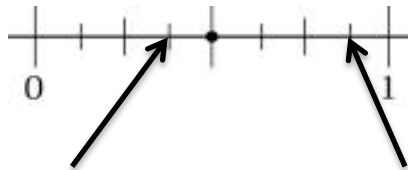


# Examples of Misconceptions

On the portion of the number line below, a dot shows where  $\frac{1}{2}$  is. Use another dot to show where  $\frac{3}{4}$  is.

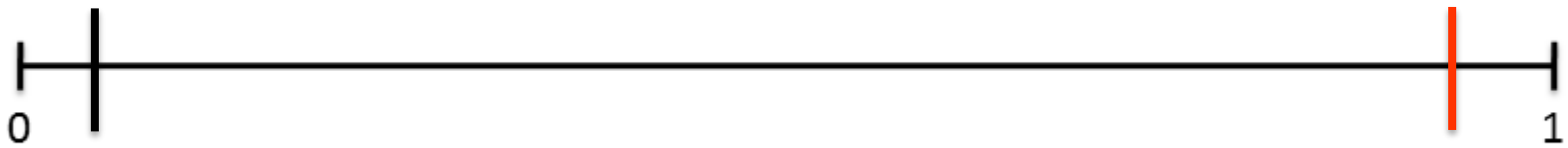


**Most Common  
Incorrect Responses:**

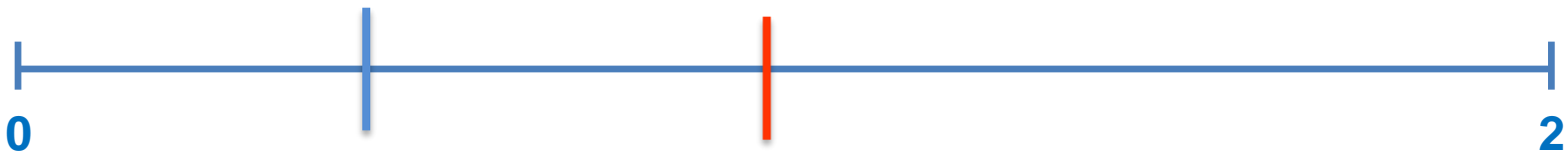




Estimating fraction magnitudes on a number line:



$$\frac{1}{19}$$



$$\frac{1}{2}$$



# Latent Class Analysis

Fraction Number Line Estimation

Resnick, I., Jordan, N.C., Hansen, et al. (2016)

Scores were calculated as Percent Absolute **Error (PAE)**, meaning that *lower scores indicate better performance*.

