Building Numbers from Primes



Jerry Burkhart 5280math.com

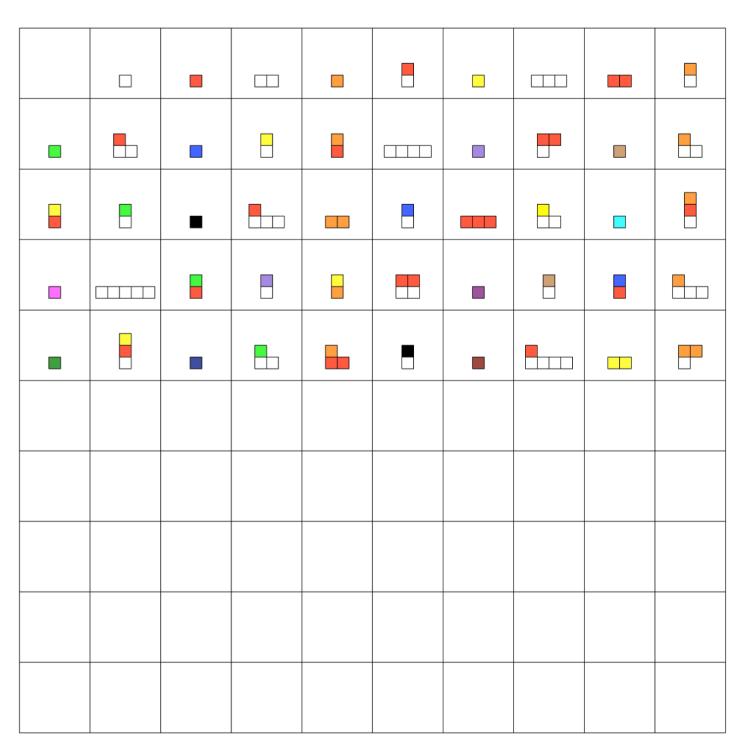
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Math Building Blocks



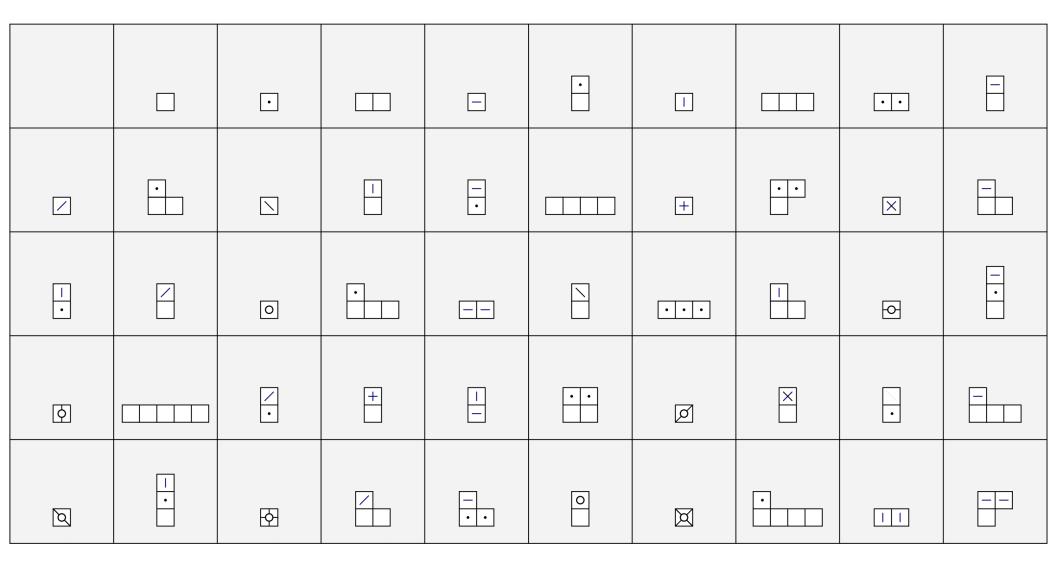
What do you notice?

What do you wonder?



Introducing the Blocks: Method 1

A Color-free Version



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Introducing the Blocks: Method 2

Give students enough colored blocks to build 1 - 20. Each color represents a different number. Joining blocks stands for multiplication.

- Build the numbers 2 20 in order.
- Use a new color only when necessary.

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https://www.nctm.org/Publications/Mathematics-Teaching-in-Middle-School/2009/Vol15/Issue3/Building-Numbers-from-Primes/

1	2	3	4 2 2	5 5
6	7	8 2 2 2	9	10
11 11	12 3 2 2	13 13	14 2 7	15 3 5
16 2 2 2 2	17 17	18 3 2 3	19 19	20 5 2 2

Introducing the Building Blocks model Method 3

Math Building Blocks

by Jerry Burkhart

Introducing the Building Blocks model Method 3

Building Blocks

modified Sieve of Eratosthenes with numbers

by Jerry Burkhart

Why is the first cell blank?

