MATHEMATICS · KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 3

Comparing simple fractions visually

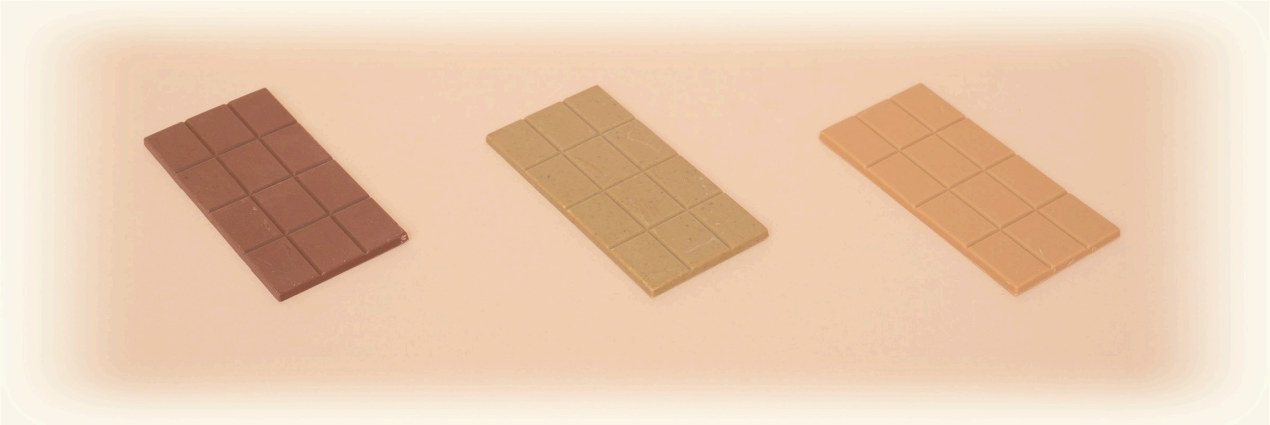
Difficulty level: Easy

Mathematics: Kindergarten to Grade 3

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Overview of the concept

This is how you tell which fraction is bigger at a glance. You look at shaded bars of the same size and see which shaded part is longer, which makes the comparison obvious without any calculation. It is the visual foundation for comparing fractions, and it builds the intuition you rely on when the fractions get harder.

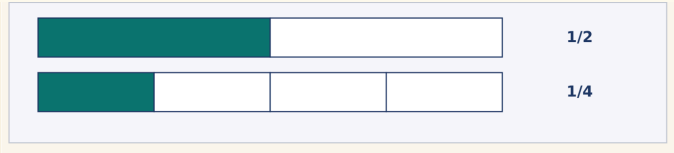


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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q Which is larger: $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$?



SOLUTION

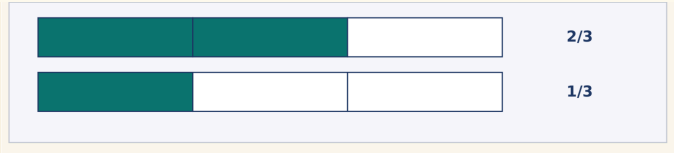
Draw both bars the same length.

Shade $\frac{1}{2}$ of one bar and $\frac{1}{4}$ of the other.

The shaded part for $\frac{1}{2}$ is longer, so $\frac{1}{2}$ is larger.

EXAMPLE 2

Q Which is larger: $\frac{2}{3}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$?



SOLUTION

Draw both bars the same length, each in 3 equal parts.

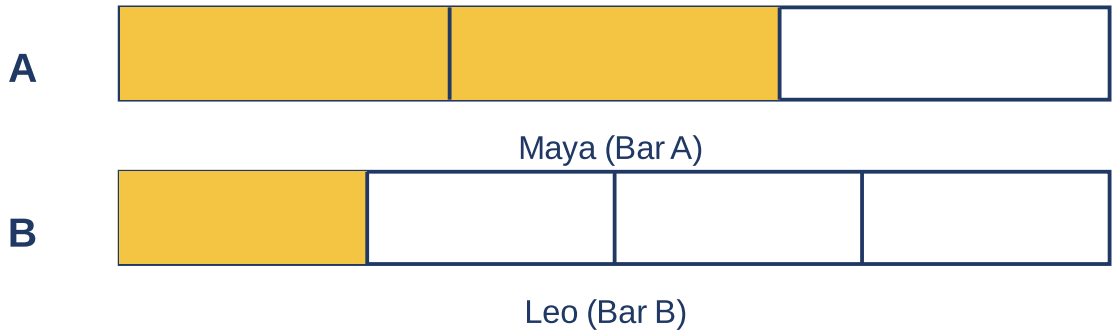
Shade 2 parts for $\frac{2}{3}$ and 1 part for $\frac{1}{3}$.

