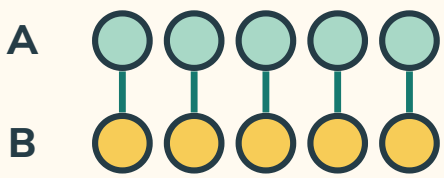
MATHS FIELD GUIDE · GRADE 1

Compare and order amounts

OPENING PROBLEM

Which row has more?



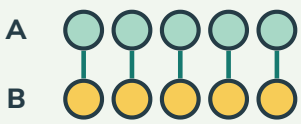
02 Pair first, then compare
03 Rules and worked cases
04 Seats at the table
05 Balance the two sides
06 Check your reasoning

ILLUSTRATED PROBLEM SHEET

Pair first, then compare

A pair uses one object from each set. Unpaired objects show the difference.

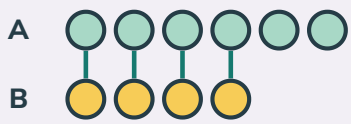
1



Which row has more?

Every counter finds one partner. The rows are equal.

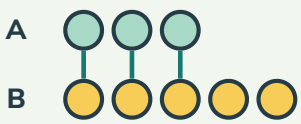
2



How many extra are in A?

Match four pairs. Two in A are left.

3



How could you make A equal B?

Add two to A, or take two from B.

4



Move one counter from A to B. What happens?

The rows become three and three. Moving one closes a gap of two.

Add one to both rows
the gap stays fixed.

Add one only to the shorter row
the gap shrinks by one.

CHAPTER PROBLEM

Order 3, 7 and 5 from fewest to most.

3, 5, 7.

MATHS REFERENCE · GRADE 1

Compare and order amounts

More means a larger amount. Fewer means a smaller amount.

Equal amounts have the same number of objects.

Four cases to recognise

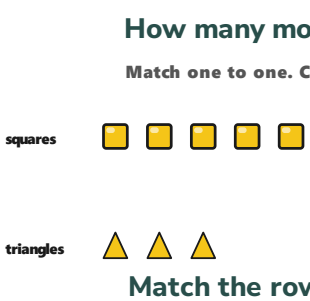
Situation	What to do and why
Six lids for eight jars	Pair a lid with each jar. Two jars remain uncovered.
Five dots in a tight row and five far apart	Every dot has a partner. The amounts are equal.
Four red and six blue counters	Blue has two more. Adding two red makes the counts equal.
Two trays hold six and four counters. Move one from the fuller tray to the other	Both groups now have five counters.

Read the model

Match one with one

Match each square with one triangle.

Five squares match three triangles, with two squares left. There are more squares.

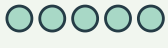


Size can fool us

A big object is not a bigger count.

Three large blocks are fewer objects than five small blocks. Count or match to check.

more A larger amount.
fewer A smaller amount.
equal The same amount.

A 

Count from the left. What if you start at the right?

Five either way. Each counter gets one number.

WORKED INVESTIGATION

Seats at the table

> Set out six cups and five plates. Pair one cup with each plate. The unpaired cup tells you that cups are more numerous.

Look at this part	What it tells you
Cup with plate	one pair
Five plates	five pairs
One cup left	one more cup than plates

Work it through

Add one plate. Pair it with the spare cup. Now neither group has anything left over, so the groups are equal.

Catch the mistake

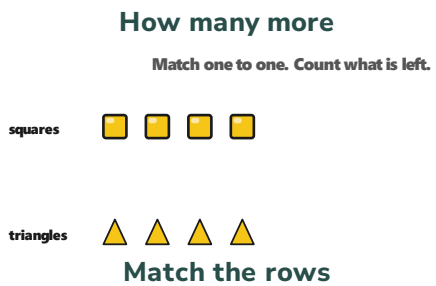
Spread five plates farther apart. Their row may look longer than the six-cup row. Pairing tells you which group has more objects.

Compare the cases

Equal does not mean identical

These groups use different shapes.

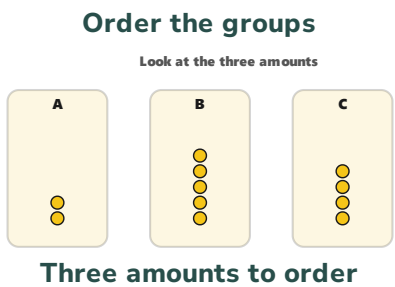
Each has four objects, so their amounts are equal.



Compare three amounts

The groups have two, five and four counters.

From fewest to most: two, four, five. Compare each neighbour in that order.



Change one condition

Take two cups away from the original six. There are now four cups for five plates, so the plates have one more.

Do not count the spaces

Spreading three counters out does not make six.

More space is not more objects. Match one with one.

Try a fair comparison

Make groups of six and eight blocks.

Match the blocks in pairs across the groups. Two blocks will be unmatched in the larger group.



How can you see five without starting at one again?

See three, then count on: four, five.

ILLUSTRATED PROBLEM SHEET

Balance the two sides

The equals sign says the two sides have the same value.

1



Can either side be read first?

Yes. Each row has two.

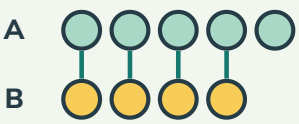
2

$$3 + 2$$
$$\downarrow$$
$$5$$
$$\downarrow$$
$$4 + 1$$

Can different additions have the same total?

Yes. Both describe five.

3



How could adding just one make the rows equal?

Add one to B. Adding one to A would increase the difference.

4

$$6 = 4 + \square$$
$$\downarrow$$
$$4 + 2 = 6$$

What fits the empty square?

Two. Four and two match the six on the other side.

$3 + 4 = 7$
the statement reads both ways.

$3 + 4 = 4 + 3$
swap the two addends and the total stays 7.

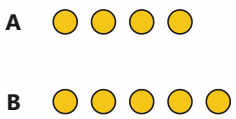
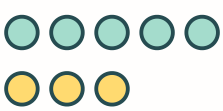
CHAPTER PROBLEM

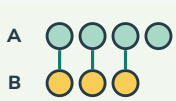
Two groups each have six objects. One is spread out. Are the amounts equal?

Yes. Both groups still have six objects.

QUESTION BANK · FOLD OR COVER THE RIGHT COLUMN

Check your reasoning

Try the problem	Solution and reasoning
01 Which row has more counters? How can you check? 	Row B. Match one with one: B has one counter left.
02 Two groups differ by one. Can moving one counter from the larger group make them equal?	No. The group with more will swap places with the group with fewer.
03 Take one from each side of a balance with five on each side. What happens?	Four remain on each side. Equality is preserved.
04 Four spoons and six bowls are paired. How many extra spoons would give every bowl one?	Two bowls are left without a spoon. Add two spoons and match again.
05 Five green and eight yellow blocks. How many yellow blocks have no green partner?	Five pairs use five of each. Three yellows remain.
06 Three children each need a chair. How many extra chairs are in a row of five?	Pair three chairs with the children. Two are extra.
07 How many top counters have no partner underneath? 	Two. Match three vertical pairs; two top counters remain.



Which counter cannot find a partner?

One in A. Four needs one more partner than three.

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