What can you say about blocks in consecutively numbered cells?

If a number has a factor of 4, then...

If a number has a factor of 4, then...

If a number does not have a factor of 3, then...

The Next Step

Build the numbers.

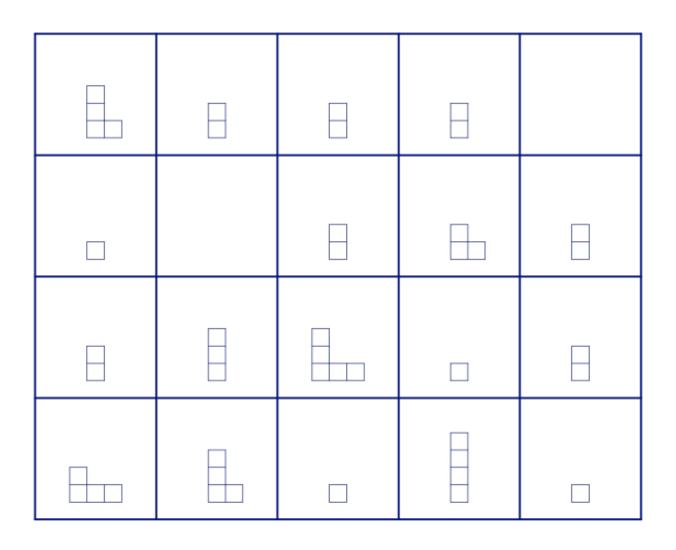
101 128 196 201 999 1000 1001 etc.

What strategies might students use?

- 1. Test one color (prime number) at a time.
- 2. Find one or more factors that appear on the grid.
- 3. Use a factor tree.



An Extension



Multiplication and Division

6 •	15
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 $21 \div 3$

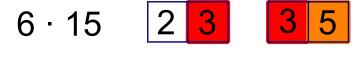
 $98 \div 14$

 $64 \div 32$

 $5 \div 5$

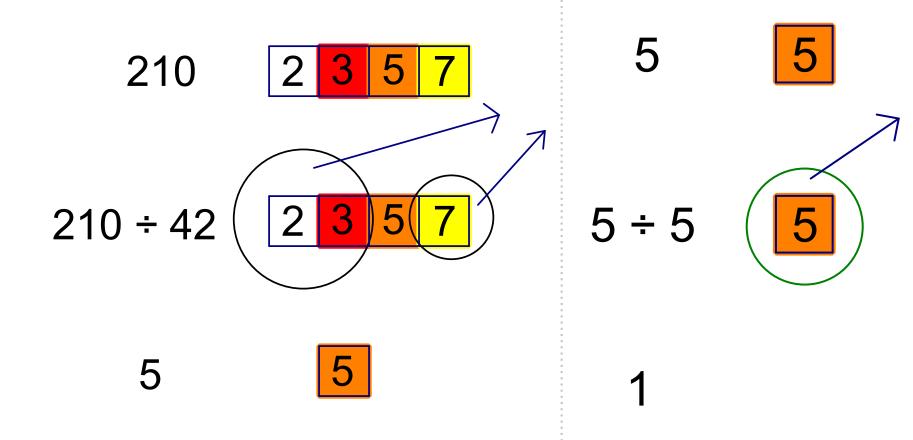
 $210 \div 42$

Multiplication Examples



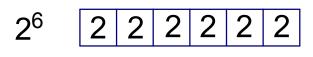


Division Examples





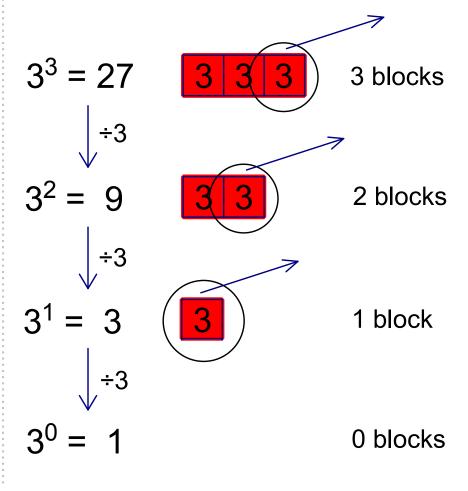
Exponent Examples



2¹ 2

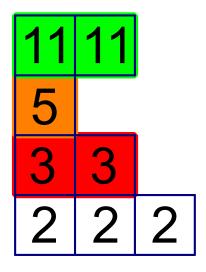
$$2^6 \div 2^5 = 2^{6-5}$$

 $64 \div 32 = 2$





Factors



Is ____ a factor of this number?

