

Worth a thousand words

A picture can serve as a powerful tool for students to investigate the mathematics in their everyday lives. Share a photo of something students experience regularly in their communities: a local restaurant menu, a bus ticket, or even a bowl of fruit. Ask students to find the mathematics in the picture. Start by brainstorming as a class, paying close attention to the numerical or geometric aspects of the photo. Allow students to work as partners or in groups to create problems relevant to the context.

Julia and Marcus, two third-grade students, wrote the following problem about the fruit cart photo:

Mrs. Rodriquez bought a large cup of mangos and a small cup of watermelon. The small cup costs \$1.75, and the larger cup costs twice as much as the smaller order. If Mrs. Rodriquez paid \$10.00, how much money would she get back?

Photos can also be used to examine number patterns and to subitize quantities. Marie, a first-grade student, brought in a photo of the fruit bowl in her kitchen. Her teacher flashed the photo quickly (for 2–3 seconds) on the overhead projector to encourage subitization and recognition of number patterns. Then she asked, “How many pieces of fruit did you see? How did you know?”



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Pennsylvania. Submit your quick game, puzzle, activity, or instructional strategy along with suggestions for how teachers of different grade bands (K–1, 2–3, 4–6) can use this idea. Send submissions of no more than 250 words to this department by accessing tcm.msubmit.net. See detailed submission guidelines for all departments at www.nctm.org/tcmdepartments.

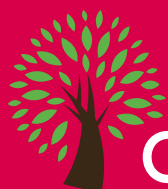
Teaching tips

- Discuss with students the elements of a “rich” problem.
- Allow students to work through the writing process as they develop their problems.
- Encourage students to bring in photos of the mathematics in their daily lives.



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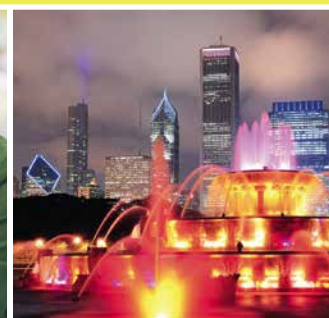
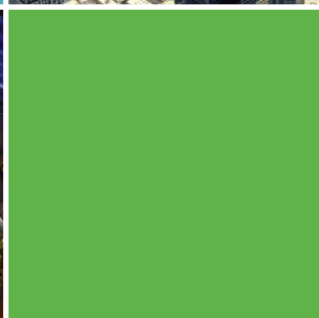
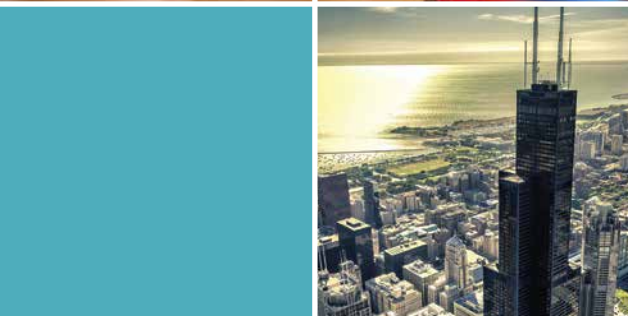
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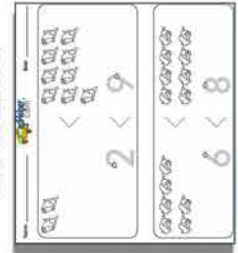


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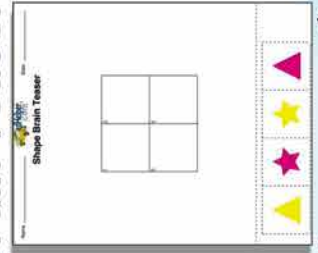
Bulletin Boards



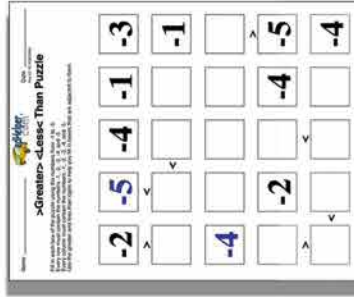
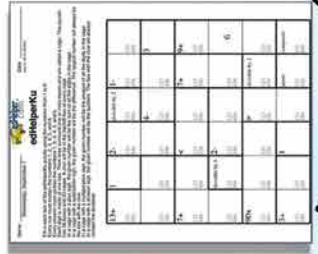
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