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Trade-First Subtraction

Family Note

Today your child learned about subtracting multidigit numbers using a procedure called the trade-first method. Your child also used "ballpark estimates" to determine whether his or her answers made sense.

The **trade-first** method is similar to the traditional subtraction method that you may be familiar with. However, all the "regrouping" or "borrowing" is done before the problem is solved—which gives the method its name, "trade-first."

Example:

longs 10s	cubes 1s
4	6
−3	9

◆ Are there enough tens and ones to remove exactly 3 tens and 9 ones from 46? *(No; there are enough tens, but there aren't enough ones.)*

◆ Trade 1 ten for 10 ones.

longs 10s	cubes 1s
3	16
~~4~~	~~6~~
−3	9

◆ Solve. 3 tens minus 3 tens leaves 0 tens. 16 ones minus 9 ones leaves 7 ones. The answer is 7.

longs 10s	cubes 1s
3	16
~~4~~	~~6~~
−3	9
	7

◆ Make a ballpark estimate to see whether the answer makes sense: 46 is close to 50, and 39 is close to 40. 50 − 40 = 10. 10 is close to the answer of 7, so 7 is a reasonable answer.

The trade-first method is one of many ways people solve subtraction problems. Your child may choose this method or a different procedure. What is most important is that your child can successfully solve subtraction problems using a method that makes sense to him or her.

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Trade-First Subtraction *cont.*

Make a ballpark estimate for each problem and write a number model for your estimate.

Use the trade-first method of subtraction to solve each problem.

Example: Ballpark estimate:

30 − 20 = 10

longs 10s	cubes 1s
1	16
~~2~~	~~6~~
− 1	8
	8

Answer 8

1. Ballpark estimate:

longs 10s	cubes 1s
7	3
− 4	2

Answer

2. Ballpark estimate:

longs 10s	cubes 1s
4	9
− 2	6

Answer

3. Ballpark estimate:

longs 10s	cubes 1s
8	5
− 5	6

Answer

4. Ballpark estimate:

longs 10s	cubes 1s
3	2
− 1	5

Answer

5. Ballpark estimate:

34 − 18

Answer