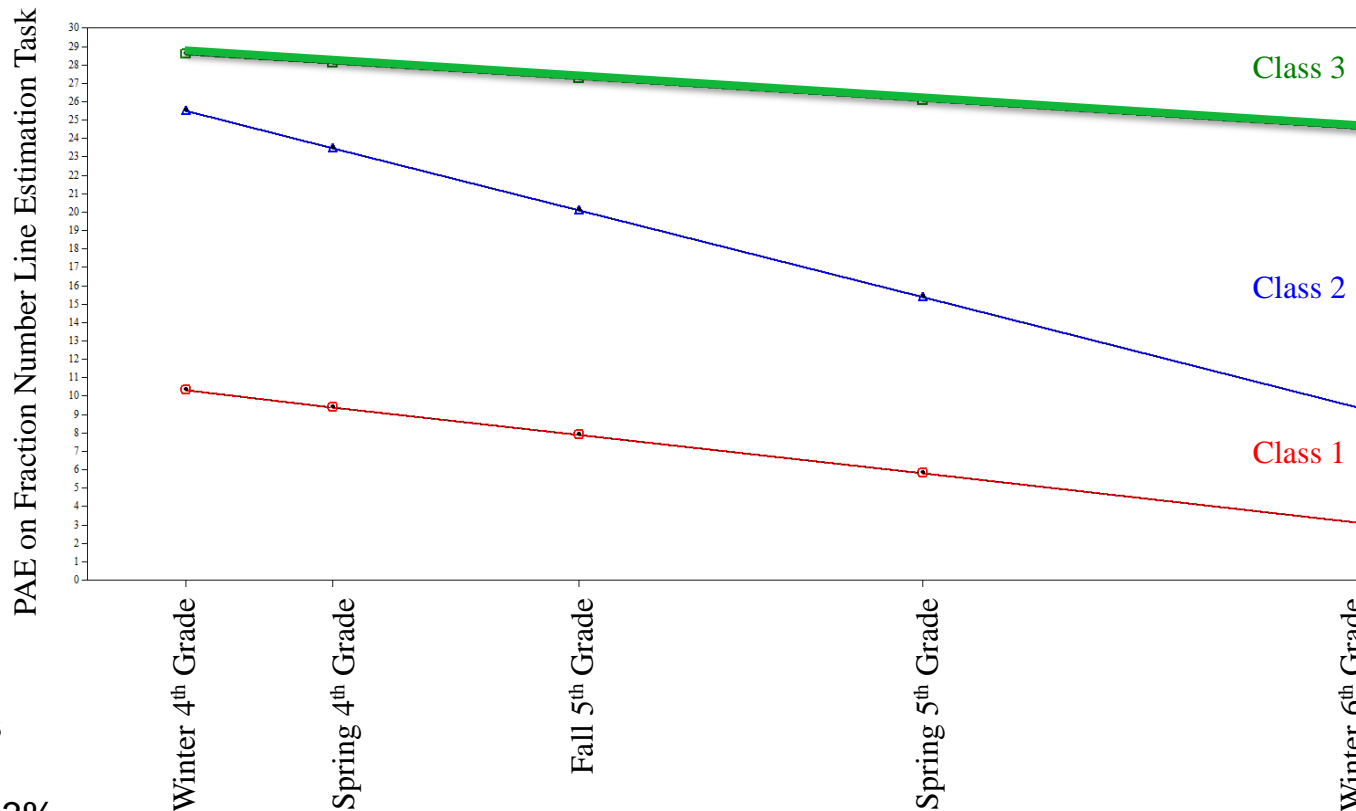




# Latent Class Analysis

## Fraction Number Line Estimation

Resnick, I., Jordan, N.C., Hansen, et al. (2016)



### FNLE Classes

Total: 472

Class 1: 154; 33%

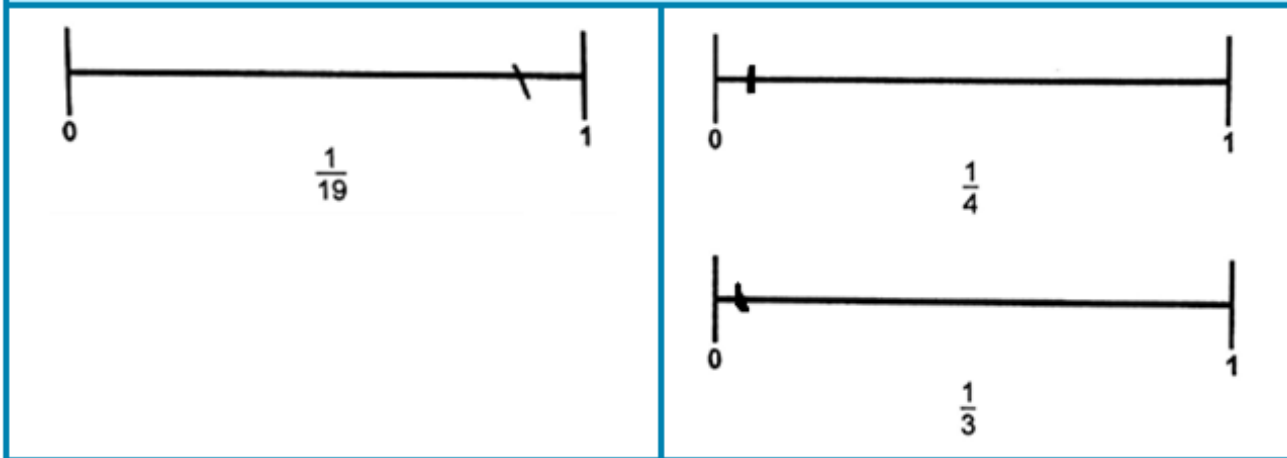
Class 2: 121; 25%

Class 3: 197; 42%



# Examples of Misconceptions

(A) Inaccurate estimations of unit fractions on a 0-1 number line:





