

Small Group Work

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Third Grade Lessons

1. **All Things Being Equal II** - The equals sign signifies that amounts on each side are the same. The students will use Unifix blocks and the corresponding equations to represent equalities between additive amounts.
2. **All Things Being Equal III** - The students will write equations to represent verbal statements and successive transformations that maintain or do not maintain the equality.
3. **Box Extremum** - Students will start by finding average rates of change for a non-linear function over increments of the independent variable. The size of the increments will decrease to introduce the idea of using tangent lines to find instantaneous rates of change of linear and non-linear functions. Students will see what a tangent looks like at the extrema of a graph. Students will then create a box that maximizes the volume and see how determining the extrema of a graph can help to find the maximum volume.
4. **Candy Boxes** - This class centers on the possible amounts of candies two children, John and Maria, have. They each have the same, unspecified number of candies inside their own candy box. John has, in addition, one extra candy and Maria has three extra candies. What are the possible total candies they might have?
5. **Comparing Different Functions** - The students will discuss, represent, and solve a verbal problem involving the choice between two functions.
6. **Comparing Discrete Quantities** - Students compare amounts of tokens and unknown amounts of discrete quantities. In both cases they are guided to adopt line segments to represent discrete amounts and the differences between them. They are also asked to discuss composition of measures: "the difference plus the smaller amount is equal to the larger amount" and, "the larger amount minus the difference is equal to the smaller amount".
7. **Comparing Heights I** - Students compare the heights of two children, measure, compare, and represent one's own height in relation to a peer's height, and focus on the differences between heights.
8. **Comparison Problems & Tables** - This class will be used to review concepts and representations as applied to the solution of verbal comparison problems and to work on function tables.
9. **Comparisons** - Comparisons and comparison operators: =, <, >.
10. **Comparisons and Attributes** - Work with comparisons and comparison operators (=, <, >).
11. **Dots Problem** - We present to the students a problem dealing with a growing pattern over time. To begin, there is one dot. With each passing minute four more dots are drawn around the previous dot(s).
12. **Formulas and Stories** - The students will be required to work with the relation between different mathematical expressions (formulas) and stories.
13. **Functioning Together** - Students work together to develop multiple representations of a function. The students split up into groups of three with each student having a separate responsibility. When all the input values have been used up, the students are asked to, together, make up a story that describes their function.
14. **Functions - Earning Money** - The students will create tables and equations from given stories. The functions are additive and multiplicative.
15. **Functions from Tables** - Students work with a function, beginning with a table and then a formula, to generate ordered pairs that follow the rule of the function.
16. **Heights as Functions** - In this class children will work on the functional representation of two unknown heights and on the composition of the shorter height plus the difference between the heights as equal to the second height.
17. **How Many Points?** - Students work with: (a) a context — distance as a function of time; (b) generating coordinates.
18. **Interpreting Graphs** - Students will be given two linear distance-time graphs and asked to tell a story about each graph and to compare them. They will later explore comparisons between points in each line.
19. **Linear vs Quadratic Functions** - The students will use two functions (a linear and a quadratic) that are represented as a sequence of patterns and create a sequence of hops on the number line and an algebraic expression to express the functions.
20. **Maps to Graphs** - Students will be given two linear distance-time graphs and asked to tell a story about each graph and to compare them. They will later explore comparisons between points in each line.
21. **Multiple Number Lines** - Students continue to learn that two partial changes that start at different points on the number line are equivalent. At the end, they will work with notation for variables ($N + 5 - 3$ or $N + 2$).
22. **N-Number Line I** - Students work with the table they built in the previous class for multiple number lines, focusing on the notation for variables ($N + 5 - 3$ or $N + 2$).
23. **N-Number Line II** - Students use the N-Number line to make generalizations about an unknown amount of money in a piggy bank.
24. **Number Line Shortcuts** - The students will use a number line to see how two addends or subtrahends are equivalent to one single change once combined.
25. **Part-Whole Relations** - This class follows the discussion from the Candy Boxes I class. The challenge is to work with a visual representation of the relationships among the various quantities in the candy box problem and to relate the visual and numerical information contained in visual diagram(s) to verbal descriptions and to algorithms for finding unknown values.
26. **Piggy Banks** - The whole lesson revolves around a multipart story problem involving changes in two quantities over several days of a week. The initial quantities are equal yet unknown. Then transformations are applied to the quantities. Students are asked to compare the quantities throughout the week even though only their relative relationship can be determined.
27. **Rates vs Totals** - Students compare points on an hours/pay Cartesian space. The main challenge lies in recognizing that, although one student earned more, the other student was paid better, that is, at a higher rate of pay. They must indicate the difference in pay and the differences in amount worked.
28. **Starting With A Rule** - Students focus on whether given outputs are consistent with a given rule.
29. **Symbols** - Discussion about what symbols are; writing messages or "stories" with symbols; interpreting symbols.
30. **Three Heights** - In this class we will explore: (a) How the children deal with comparisons, (b) How they draw inferences from comparisons, and (c) How they represent comparisons between three unknown amounts.
31. **Time and Time Lines** - Students will discuss and learn about points and intervals on time lines of various sorts.

