Math Live – *Equivalent Fractions*: Parent Notes

Grade: 5 Strand: Number Outcome: 7

What should students be able to do?

Students should be able to explain the relationship between two equivalent fractions using symbols, words, and pictures. Identify equivalent fractions as equal amounts. Match pictorial representations of equivalent fractions to the correct number symbol. Knowing their basic multiplication and division facts will help students succeed in their work on equivalent fractions.

Common mistakes students make:

Students add or subtract the same number to or from the equivalent numerator and denominator in an attempt to create an equivalent fraction. Students can often manipulate symbols but do not understand the real world significance of these symbols.

Using the word reduce to describe finding equivalent fractions leads children to think that the fraction is getting smaller or shrinking.

Ideas for more practice:

When serving pizza, cake, cookies, etc., ask the student whether he/she would rather have 1/3 or 2/6 of the item under discussion. Use whatever fractions suit the situation. Other fractions to compare might include 4/5 and 7/10.

Tell the student to take $\frac{3}{4}$ of a bag of 8 candies, marbles, cookies, and so on. Have the student explain why $\frac{3}{4} = 6/8$ using the objects discussed, then have him/her draw a diagram and write a number sentence to show this equivalence.

When cooking, have students examine equivalent fractions by measuring the ingredients two times using different fractions.

Literature Links:

Hutchins, The Doorbell Rang – This is a simple story about two children sharing a plate of 12 cookies. Just as the children figure out how to share the cookies, more kids show up.

Matthews, *Gator Pie* – Similar to the premise of *The Doorbell Rang*, alligators are forced to share a pie they find in the woods. More and more alligators arrive and the pie is eventually divided into hundredths.

Tahan, *The Man Who Counted: A Collection of Mathematical Adventures* – This is a variety of short stories based on math concepts.