# Fraction Sense Intervention



Small group (4 students /1 instructor)  
24 lessons, everyday  
40 minutes each



## COLOR RUN



0

4



# Many Concepts - Few Numbers

## *HALVES*



# Developing Fraction Sense

40-minute lessons:

- Warm Up
- Exercises
- Huddle
- Fraction Game
- Sprint
- Cool Down



# Developing Fraction Sense with Halves

## **WARM UP**

Written activity done as students arrive to the intervention.

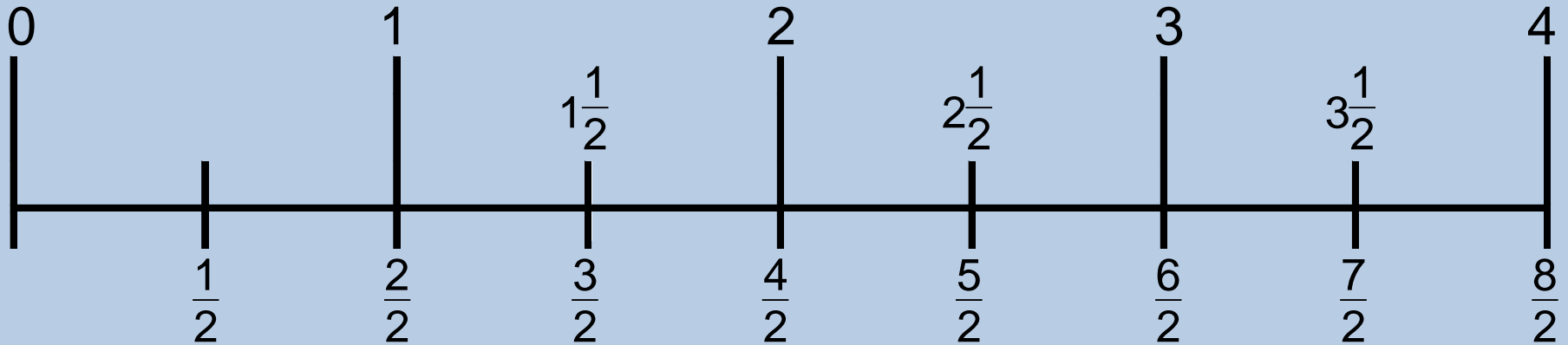
Matches the previous day's **COOL DOWN**



# Developing Fraction Sense with Halves

## EXERCISES

### Oral Counting Activities with Halves







# Developing Fraction Sense with Halves

## HUDDLE

Develop Fraction Concepts, Vocabulary, and Strategies using Halves

How can I separate this into halves?

- 2 EQUAL Portions ?
- Ask, “Of What Whole?”



