MATHEMATICS · KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 3

Creating and identifying patterns

Difficulty level: Easy

Mathematics: Kindergarten to Grade 3

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Overview of the concept

This is how you spot what comes next in a repeating pattern. Tiles on a floor, beads on a necklace, and stripes on a shirt all follow a rule you can pick out. Once you see the rule, you can predict the next tile or bead without seeing it. Spotting patterns is also how you notice when something is out of place, like a wrong tile in a finished floor.



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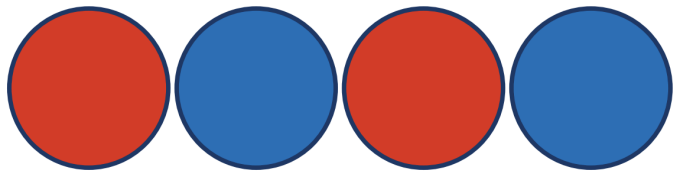
Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q What comes next in the pattern red, blue, red, blue, ...?



SOLUTION

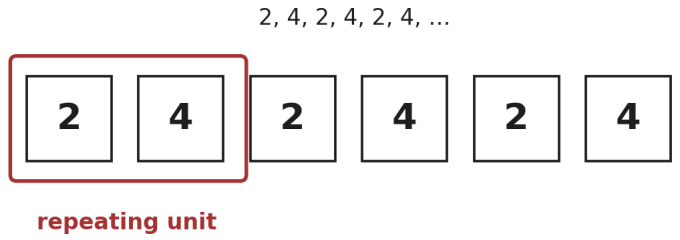
Find the unit that repeats: red, blue

After red, blue comes red again.

So the next term is red, and the pattern continues red, blue, red, blue, ...

EXAMPLE 2

Q What is the pattern unit in 2, 4, 2, 4, ...?



SOLUTION

Look for the smallest part that repeats: 2, 4

After 2, 4 comes 2 again, then 4 again.

So the pattern unit is 2, 4

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Practice questions

1 **The unit is green, yellow. Repeat the unit to make 6 beads. Write the pattern.**

- **A** green, yellow, green, yellow, green, yellow
- **B** yellow, green, yellow, green, yellow, green
- **C** green, green, yellow, green, green, yellow
- **D** green, yellow, green, yellow, green, green

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2 3, 6, 3, 6, 3, 6. Find the unit that repeats.

- **A** 6, 3
- **B** 3, 6
- **C** 3, 6, 3
- **D** 6

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3 1, 2 repeat over and over. What is the 9th term?

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4 What comes next in the pattern circle, square, square, circle, square, square, ...?

- A circle
- B square
- C triangle
- D rectangle

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5 The pattern unit is up, down, down. The unit repeats 2 times to make 6 steps. How many of the 6 steps are down steps?

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6 The unit is 5, 5, 10. How many terms are in 3 repeats of the unit?

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7 The pattern is triangle, then circle, repeating. What is the 8th flag?

A triangle

B circle

C square

D rectangle

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8 A pattern goes red, red, blue, red, red, blue, ... What colour is the 6th bead?

- **A** red
- **B** blue
- **C** green
- **D** yellow

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9 A pattern goes A, A, B, A, A, B. What is the rule?

- **A** Repeat A, A, B
- **B** Repeat A, B, A
- **C** Add one more A each time
- **D** Repeat B, A, A

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10

A pattern goes 2, 4, 6, 8. What is the rule, and what comes next?

A Add 2 each time; 10 comes next.

B Add 3 each time; 11 comes next.

C Multiply by 2 each time; 16 comes next.

D Add 1 each time; 9 comes next.

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ANSWER KEY

1. green, yellow, green, yellow, green, yellow

2. 3, 6

3. 1

4. circle

5. 4

6. 9

7. circle

8. blue

9. Repeat A, A, B

10. Add 2 each time; 10 comes next.

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