MATHEMATICS · KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 3

Multiplication as groups of

Difficulty level: Easy

Mathematics: Kindergarten to Grade 3

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Overview of the concept

This is how you read a multiplication as equal groups, like four bags with three apples in each bag, so you always know what the numbers mean. Multiplication is just a shortcut for adding equal groups, and seeing the groups is what makes the numbers make sense. You use it when you buy several packs of the same thing, count seats in rows, or work out how many items you have when they come in equal boxes.



Rule

Multiplication means equal groups: a × b means a groups of b.

The first number tells you how many groups, and the second number tells you how many are in each group.

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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q There are 3 groups with 4 dots in each group. How many dots are there in all?

SOLUTION

Equal groups mean multiplication. 3 groups of 4 is 3 × 4, and the repeated addition is 4 + 4 + 4

4 + 4 + 4 = 12

There are 12 dots in all.

EXAMPLE 2

Q Ben says 3 groups of 5 is 8, because 3 + 5 = 8. Is he right?

SOLUTION

No. Adding the number of groups to the size of one group is the trap. 3 groups of 5 means 5 + 5 + 5, three fives, not 3 + 5

5 + 5 + 5 = 15

3 groups of 5 is 15, not 8

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Practice questions

1 There are 5 groups with 3 dots in each group. How many dots are there in all?

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2 What does 5 × 2 mean in words?

A. 5 groups of 2

B. 2 groups of 5

C. 5 + 2

D. 5 groups of 5

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3 Write 3×4 as an addition.

- **A** $4 + 4 + 4$
- **B** $3 + 3 + 3$
- **C** $3 + 4$
- **D** $4 + 4 + 4 + 4$

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4 Sara puts 2 apples in each of 6 bags. Which multiplication matches: 2×6 or $6 + 2$?

- **A** 2×6
- **B** $6 + 2$
- **C** $2 + 2 + 2$
- **D** $6 + 6$

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5 Tom has 3 bags with 5, 5, and 4 marbles in them. Can you write it as 3 × 5?

- A Yes
- B No

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6 Can 12 counters be sorted into 3 equal groups? How many are in each group?

- A Yes, 4 in each
- B Yes, 3 in each
- C No, 12 cannot be shared into 3 equal groups
- D Yes, 6 in each

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7 **20 apples are shared into 4 equal groups. How many apples are in each group?**

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8 **Mia says 4 groups of 6 is 10 because 4 + 6 = 10. What is it really?**

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9 Bag A has 3 groups of 4 marbles. Bag B has 4 groups of 3 marbles. Which bag has more?

- **A** Bag A
- **B** Bag B
- **C** Neither, both have 12
- **D** Bag A, by 1 marble

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10 Which one has a different product?

- **A** 2 × 9
- **B** 3 × 6
- **C** 6 × 3
- **D** 4 × 4

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ANSWER KEY

1. 15

2. 5 groups of 2

3. 4 + 4 + 4

4. 2 × 6

5. No

6. Yes, 4 in each

7. 5

8. 24

9. Neither, both have 12

10. 4 × 4

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