2 6 22 7 8 16 44 35 27 36 1210



Finding all factors of a number



Factors in Exponential Form

$$2^3 \cdot 3^1$$

Factors

$$2^2 \cdot 3^0$$

$$2^1 \cdot 3^1$$

$$2^1 \cdot 3^0$$

$$2^2 \cdot 3^1$$

$$2^3 \cdot 3^0$$

$$2^0 \cdot 3^1$$

$$2^0 \cdot 3^0$$

$$2^3 \cdot 3^1$$

Counting Factors

2 ⁰ · 3 ⁰	$2^1 \cdot 3^0$	$2^2 \cdot 3^0$	2 ³ · 3 ⁰
1	2	2 2	2 2 2
2 ⁰ · 3 ¹	2 ¹ · 3 ¹	2 ² · 3 ¹	$2^3 \cdot 3^1$
3	3 2	3 2 2	3 2 2 2
3	6	12	24

Counting Factors: a formula

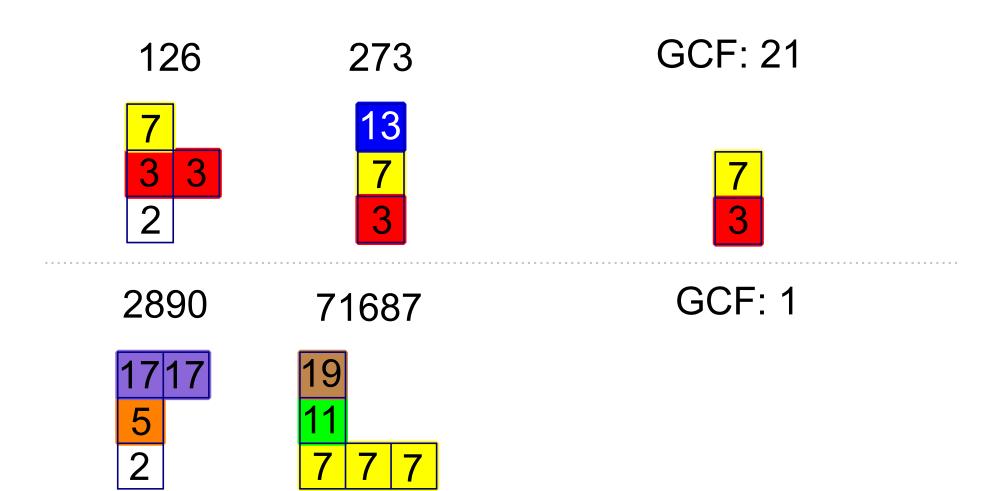
$$n = p^x \cdot q^y$$

p and q are distinct prime numbers.

N represents the number of factors of n.

$$N = (x+1) \cdot (y+1)$$

Greatest Common Factor

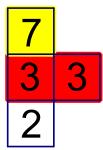




GCF with Exponents



GCF: 3¹.7¹

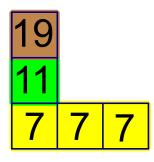






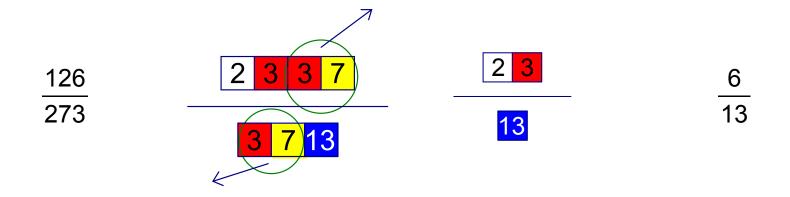
$$2^{1} \cdot 5^{1} \cdot 17^{2} \quad 7^{3} \cdot 11^{1} \cdot 19^{1}$$