# Developing Fraction Sense with Halves

$$\frac{1}{2}$$

of what WHOLE







# Developing Fraction Sense with Halves

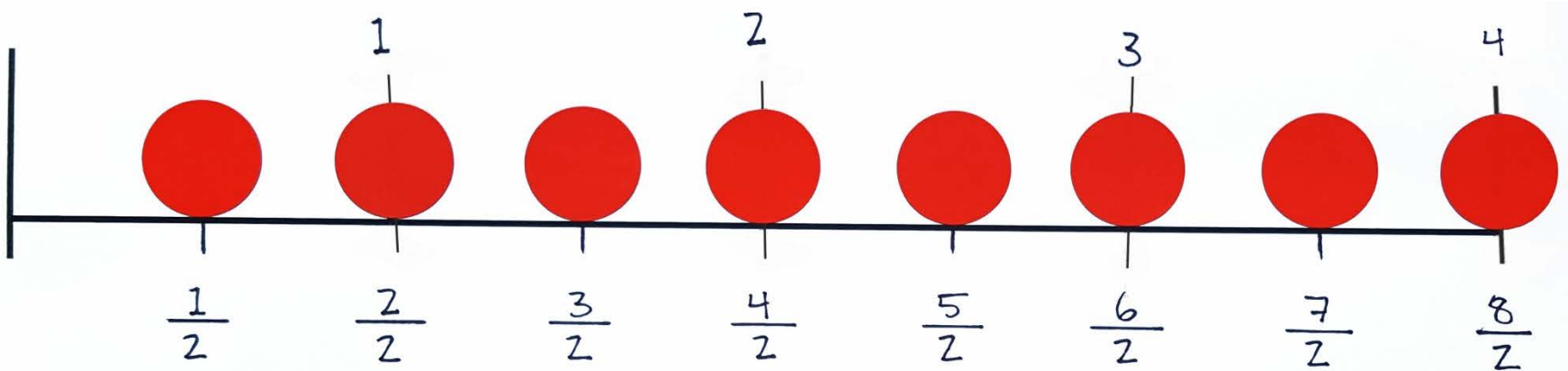
Developing Number Line Concepts Using a Race Course



Use a paper bar to measure whole miles



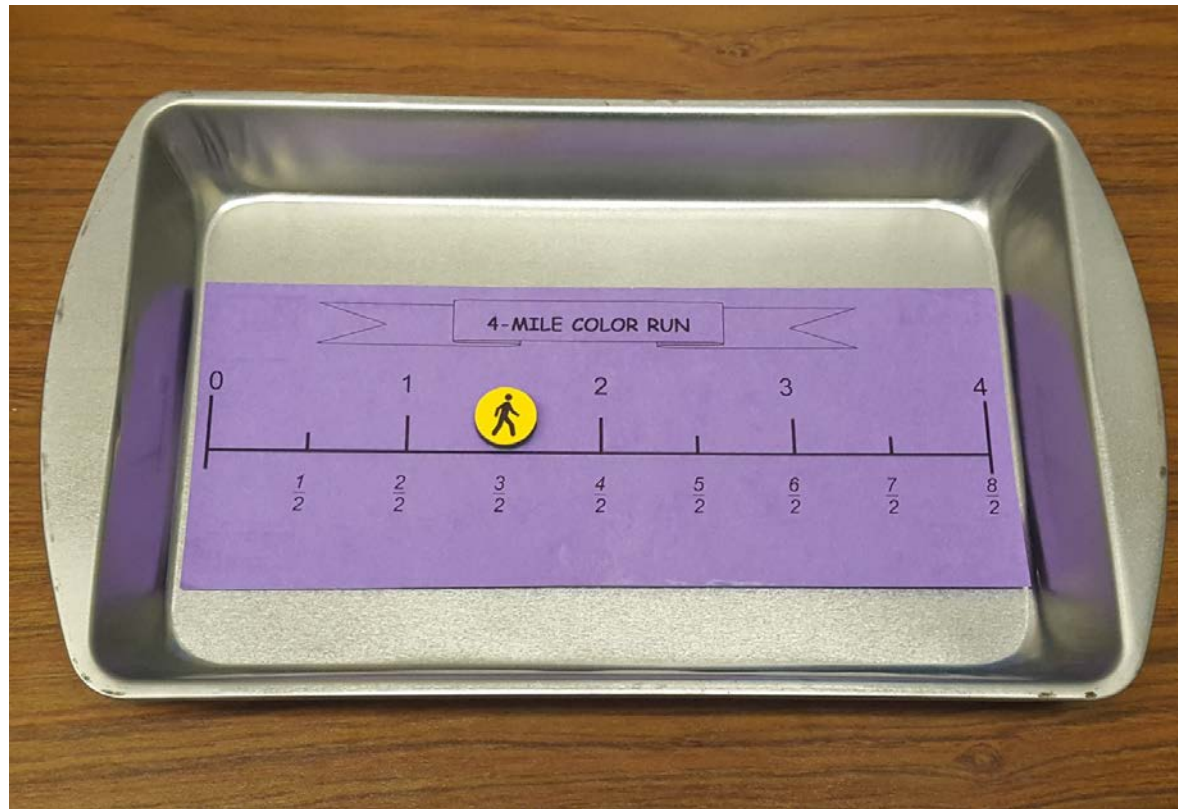
## 4-Mile Race Course with Half Miles Marked