The shaded part for $\frac{2}{3}$ is longer, so $\frac{2}{3}$ is larger.

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Practice questions

1 Two bars of the same size are shown. Count the equal parts and the shaded parts on each bar. Which shaded part is longer? Write the fraction that is shaded on that bar.

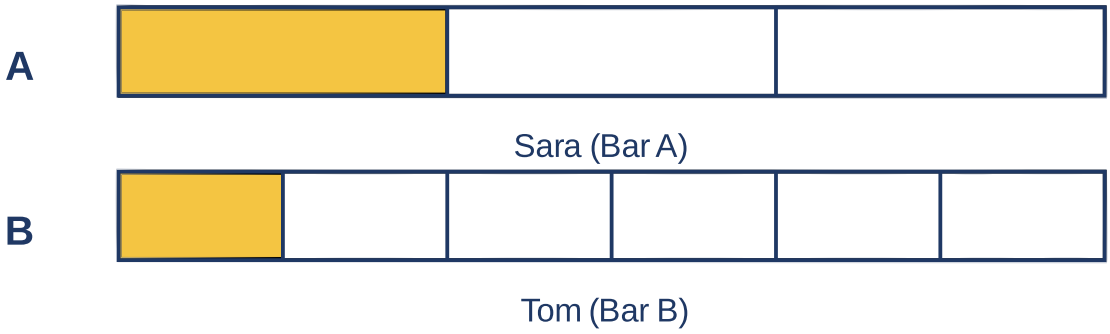


- **A** $\frac{1}{4}$
- **B** $\frac{1}{2}$
- **C** $\frac{2}{3}$
- **D** $\frac{3}{4}$

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2 Two bars of the same size are shown. Count the equal parts and the shaded parts on each bar. Which shaded part is longer? Write the fraction that is shaded on that bar.

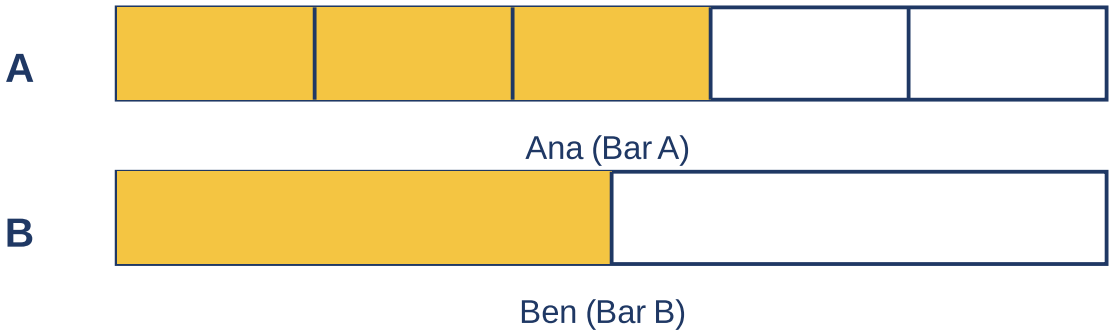


- **A** $\frac{1}{6}$
- **B** $\frac{1}{3}$
- **C** $\frac{1}{2}$
- **D** $\frac{2}{3}$

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3 Two bars of the same size are shown. Count the equal parts and the shaded parts on each bar. Which shaded part is longer? Write the fraction that is shaded on that bar.

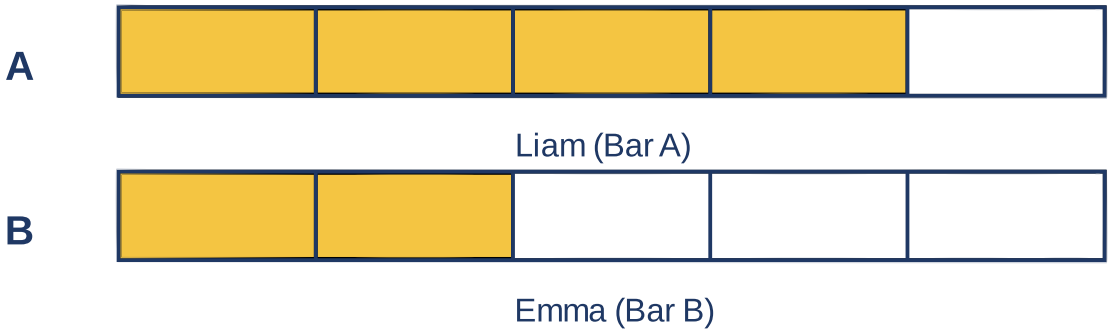


- **A** $\frac{1}{5}$
- **B** $\frac{2}{5}$
- **C** $\frac{1}{2}$
- **D** $\frac{3}{5}$

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4 Two bars of the same size are shown. Count the equal parts and the shaded parts on each bar. Which shaded part is longer? Write the fraction that is shaded on that bar.

