Grade 4 - Unit 4

Our class is beginning Unit 4: Fractions. The purpose of this unit is to take the students to the next level of understanding of fractions. Students will use models, fraction strips, and pattern blocks to review equivalent fractions. Students will also compare and order fractions and represent fractions on a number line. Students will add and subtract fractions with unlike and like denominators. They will use benchmark fractions (0, ½, and 1) to estimate and compute fractions. Students will be introduced to decimals in this unit and the relationship of fractions to decimals. They will use picture models to help them understand decimals, then will compare decimals, add and subtract decimals, and represent decimals on a number line.

Some examples of the work your child will be doing are:

* Students will understand the relationship between mixed ( 3 ½ ) and improper (7/2) fractions.
* Example:
* Students will see that benchmark fractions help them to estimate and compute. Using the benchmarks of 0$, ½$ , and 1 is a great way to visualize the relative size of fractions and is useful in estimating sums and differences of mixed fractions.
* Example: Is $\frac{5}{6}$ closer to 0,$\frac{1}{2}$, or 1? Explain.
* Example: Mrs. Stein cooked chicken pot pie for dinner. Her children ate $\frac{1}{4}$ of the pot pie and her husband ate $\frac{1}{8}$ of the pot pie. Did her family eat more or less than $\frac{1}{2} $of the pie?
* Students will understand that equivalent fractions can represent the same quantity.
* Example: Using the fraction strips, students find all the fraction pieces that are equivalent to $\frac{3}{4}$
* Example: Find the mixed number equivalent to 8/5.
* Students will order and compare fractions.
* Example: Is $\frac{4}{5}$ or $\frac{5}{6}$ greater? Explain your thinking.
* Example: Is .7 or .35 smaller? Explain your thinking.
* Students will locate fractions and decimals on a number line.
* Example: Locate the following on the number line: $\frac{3}{8}$, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ , and $\frac{10}{8}$.
* Example: : Locate the following on the number line: .7, 2.3, .58
* Students will add and subtract fractions with like and unlike denominators. Students will add and subtract decimals.
* Examples: $\frac{2}{6}$ + $\frac{3}{6}$ = \_\_\_\_\_ $\frac{5}{6}$ – $\frac{2}{3}$ =\_\_\_\_\_
* Example: 1.7 + .35 = \_\_\_\_\_ 7.0 – 5.6 = \_\_\_\_\_

Here is how you can help your child while our class is working on this unit:

* Practice multiplication and division facts. Fluency in these facts becomes increasingly important as students work with fractions.
* Reinforce strategies that help your child think flexibly about numbers. As students work with fractions you can remind them that fractions are made up of parts, just like whole numbers. For instance, $\frac{5}{6}$ = $\frac{2}{6}$ + $\frac{3}{6}$ OR $\frac{5}{6}$ = $\frac{1}{6}$ + $\frac{4}{6}$.
* Encourage your child to explain his/her thinking as he/she solves problems.
* Keep students focused on what they know about fractions. If your child is having difficulty changing an improper fraction to a mixed number, suggest that he/she draw a picture of the improper fraction and then “sees” the mixed number. The end goal is for the student to solve this problem numerically, but it is important to recognize their entry point and help them from that point.
* Likewise, if your child is unsure about comparing decimals, relate the amounts to money. For instance, to determine if .72 is greater than .9, remind them that .9 is equivalent to $0.90 because the tenths place can be represented by dimes.
* Provide your child with opportunities to practice using fractions and decimals in their daily life, such as cooking, measuring, and making change with money.

If you have any questions, please contact your child’s teacher or the Math Science Teacher.

For additional information, take a look at the Fairfield Public School Parent Guide at <http://fairfieldpublicschoolsk5math.wikispaces.com/home>