1. Mark Halves (use folded paper bar to check accuracy)
2. Put on stickers
3. Label halves – note whole number/halves equivalencies



# Walking the Race Course to Solve Equations

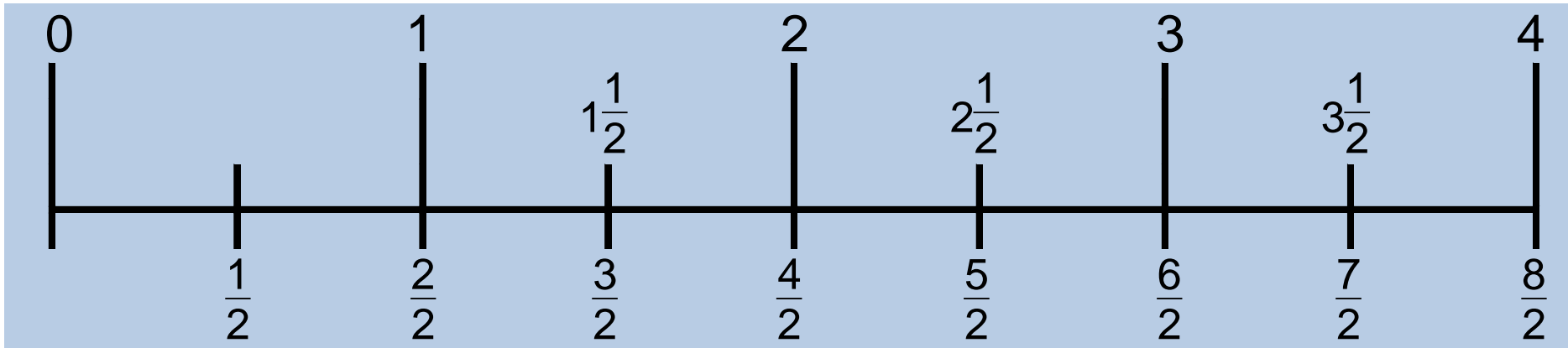


$$\frac{2}{2} + \frac{1}{2} = \frac{3}{2}$$

$$\frac{3}{2} - \frac{1}{2} = \frac{2}{2}$$



## Whole and Mixed Numbers



- Note Mixed Number / Improper Fraction Equivalences
- Change From Mixed Number to Improper Fraction
- Change from Improper Fraction to Mixed Number



# Connecting Fraction Models to Deepen Conceptual Understanding







Using fraction bars on the number line emphasizes that  $\frac{1}{2}$  stands for the distance from 0 to  $\frac{1}{2}$  - not just the location where the  $\frac{1}{2}$  is written.

