MATHEMATICS · KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 3

Estimating sums and differences

Difficulty level: Easy

Mathematics: Kindergarten to Grade 3

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Overview of the concept

This is how you get a close answer quickly, so you can tell whether an exact answer is sensible before you trust it. A rough total at the shops tells you whether you have enough money before you reach the till. The estimate does not need to be exact, it just needs to be close enough to catch a big mistake. It is the quick check that stops a small slip from becoming a wrong answer.

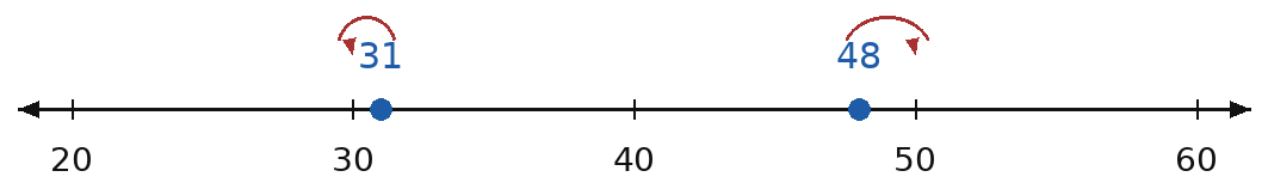


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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q Estimate 48 + 31



SOLUTION

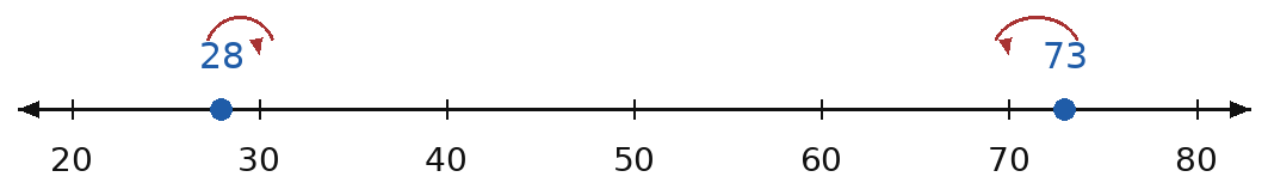
Round each number to the nearest ten: 48 rounds to 50, 31 rounds to 30.

Add the rounded numbers: 50 + 30 = 80

So the estimate is about 80

EXAMPLE 2

Q Estimate 73 - 28



SOLUTION

Round each number to the nearest ten: 73 rounds to 70, 28 rounds to 30.

Subtract the rounded numbers: 70 - 30 = 40

So the estimate is about 40

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Practice questions

1. You buy a game for 52 dollars and a puzzle for 29 dollars. Round each price to the nearest ten, then estimate the total.

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2. A box has 47 pencils. You buy 3 more boxes the same size. Round 47 to the nearest ten, then estimate how many pencils you have in all.

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3. Estimate 512 - 298 by rounding each number to the nearest hundred. What is the estimate?

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4 68 stickers were on a page and 31 were used. Round each number to the nearest ten, then estimate how many stickers are left.

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5 A shelf holds 95 books. 48 are taken away and 20 more are added. Round each number to the nearest ten, then estimate how many books are on the shelf.

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6 Estimate 29 + 31 + 28 by rounding each number to the nearest ten. What is the estimate?

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7 **After rounding to the nearest ten, two numbers add to about 70. One number rounds to 40. What could the other number round to?**

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8 **Why do you round both numbers before adding when you estimate, instead of adding exactly and then rounding? Write one sentence.**

- **A** Rounding first gives a quick answer that is close enough to check the exact answer
- **B** Adding exactly and then rounding is always faster
- **C** Rounding first means you never need the exact answer
- **D** You round after adding so the numbers stay exact

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9 Estimate 68 - 21 by rounding each number to the nearest ten. What is the estimate?

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10 Which of these estimates is not about 80?

A. 52 + 29 is about 80

B. 48 + 33 is about 80

C. 61 + 18 is about 80

D. 44 + 47 is about 90

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ANSWER KEY

1. 80

2. 150

3. 200

4. 40

5. 70

6. 90

7. 30

8. Rounding first gives a quick answer that is close enough to check the exact answer

9. 50

10. 44 + 47 is about 90

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