GCF: 1





Simplifying Fractions



 429

 14586

 2 3 1113 17

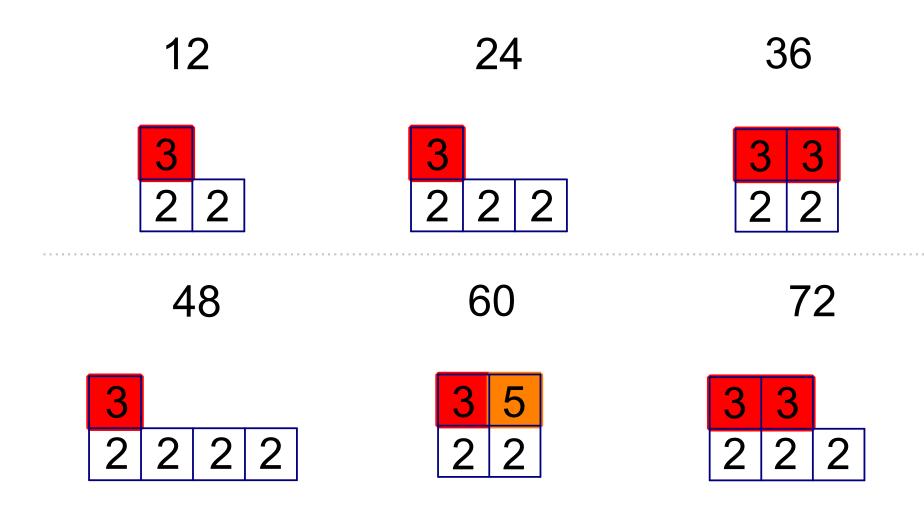
 2 17

 3 429

 2 17

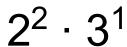


Multiples



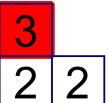


Multiples in Exponential Form



 $2^3 \cdot 3^1$

 $2^2 \cdot 3^2$



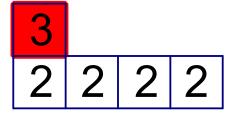
3222



$$2^4 \cdot 3^1$$

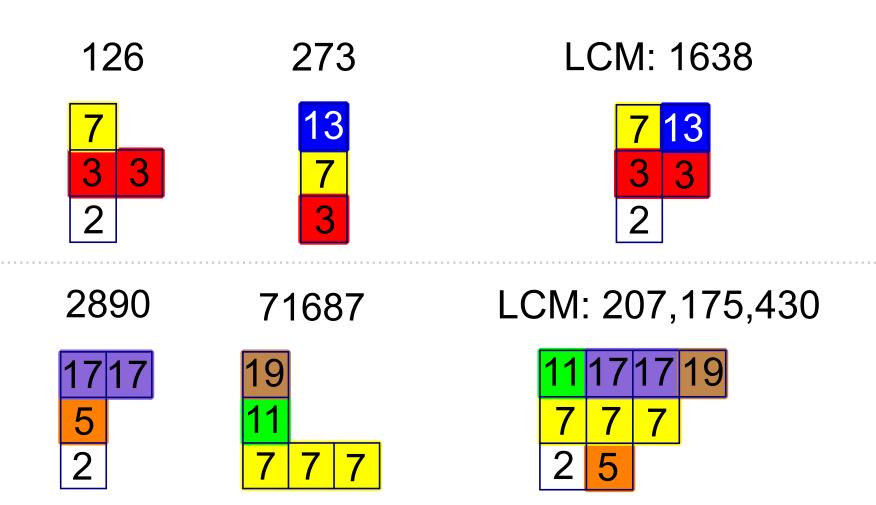
 $2^2 \cdot 3^1 \cdot 5^1$

 $2^3 \cdot 3^2$





Least Common Multiple





LCM Strategy 1

The numbers

126

273





1. Choose a factor.

273



2. **Find** the missing blocks.

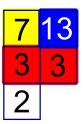
273

6

32

3. Join the blocks.

LCM: $273 \cdot 6 = 1638$





LCM Strategy 2

The numbers

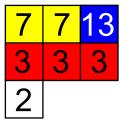
126

273



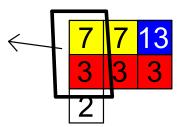
13 7 3 1. **Join** the blocks.

$$126 \cdot 273 = 34398$$



2. Remove the common blocks.

$$34398 \div 21$$



The answer

LCM: 1638

LCM Strategy 3

The numbers

126

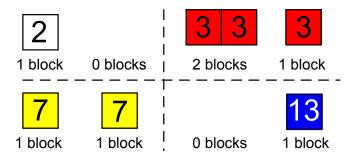
273



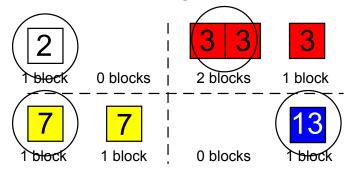
13



1. Count same-colored blocks.



2. **Choose** the greater number.



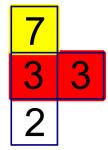
3. Join the blocks.