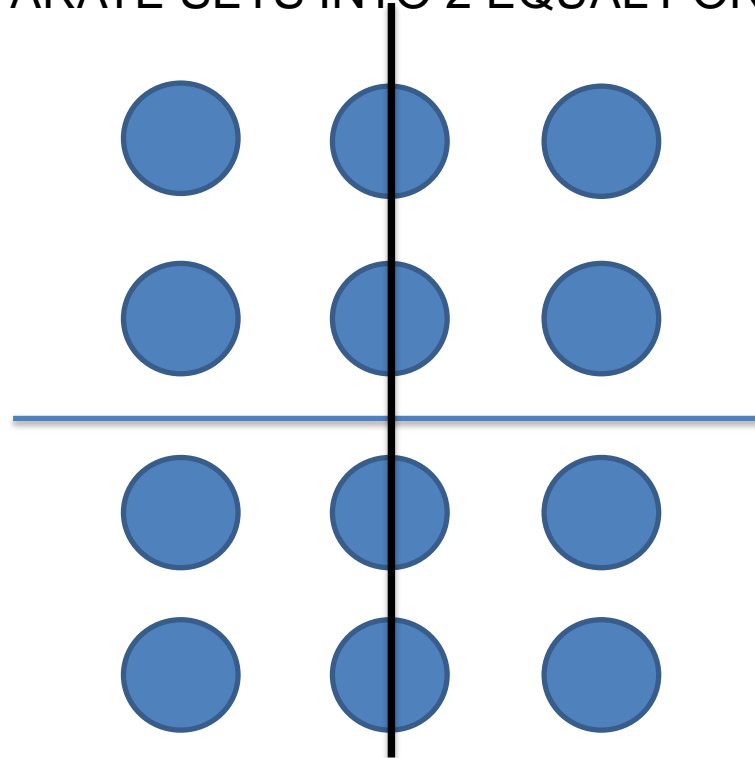




## USING SAME STRATEGY for FRACTION of a SET

Find  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 12 circles

SEPARATE SETS INTO 2 EQUAL PORTIONS

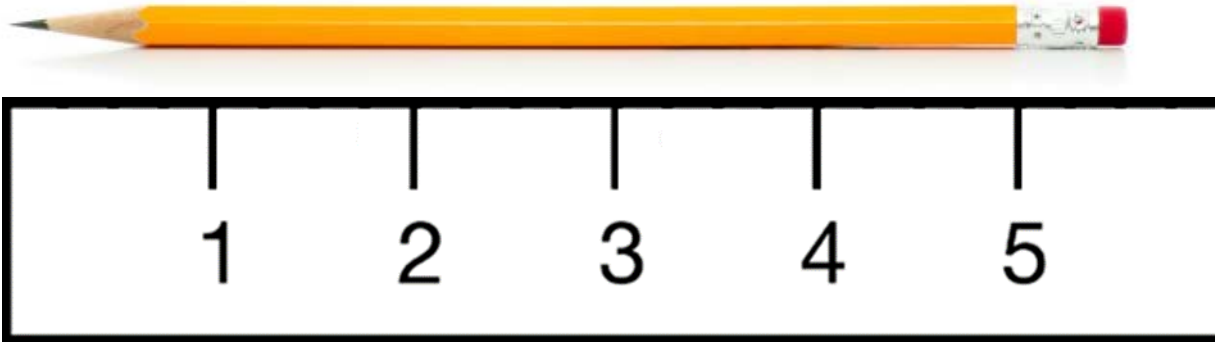


$\frac{1}{2}$  of 12 circles is 6 circles (introduction to multiplication by a fraction)



## CONNECTING TO EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES

### RULER ACTIVITIES Ruler Marked in Halves





## Introducing THIRDS with a Proportional Reasoning Task



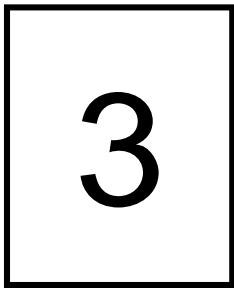
A Measuring Cup = a *Vertical* Number Line



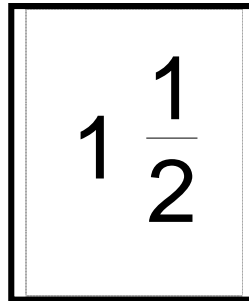
# Developing Fraction Sense with Halves

## FRACTION GAMES

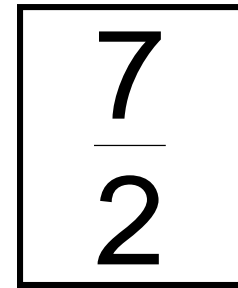
Fast-paced card games to reinforce lesson concepts and develop fluency



How many halves?



How many halves?



What mixed number?



# Developing Fraction Sense with Halves

## SPRINT

Multiplication Facts that Support the Lesson

For Halves:  $n \times 2$

$$5 \times 2 = 10$$

Initial Practice with  
Front of Card

$$5 \times 2 =$$

Final Practice with  
Back of Card

Front of card is shown for ERROR correction –  
students always end with a correct statement



# Developing Fraction Sense with Halves

## COOL DOWN

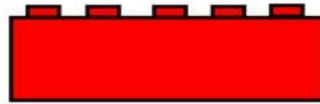
### Formative assessment and review

Use your ruler to measure the length of the pen to the **exact**  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch:



\_\_\_\_\_ in.

