Whole versus part

Difficulty level: Easy

Mathematics: Kindergarten to Grade 3

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Overview of the concept

This is how you tell a whole from a part, like knowing a slice is only one piece of the full pizza, whenever you share, cut, or split something. The whole is the complete thing, and a part is one piece of it, and keeping them straight is the start of working with fractions. If you mix them up, you can end up treating a slice as if it were the whole pizza. That distinction is behind every share, every fraction, and every time you cut something into pieces.



Rule

Whole versus part: a whole is the complete thing, with no pieces taken away.

A part is one piece of a larger whole, such as one slice of a pizza or one shaded piece of a bar. If only a piece is shown, it is a part, not a whole.

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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q Is this a whole pizza or a part?



SOLUTION

Look at the pizza: it is complete, with no slices taken away.

A complete pizza is a whole.

So this is a whole.

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EXAMPLE 2

Q Is this a whole bar or a part?



SOLUTION

Look at the bar: only one piece of it is shaded.

A shaded piece of a larger bar is a part.

So this is a part of a whole.

Practice questions

1 A full box of crayons sits on the table, with no crayons taken out. Is it a whole or a part?

- **A** whole
- **B** part

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2 One slice sits on a plate, cut from a whole pizza. Is it a whole or a part?

- A whole
- B part

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3 A chocolate bar sits on the table, complete, with no squares broken off. Is it a whole or a part?

- A whole
- B part

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4 One square of chocolate sits on a plate, broken off a whole bar. Is it a whole or a part?

- A whole
- B part

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5 An apple sits on the table, complete and uncut. Is it a whole or a part?

- A whole
- B part

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6 Half an apple sits on a plate, cut from a whole apple. Is it a whole or a part?

- A whole
- B part

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7 A cake sits on the table, complete and uncut. Is it a whole or a part?

- A whole
- B part

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8 One piece of cake sits on a plate, cut from a whole cake. Is it a whole or a part?

- A whole
- B part

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9 A full glass of juice sits on the table. Is it a whole or a part?

- A whole
- B part

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10 Half a glass of juice sits on the table, poured from a full jug. Is it a whole or a part?

- A whole
- B part

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ANSWER KEY

1. whole

2. part

3. whole

4. part

5. whole

6. part

7. whole

8. part

9. whole

10. part

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