Fourth Grade Lessons

1. **Cartesian Candy Bars II** - Children work on sharing different amounts of candy bars among different numbers of people. They compare ratios (candy bars per person) and plot points in a Cartesian grid.
2. **Comparing Functions** - This lesson is split into two days. In the first class, the students will analyze eight basic graph shapes and will represent and solve a verbal problem involving the choice between two functions. In the second one they will be asked to choose, among the eight basic graph shapes, the ones that matches specific situations.

- Equations and Inequalities** - Students will work with equations and inequalities, first with simple ones and later with comparisons of two functions. The Wallet Problem, introduced in a previous lesson, will provide the background context.
- Evaluation Problem** - Students will be given a problem that asks about the amount of money each person has, based on the amount in a piggy bank. They will be given one graph and asked to draw the second graph.
- Graphing A Story** - A trip is described in miles, hours, and miles/hr. Students produce a graph from the description. They then produce a table from the graph and answer questions about the trip.
- Graphing Halves and Doubles** - Children work on a problem about distance and time and compare two rates: half a meter per second and two meters per second.
- Graphing Thirds and Triples** - Children work on a problem about distance and time and compare two rates: one third of a meter per second and three meters per second.
- Intervals** - Students reason about graphs showing growth over time. They compare heights of children and heights of two animals at different time intervals.
- Multiplicative Candy Boxes II** - This class is a continuation of the Multiplicative Candy Boxes I lesson. It centers on the possible amounts of candies two children, Juan and Marcia, have. Juan has a box of candy and Marcia has twice as much candy. What are the possible amounts of candies they might have?
- The Better Paying Job I** - Children work on a problem about rate of pay per hour of work. They compare ratios (dollars earned per hour of work) and discuss and plot points in a Cartesian plane.
- The Better Paying Job II** - Children work on a problem about rate of pay per hour of work. They compare ratios (dollars earned per hour of work) and discuss and plot points in a Cartesian plane.
- Three Heights Review** - In this class we will explore: (a) How children deal with comparisons, (b) How they draw inferences from comparisons, and (c) How they represent comparisons between three unknown amounts.
- Three to One** - Children discuss and produce verbal and mathematical statements on the proportion, S:L :: 1:3, that is, on the function $f(x) = 3x$ and on its inverse $f^{-1}(x) = 1/3x$
- Two Phone Plans I** - Students compare two phone plans, one of which has a lower rate, but a monthly basic charge; the other has a higher rate but no basic charge.
- Two Phone Plans II** - Students will work on the comparison between two phone plans (also used in the lesson "Two Phone Plans I"), one of which has a lower rate, but a monthly basic charge, the other has a higher rate but no basic charge.
- Varying Speed** - Children are asked to tell a story about a trip depicted through a graph that has varying slopes/speeds.
- Varying Velocity** - Children are asked to tell a story about a trip depicted through a graph that has varying slopes/velocities.
- Wallet Problem I** - Students compare the amounts of money two students have. The amounts are described relationally but not through precise dollar amounts.
- Wallet Problem II** - Students will be given a wallet problem. They will be asked to compare the amounts of money two students have. The amounts are described relationally but not through precise dollar amounts.
- Wallet Problem III** - Students will continue working with the wallet problem. They will be shown a graph for Mike's amounts and asked to (a) determine whether it represents Robin's or Mike's money and (b) to predict where the line for Mike would fall. Later they will plot Mike's amounts and will discuss why the lines cross.