LCM: 2.9.7.13 = 1638

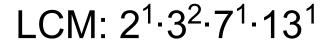


LCM with Exponents



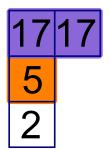


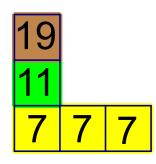






$$2^{1} \cdot 5^{1} \cdot 17^{2} \quad 7^{3} \cdot 11^{1} \cdot 19^{1}$$





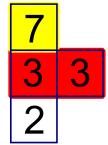
LCM: 2¹·5¹·7³·11¹·17²·19¹

11	17	17	19
7	7	7	
2	5		,



Connecting GCF and LCM





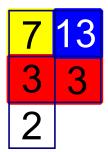
273



GCF: 21

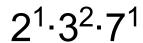


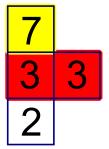
LCM: 1638





Connecting GCF and LCM with Exponents





GCF: 31.71



 $3^{1} \cdot 7^{1} \cdot 13^{1}$

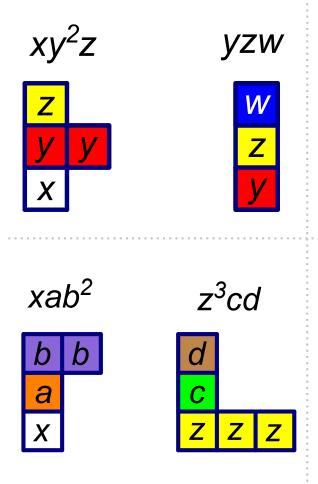


LCM: 2¹·3²·7¹·13¹





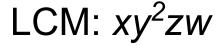
GCF and LCM with Variables

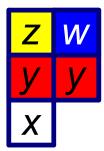


GCF: yz

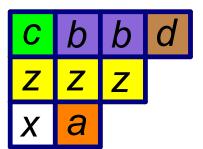


GCF: 1





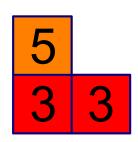
LCM: xaz³cb²d





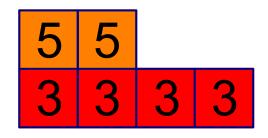
Squaring a number

45



 $3^2 \cdot 5^1$

 45^{2}



 $3^4 \cdot 5^2$

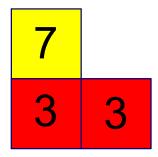
How can we recognize square numbers from their block diagrams?

How can we recognize square numbers from the exponents in their prime factorizations?

- Even number of blocks of each color
- Exponents are all even



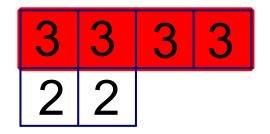
What is the smallest square number greater than 63?



Strategy: Join the fewest blocks so that there is an even number of blocks of each color.

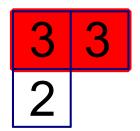
Square Roots

324



 $2^2 \cdot 3^4$

 $\sqrt{324}$



 $2^{1} \cdot 3^{2}$

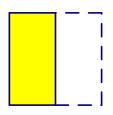
What happens to the blocks when you form the square root of a number?

What happens to the exponents when you form the square root of a number?

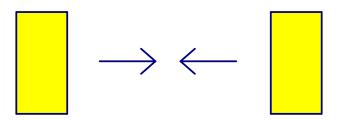
- Half as many blocks of each color
- Exponents are halved



What does this represent?



