

Problem of the Week

The following tasks address basic operations while highlighting mathematical vocabulary – sum, difference, product. The tasks are meant to be open-ended so that discussion can support understanding.

Be mindful that during these prompts, it is important the teacher listens to student conversations and asks questions that illicit student thinking.

Primary	<p>Ask students to represent two different numbers using 13 base-ten blocks that meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When you subtract the smallest number from the largest number, the difference is about 20.• When you add the two numbers, the sum is about 100. <p>To meet this goal, must you use more tens (rods) than ones (units)? How do you know?</p>
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Elementary	<p>Ask students to represent two different numbers using 11 base-ten blocks that meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One number is considerably larger than the other number.• When you multiply the two numbers, the product is greater than 80. <p>To meet this goal, must both numbers be less than 10. How do you know?</p>
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Intermediate	<p>Ask students to make two different fractions that meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Digits 1-9 can only be used one time.• When you subtract the smallest fraction from the largest fraction, the difference is approximately half.• When you add the two fractions, the sum is greater than one. <p>What are the two fractions? What is the difference? What is the sum (as both an improper fraction and mixed number)?</p>
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