

# Math Moments that Matter

## FIRST GRADE

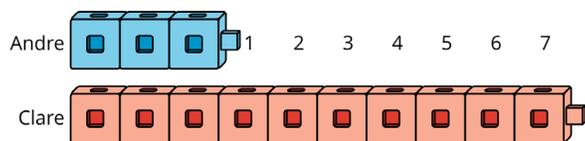


### Addition and Subtraction up to 20

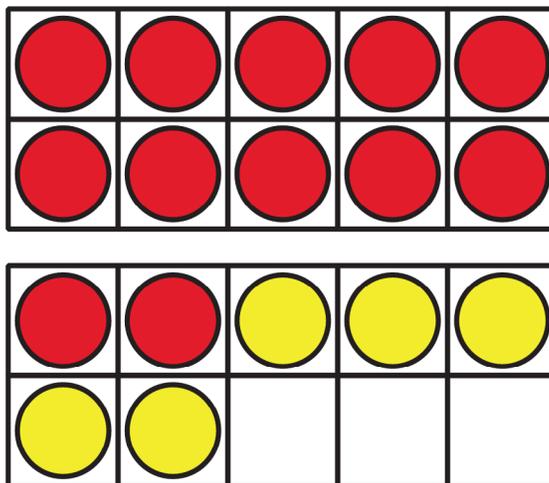
First graders use objects, pictures, and simple number sentences to understand addition and subtraction up to 20. They practice putting groups together, taking groups apart, and comparing amounts to see which is more or less. These activities help students make sense of numbers and explain their thinking in clear, easy ways.

Students use connecting cubes and ten-frames to help them see how numbers relate to each other. In the first image, students compare two cube trains to see who has more and by how much. In the second image, a ten-frame shows how two parts fit together to make a total. These simple visuals help students understand the math and explain their thinking in clear, easy ways.

**EXAMPLE:** Connecting cubes comparing two amounts



**EXAMPLE:** Counters showing two parts that make a total



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### Problem Solving in Math

In 1st grade, students learn that math helps them figure things out! When they work on addition and subtraction stories, they think about what's happening and choose a strategy (a way of thinking about or solving a problem) that makes sense. They learn to:

- Understand the story by noticing what they know and what they need to find
- Use tools, drawings, or numbers to show their thinking
- Try new ideas when one strategy doesn't work yet
- Use math phrases, like “I added,” “I took away,” or “I found how many more”

These habits help students feel confident as problem solvers because they see that numbers fit together in ways that make sense.

## What You Might See in the Classroom

Students using counters, connecting cubes, drawings, or number lines to show how two parts come together or how a total can be taken apart.

Teachers asking:

- “How do you know that 9 and 6 make 15?”
- “Can you show it another way?”
- “What does this equation tell us?”

Students sharing their models and strategies with a partner.

Students drawing pictures or building with tools to show equations like  $7 + 8 = 15$  or  $15 - 8 = 7$ .

Quick partner talks: Students explaining which operation makes sense in a story.

Students connecting word problems to equations and explaining how addition and subtraction are related.

## What You Can Do at Home

Use snacks or toys: “You have 8 crackers. If I give you 4 more, how many now?”

Ask your student to explain their thinking: “How did you figure that out?” or “Can you show 12 another way?”

Play a quick game: “Let’s make 20 in different ways. How many can we find?”

Tell math stories together: “You had 16 blocks and used 3 to build. How many are left?”

Encourage your student to share their strategy: “Tell me how you knew that 8 and 7 make 15.”

Connect addition and subtraction: “If  $9 + 6 = 15$ , what subtraction equation matches it?”

## Make it a Math Moment!

Math helps students figure things out. When students work with numbers that join or separate, they start to see how their strategies make sense.