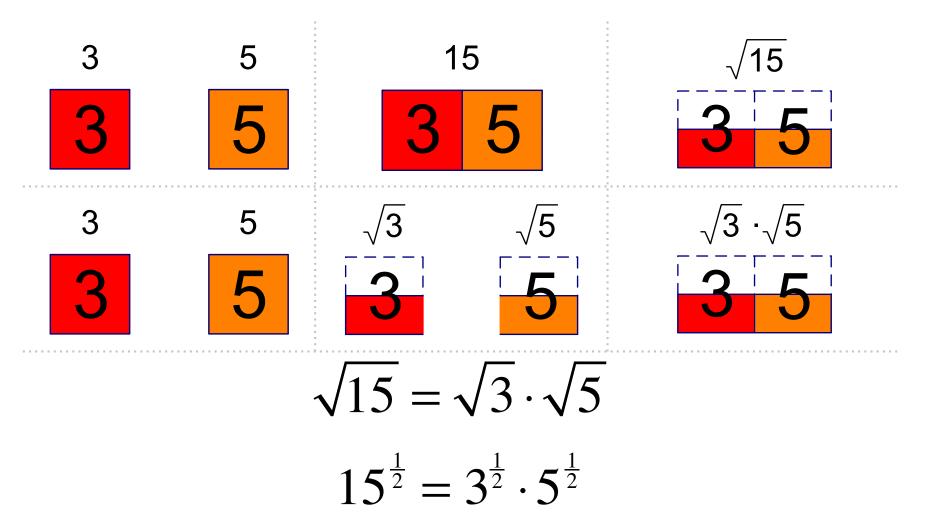
$$7^{\frac{1}{2}}$$



$$\sqrt{7} \cdot \sqrt{7}$$

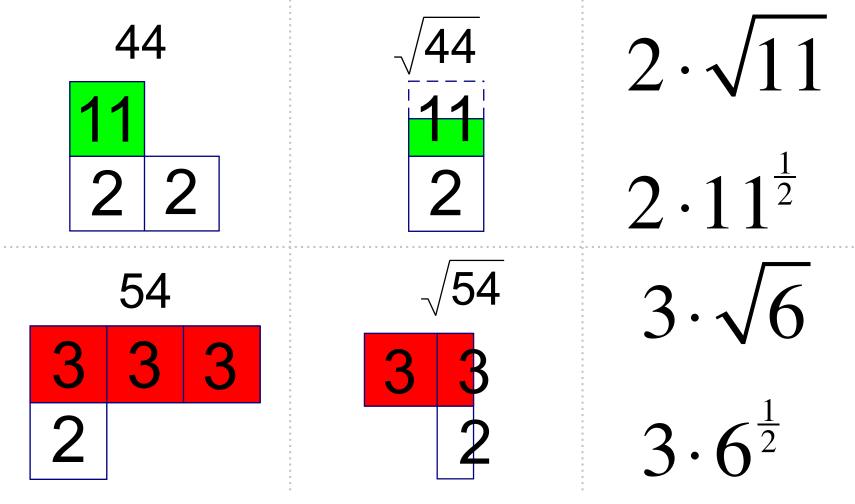


What property is illustrated?





Simplifying Radicals





How many ways can you name this?

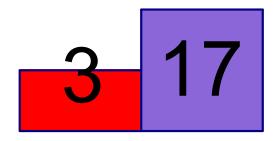
$$7\sqrt{7} \qquad 7 \cdot 7^{\frac{1}{2}} \qquad 7^{1\frac{1}{2}} \qquad \sqrt{343}$$

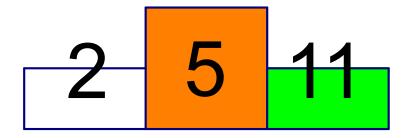
$$343^{0.5} \qquad (7^{\frac{1}{2}})^3 \qquad 49^{\frac{1}{2}} \cdot 7^{\frac{1}{2}} \qquad (49 \cdot 7)^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

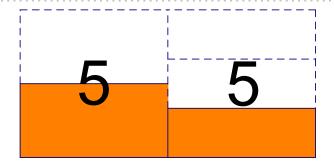
$$(7^3)^{0.5} \qquad \sqrt{7^3} \qquad 49 \div \sqrt{7} \qquad 117,649^{\frac{1}{4}}$$

$$49^{\frac{3}{4}} \qquad ((7^2)^{0.25})^3 \qquad (7^{\frac{1}{4}})^6 \qquad \sim 18.520259...$$

Some other pictures to name...

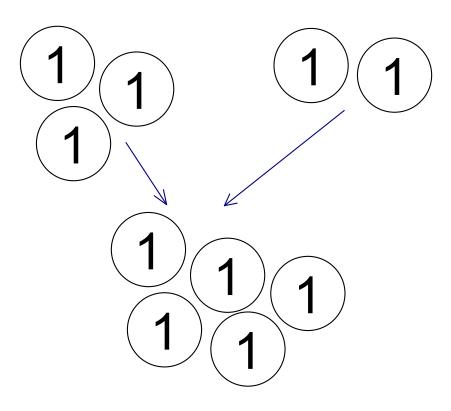






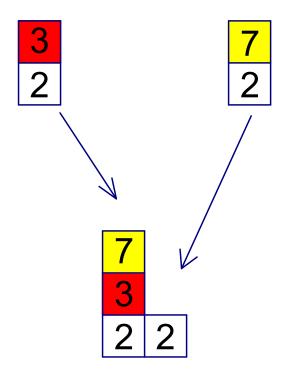


Counters and Blocks



Counters

Joining represents addition: 3 + 2 = 5



Building Blocks

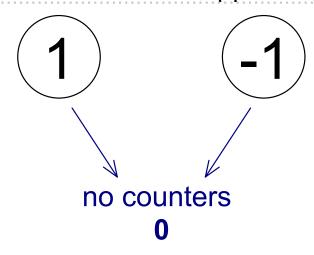
Joining represents multiplication:

$$6 \cdot 14 = 84$$

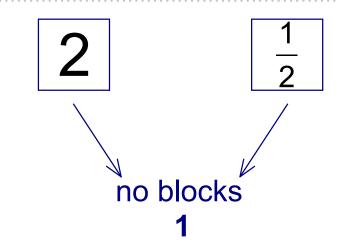


Inverses and Identities

What happens when you join additive **inverses** (opposites)?



What happens when you join multiplicative **inverses** (reciprocals)?



In both cases, you get the **identity**, which is "no counters" or "no blocks."

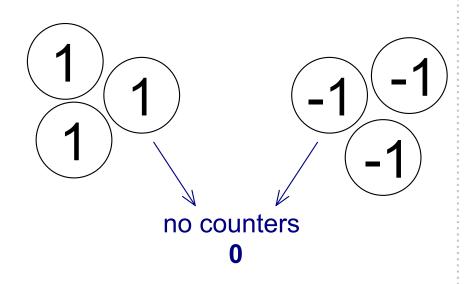
$$1 + -1 = 0$$

$$2 \cdot \frac{1}{2} = 1$$

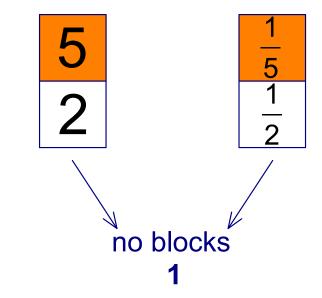
More Inverses

You can use 1 and and its opposite to form other inverses.