Use your ruler to measure the length of the Lego piece to the **closest**  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch:



\_\_\_\_\_ in.

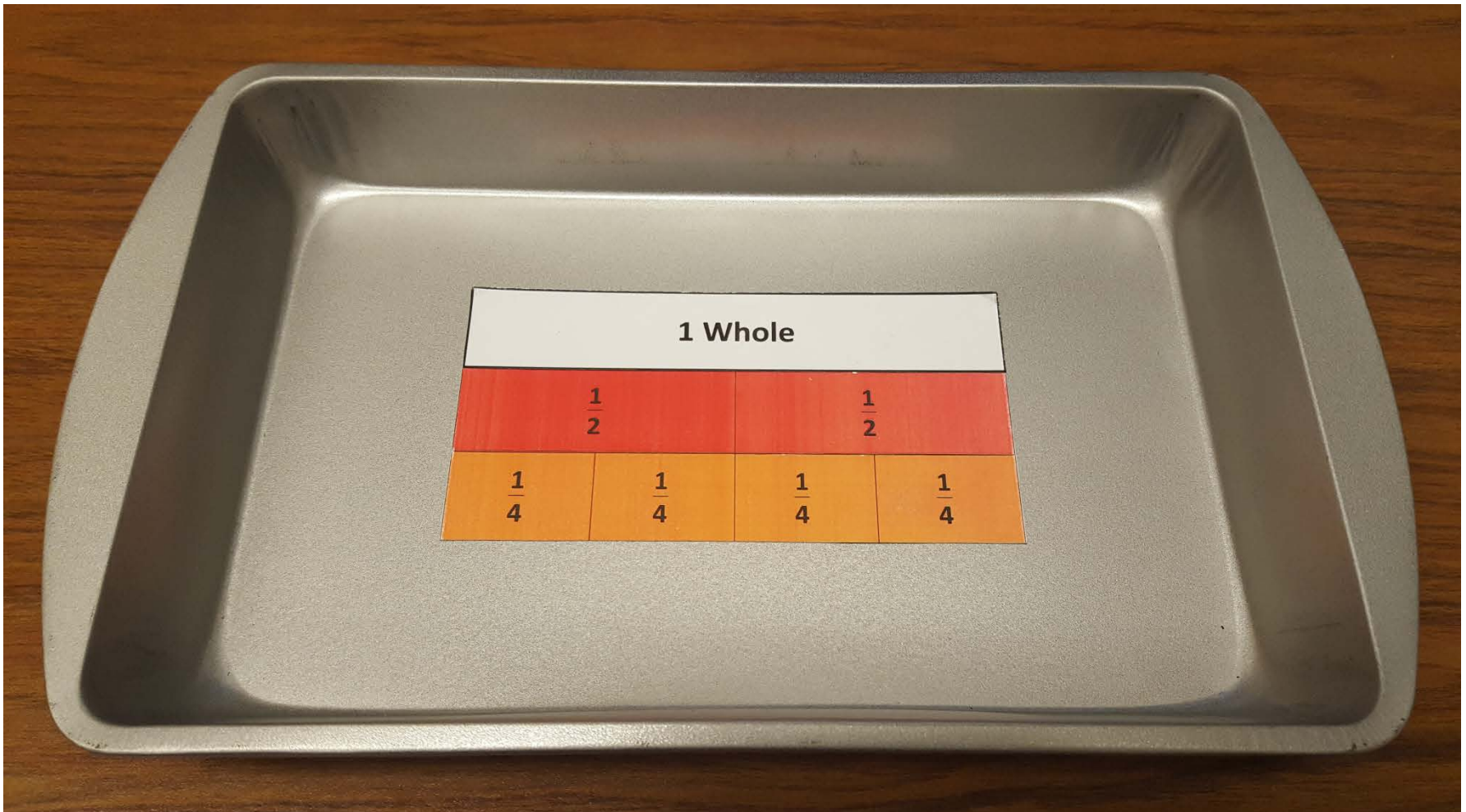
Use your rulers to help you solve the equations.  
Write your answers with **mixed** or **whole numbers**.