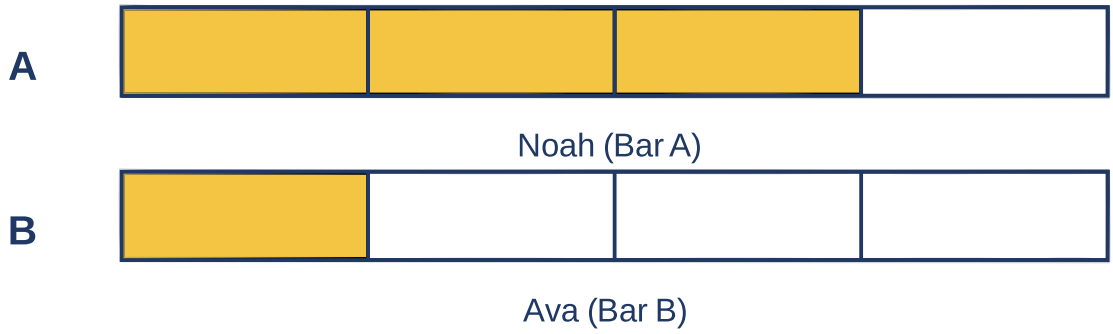


- **A** $\frac{4}{5}$
- **B** $\frac{2}{5}$
- **C** $\frac{3}{5}$
- **D** $\frac{1}{5}$

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5 Two bars of the same size are shown. Count the equal parts and the shaded parts on each bar. Which shaded part is shorter? Write the fraction that is shaded on that bar.

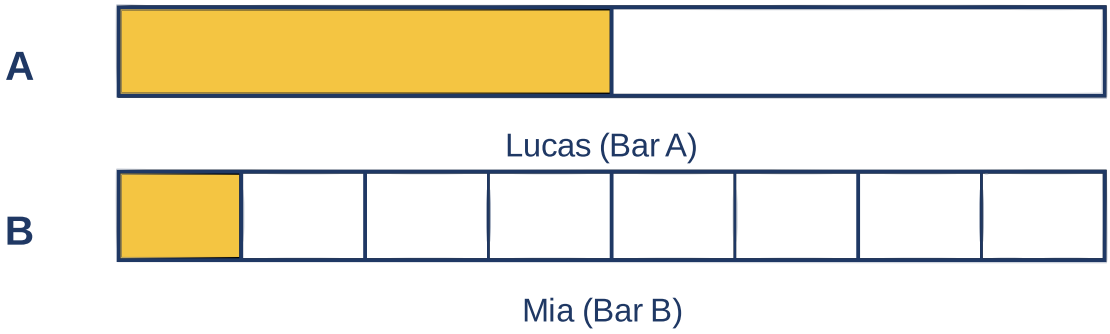


- **A** $\frac{1}{2}$
- **B** $\frac{1}{3}$
- **C** $\frac{1}{4}$
- **D** $\frac{3}{4}$

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6 Two bars of the same size are shown. Count the equal parts and the shaded parts on each bar. Which shaded part is shorter? Write the fraction that is shaded on that bar.

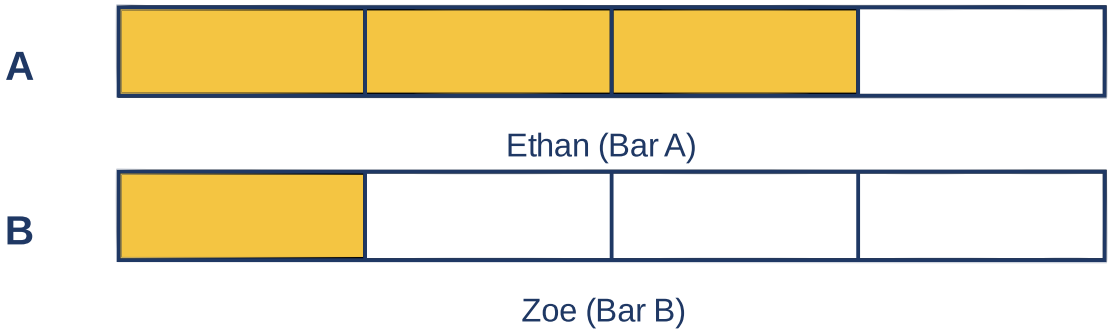


- **A** $\frac{1}{2}$
- **B** $\frac{1}{8}$
- **C** $\frac{1}{4}$
- **D** $\frac{3}{8}$

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7 Two bars of the same size are shown. Count the equal parts and the shaded parts on each bar. Which shaded part is longer? Write the fraction that is shaded on that bar.

