

Dividing by Fractions ... with Graham Crackers!

Are you looking for a fun way to teach your fifth grader important math concepts? Start with this quick and simple activity that will teach them the concept of dividing whole numbers by fractions—using one of his favorite snacks! Graham crackers are perfect for this activity, since they're easily divided into equal parts...and they make a great tasting reward!

What You Need:

- Graham Crackers (whole can be divided into 2 parts)
- Lined paper
- Pencil

What You Do:

1. First, have your child predict what they think 1 divided by $\frac{1}{2}$ is. With a little help from a graham cracker, invite them to find out if he's correct.
2. Hand over a whole graham cracker to your child. Explain that this is one graham cracker, so it represents the number 1.
3. Then, have them divide the graham cracker in half by bending it down the middle. After it splits, ask them to count how many graham cracker pieces there now are.
4. After they respond that there are two, say "That's correct. 1 divided by $\frac{1}{2}$ is 2." They may look puzzled, since most division problem answers or quotients are usually smaller than the dividend, which in this case was 1.
5. Now, ask your child to predict what 2 divided by $\frac{1}{2}$ is.
6. After your child responds, have them set the broken graham cracker aside and hand them two more. Explain that now they have two graham crackers, representing the number 2.
7. Then, have them divide the graham crackers in half by bending them and splitting them down the middle. After they split, ask your child how many pieces there are.
8. After your child responds that there are 4 pieces, say, "That's correct. 2 divided by $\frac{1}{2}$ equals 4."
9. Next, explain how to divide whole numbers by fractions without using graham crackers. Multiply the whole number by the fraction that has been reversed. 1 divided by $\frac{1}{2}$; $1 \times \frac{2}{1} = 2$, or $\frac{1}{1} \times \frac{2}{1} = \frac{2}{1}$, which equals 2. Remind them that any whole number is equivalent to that number, over 1.
10. Have your child try a few problems on lined paper. For example, 3 divided by $\frac{1}{4}$ is $3 \times 4 = 12$. 4 divided by $\frac{1}{4}$; $4 \times 4 = 16$, 5 divided by $\frac{1}{3}$; $5 \times 3 = 15$.



Finally, celebrate your child's new math concept with a yummy snack of sweet graham crackers! Try practicing some more math during snack time.