You can use primes and their reciprocals to form other inverses.



$$3 + -3 = 0$$



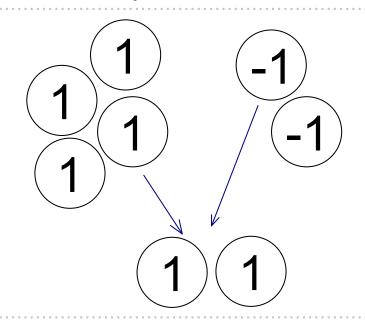
$$10 \cdot \frac{1}{10} = 1$$



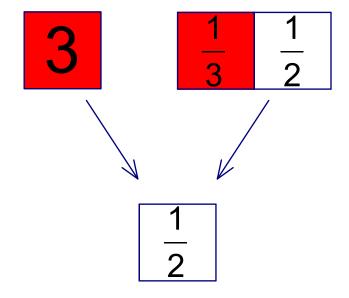
Addition and Multiplication

You can use opposite pairs to help you add.

You can use reciprocal pairs to help you multiply.



$$4 + -2 = 2$$



$$3 \cdot \frac{1}{6} = \frac{1}{2}$$

No new rules are needed!



Forming Other Fractions

$$\frac{1}{3}$$

$$2 \cdot \frac{1}{3} = \frac{2}{3}$$

$$\begin{array}{c|c} 5 \\ \frac{1}{2} & \frac{1}{3} \end{array}$$

$$5 \cdot \frac{1}{6} = \frac{5}{6}$$

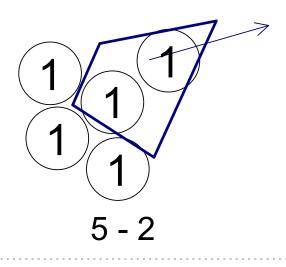
$$\frac{6}{15}$$

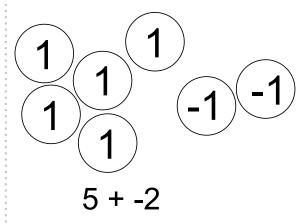
$$\frac{1}{3}$$
 $\frac{1}{5}$ $\frac{1}{5}$ $\frac{2}{3}$

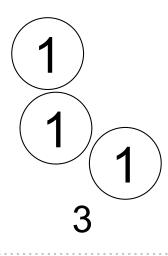
$$6 \cdot \frac{1}{15} = \frac{6}{15}$$

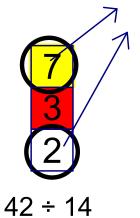


Using Inverses to Calculate





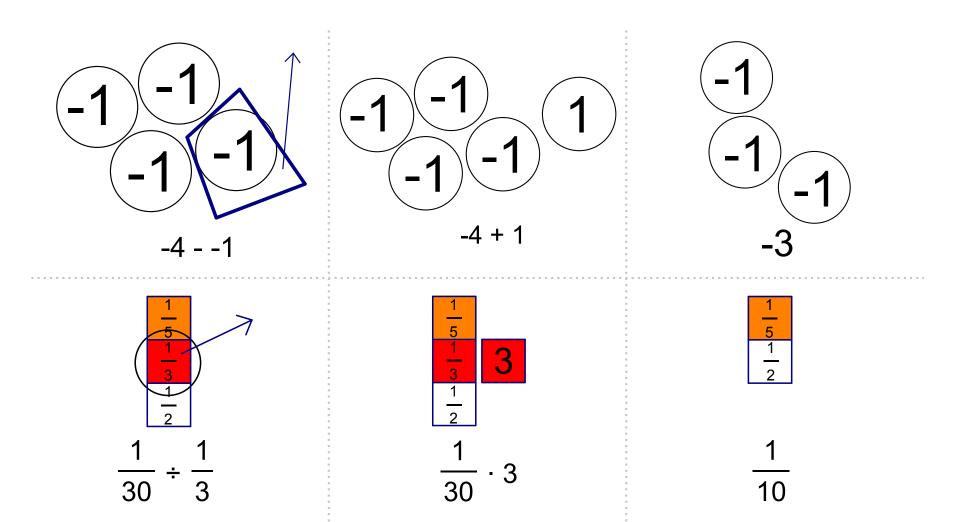




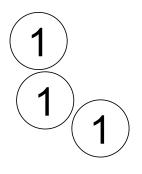
3



Using Inverses to Calculate (2)



