



Family Letter for Unit 4

Dear Family,

During the next few weeks, our math class will be learning and practicing addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of fractions, mixed numbers, and decimals.

You can expect to see work that provides practice with finding equivalent fractions and writing fractions in simplest form. You may wish to use the following samples as a guide to give help if needed.

Vocabulary

fraction A number that names a part of a whole, a part of a collection, or a part of a region.

decimal A number with one or more digits to the right of a decimal point.

prime number A whole number, greater than 1 that has exactly two factors.

greatest common factor The greatest whole number that is a common factor of two or more numbers. It is also called the greatest common divisor.

Adding Fractions

You can only add or subtract fractions with the same denominator.

$$\frac{4}{5} + \frac{2}{3}$$

To add these fractions, find a number that has both 3 and 5 as a factor.

$3 \times 5 = 15$, so both fractions can be expressed in fifteenths

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \begin{array}{c} \times 3 \\ \frac{4}{5} = \frac{12}{15} \\ \times 3 \end{array} \\
 \begin{array}{c} \times 5 \\ \frac{2}{3} = \frac{10}{15} \\ \times 5 \end{array} \\
 \hline
 \frac{4}{5} = \frac{12}{15} \\
 + \frac{2}{3} = \frac{10}{15} \\
 \hline
 \frac{22}{15} = \frac{15}{15} + \frac{7}{15} \\
 = 1\frac{7}{15}
 \end{array}$$

Simplest Form

Sometimes you need to express answers in simplest form. A fraction is in simplest form when the only common factor of the numerator and the denominator is 1.

$$\begin{array}{l}
 \frac{12}{18} \quad \leftarrow \text{numerator } (2 \times 2 \times 3) \\
 \quad \quad \leftarrow \text{denominator } (2 \times 3 \times 3)
 \end{array}$$

The numerator and the denominator have 2 and 3 as common factors. Eliminate the common factors to simplify the fraction.

$$\frac{12}{18} = \frac{\cancel{2} \times \cancel{2} \times \cancel{3}}{\cancel{2} \times \cancel{3} \times 3} = \frac{2}{3}$$

You could also divide the numerator and denominator by their greatest common factor, or 6.

Have your child help with fractional and decimal computation while completing household projects or dealing with money.

Sincerely,



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