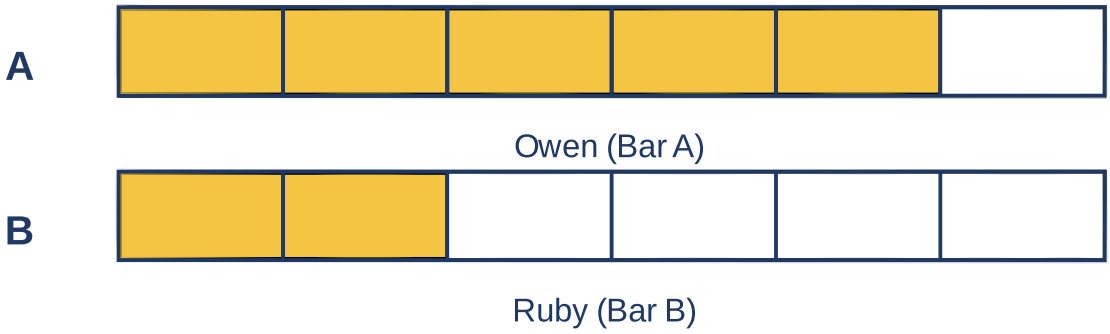


- **A** $\frac{2}{4}$
- **B** $\frac{1}{4}$
- **C** $\frac{1}{2}$
- **D** $\frac{3}{4}$

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8 **Two bars of the same size are shown. Count the equal parts and the shaded parts on each bar. Which shaded part is shorter? Write the fraction that is shaded on that bar.**



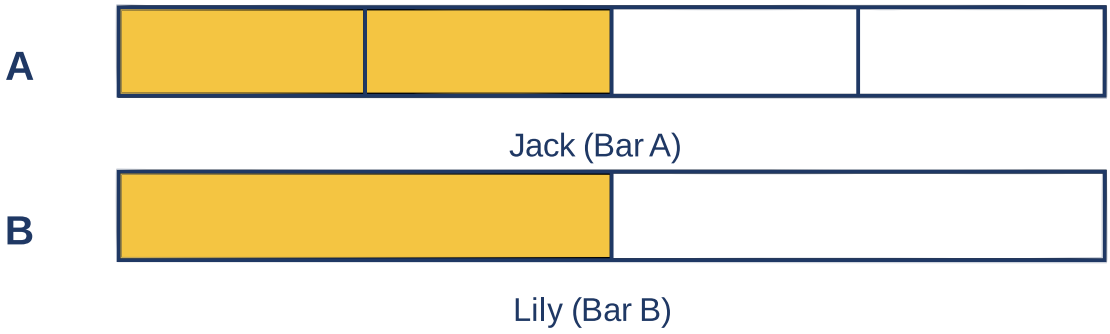
- **A** $\frac{2}{6}$
- **B** $\frac{5}{6}$
- **C** $\frac{1}{6}$
- **D** $\frac{3}{6}$

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9

Two bars of the same size are shown. Count the equal parts and the shaded parts on each bar. Are the shaded parts the same length? Answer yes or no.



A yes

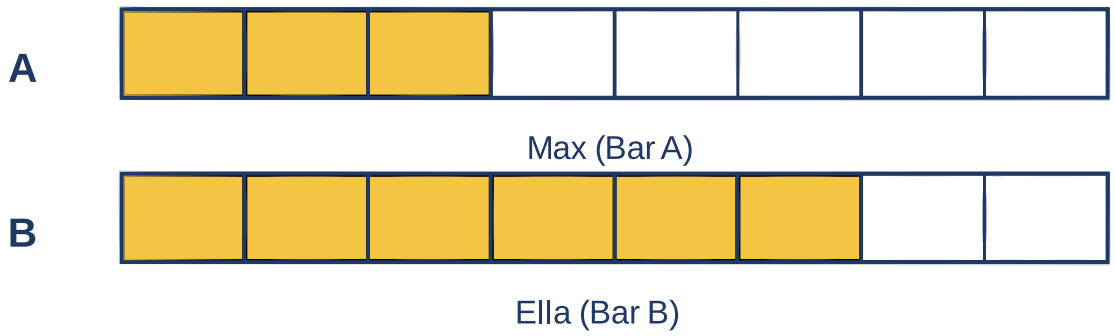
B no

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10 Two bars of the same size are shown. Count the equal parts and the shaded parts on each bar. Which shaded part is longer? Write the fraction that is shaded on that bar.



- **A** $\frac{3}{8}$
- **B** $\frac{5}{8}$
- **C** $\frac{6}{8}$
- **D** $\frac{1}{8}$

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ANSWER KEY

1. $\frac{2}{3}$

2. $\frac{1}{3}$

3. $\frac{3}{5}$

4. $\frac{4}{5}$

5. $\frac{1}{4}$

6. $\frac{1}{8}$

7. $\frac{3}{4}$

8. $\frac{2}{6}$

9. yes

10. $\frac{6}{8}$

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