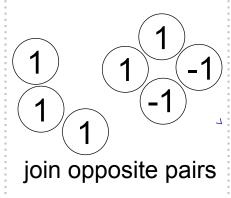
Convenient Pairs of Inverses

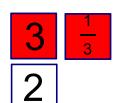


3 - -2 (start with 3)

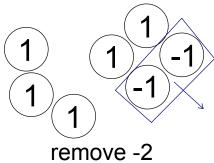


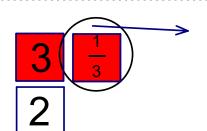
 $2 \div \frac{1}{3}$ (start with 2)



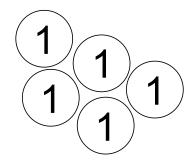


join reciprocal pair





remove $\frac{1}{3}$



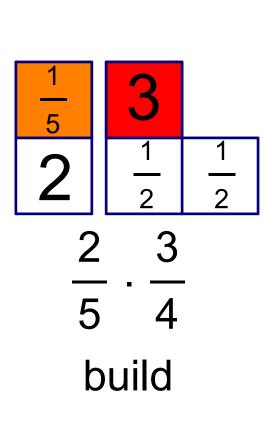
$$3 + 2$$

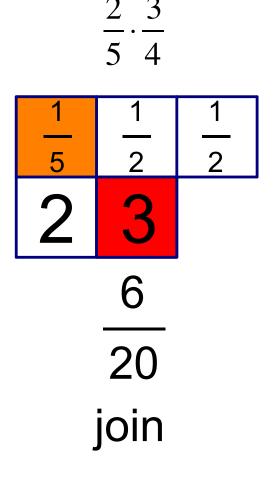


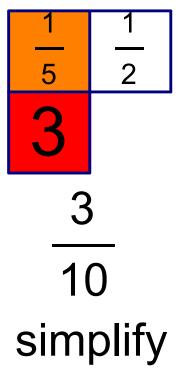
2 • 3



A Rule for Multiplying Fractions









A Rule for Dividing Fractions

$$\frac{2}{7} \div \frac{3}{5}$$

1.

 $\frac{2}{\frac{1}{7}}$

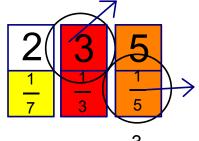
begin with $\frac{2}{7}$

2



join reciprocal pairs

3.



remove $\frac{3}{5}$

4.

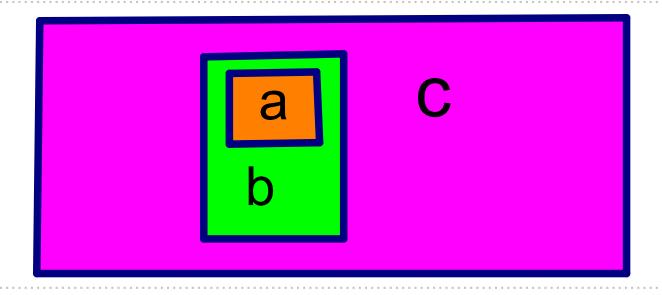
$$\frac{2}{\frac{1}{7}}$$
 $\frac{1}{3}$

$$\frac{2}{7} \cdot \frac{5}{3}$$



Number Theorems (1)

Hypothesis: a|b and b|c True or false? Conclusion: a|c



True!



Number Theorems (2)

Determine if each conclusion is True or False. Justify your answer with a block diagram. a, b, c, d, and n are natural numbers.

Hypothesis: a is a factor of b and b is a factor of a.

Conclusion: a = b

Hypothesis: a is a factor of b and c is a factor of d.

Conclusion: a • c is a factor of b • d.

Hypothesis: a is not factor of b.

Conclusion: n • a is not a factor of b.



Number Theorems (3)

Hypothesis: n • a is a factor of b

Conclusion: a is a factor of b.

What is the connection to the previous statement?

Hypothesis: a and b are factors of c and GCF(a, b) = 1

Conclusion: a • b is a factor of c.

Why is the GCF condition needed?

Hypothesis: a is a factor of b \bullet c and GCF(a, b) = 1

Conclusion: a is a factor of c.

Why is the GCF condition needed?



Number Theorems (4)

Statement: GCF(a, b) is a factor of LCM(a, b).

Hypothesis: GCF(a, b) = n

Conclusion: GCF(a/n, b/n) = 1

Hypothesis:GCF(a, b) = 1

Conclusion: $GCF(a^n, b^n) = 1$



Resources

5280math.com >> 5280 Math Resources >> Math Building Blocks

Building Numbers from Primes (October 2009) by Jerry Burkhart *Mathematics Teaching in the Middle School*, 15, 156 – 167

Advanced Common Core Math Explorations: Factors and Multiples by Jerry Burkhart, Prufrock Press, 2014

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Presentations

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