$$\frac{5}{2} \text{ inches} + \frac{2}{2} \text{ inches} =$$

$$\frac{4}{2} \text{ inches} - \frac{3}{2} \text{ inches} =$$



## SEPARATING HALVES TO MAKE FOURTHS

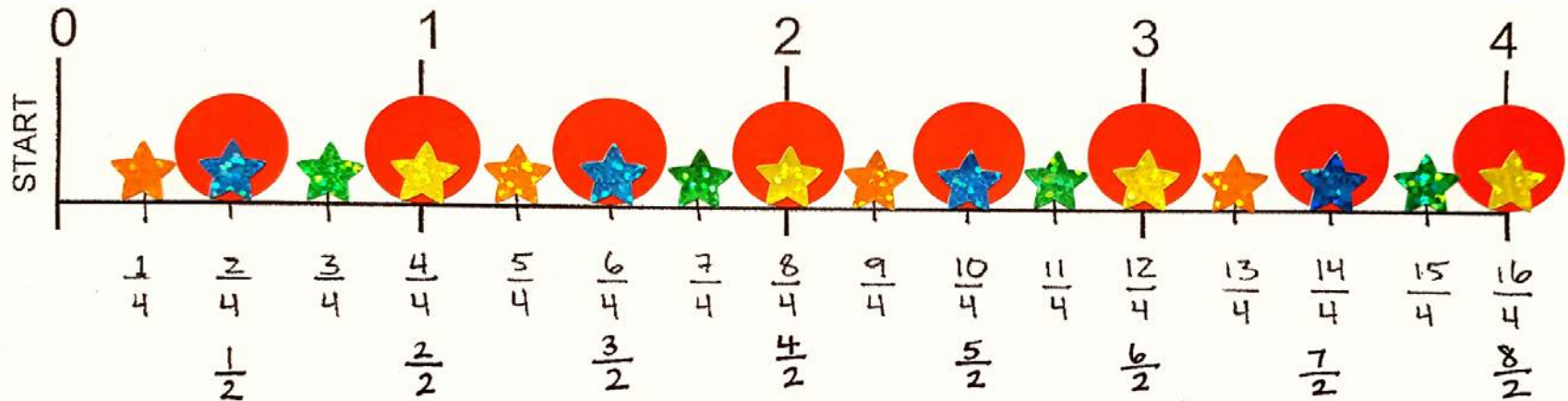




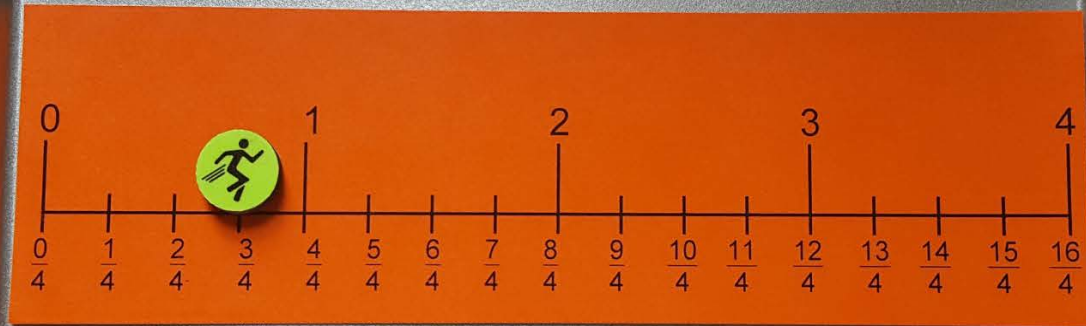


# SEPARATING HALVES TO MAKE FOURTHS

## Finding Equivalent Fractions



- Mark Halves – put on stickers
- Mark Fourths – put on stickers
- Label Fourths
- Label Halves
- Find Equivalent Fractions







*Teaching Exceptional Children*

# Preparing for Algebra by Building Fraction Sense

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**THANK YOU!**

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