

FAMILY MATH

Simplifying Strategies for Addition

Dear Family,

Your student is learning different strategies to add numbers to 200. They learn to add by decomposing, or breaking, the addends into parts. They can rearrange the parts and add in a different order to make a simpler problem. Ultimately, there is no one correct way to add. The goal is for your student to make thoughtful decisions based on what is most helpful for them. Practice using a variety of strategies helps them build flexible thinking skills.

Key Terms

compensation

decompose

Make a Ten

$$46 + 38 = 84$$

$$44 + 40 = 84$$

Break apart one addend to make the next ten.

Add Like Units

$$46 + 38 = 84$$

$$40 + 30 + 6 + 8 = 84$$

$$70 + 14 = 84$$

Break apart both addends to add tens with tens, and ones with ones.

Count On with Benchmark Numbers

$$46 + 38 = 84$$

$$46 \xrightarrow{+30} 76 \xrightarrow{+4} 80 \xrightarrow{+4} 84$$

Count on from one addend by breaking apart the other addend to reach benchmark numbers.

Compensation

$$46 + 38 = 84$$

$$+40$$

$$46 \xrightarrow{+40} 86 \xrightarrow{-2} 84$$

Add a benchmark number, such as 10 or 20, to one addend. Then subtract the extra amount that was added to get to the benchmark number.

At-Home Activities

Closest 10

Play a game with your student to see if you can each find the “closest 10” for numbers you know. Consider using age, time, or numbers of objects.

- “Grandma’s age is 68. What is the closest 10 to 68?” (70)
- “It is 33 minutes until dinner time. What is the closest 10 to 33?” (30 minutes)
- “There are 24 dinner rolls in the package. What is the closest 10 to 24?” (20 rolls)

Is There Another Way?

Take turns adding with your student. Select two numbers that are relevant to your student, such as your age and your student’s age. Or consider a four-digit number, such as a house number or birthdate, as 2 two-digit numbers. Then add them. Have them share their strategy for adding. Then ask if they can think of another way to find the total.