Problem Solving: Use a Simpler Problem

Marcello and Alphonso shared a plate of French fries. Marcello ate \( \frac{2}{5} \) of the plate of fries. Alphonso ate \( \frac{1}{5} \) of the plate of fries. What fraction of the plate of French fries did they eat in total?

What you know:
- Marcello ate \( \frac{2}{5} \) of the plate of fries.
- Alphonso ate \( \frac{1}{5} \) of the plate of fries.

Use easier numbers to solve the problem.

What if Marcello ate 2 French fries and Alphonso ate 1 French fry? Add 2 + 1 = 3.

Reread the problem. Solve using original numbers.
Add.
\[
\frac{2}{5} + \frac{1}{5} = \frac{3}{5}
\]
So together they ate \( \frac{3}{5} \) of the plate of fries.

Use a simpler problem to solve each problem. Show your work.

1. Maggie read \( \frac{1}{5} \) of a book in one night. How much of the book is left for her to read?

2. Julia drank \( \frac{1}{2} \) of a pitcher of water. Barb drank \( \frac{4}{9} \) of the same pitcher. What fraction of the pitcher did they drink together?

Writing Math  Suppose you are solving a word problem that involves adding or subtracting fractions with the same denominator. Explain how to make a simpler problem to solve.