Fifth Grade Lessons

- Basic Function Shapes** - In this lesson, the students will (a) discuss, represent, and solve a verbal problem involving the choice between two functions; (b) choose, among 8 basic graphs (7 distinct shapes), the one that matches specific situations; and (c) write stories to match a specific graph shape.
- Equations and Graphs** - Students will further compare two linear functions in the context of evaluating two plans for shoveling snow. One plan has two parts: a basic charge plus a charge based on the number of square meters cleared. The other plan has no basic charge; it only charges according to the number of square meters cleared. However the per-meter charge is higher than in the other plan. Students are asked to determine the circumstances in which the bill from each plan would be the same. They then examine the graph of the two functions and discuss how equations and inequalities relate to the graph.
- Equations in Groups** - Students first discuss equality situations and how equal changes on both sides of the equality do not change the equality or the solution to the equation. In a second activity, A pair of students begins with a solved equation (e.g. $N = 4$) and passes the equation to their neighbor; the neighbor operates equally on each side of the equation and passes the equations to the following neighbor. They continue this process until the series of equations return to the first two students who, then, check whether the solution still holds. They also check the logic and correctness of their colleagues operations on the initial equation.
- Equations in Groups II** - A student (or a pair of students) begins with a solved equation (e.g. $N = 4$) and pass(es) the equation to neighbor (or pair of neighbors); the neighbor(s) operate(s) equally on each side of the equation. And so on, around the table. There should be at least three students or pair of students at each table. When the series of equations returns to the first students, each student (or pair of students) check whether the solution still holds for the solution they had proposed at the beginning. They also check the logic and correctness of the changes implemented by their classmates.
- Phone Plans** - Students will compare two linear functions in the context of evaluating phone plans. One plan has two parts: a basic charge plus a charge based upon the number of minutes used. The other plan has no basic charge; it only charges according to the minutes used. However the per-minute charge is higher than in the other plan. Students are asked to determine the circumstances in which the monthly bill from each plan would be the same. They then examine the graph of the two functions and discuss how equations and inequalities relate to the graph.
- Solving Equations I** - Students will be asked to use the syntactic rules of algebra to solve equations with variables on both sides of the equals sign.
- Solving Equations II** - Students will be asked to represent and solve verbal problems requiring algebra and to use the syntactic rules of algebra to solve equations with variables on both sides of the equals sign.
- Wallet Review Problem** - This activity is a review of the Wallet Problem done in fourth grade. It is intended to introduce new students to some of the concepts we have covered and to refresh the memories of our old students. Students compare the amounts of money two students have. The amounts are described relationally but not through specific dollar amounts.

Middle School Lessons

- Biggest Output** - Students will decide on what linear and quadratic functions will result in the greatest output, starting from an algebraic expression, and using tables and graphs to help them make these decisions.
- Box of Clay Activity** - Students will compare two cubic functions based on the context of the volumes of a box of clay.
- Can We Predict Differences?** - Students will predict, produce, and compare linear and non-linear function graphs used to represent the number of punches on a balloon.
- Candy Experiment** - Students will create their own data to construct a graph and equation of negative and fractional slope.

5. **Compare and Contrast** - Students will identify the y-intercept and slope using equations and then use that data to create corresponding tables and graphs.
6. **Contrasting Equations** - Students write equations for three graphs and examine their slopes by comparing and contrasting the graphs. Students also look at the same functions graphed on differently scaled coordinate planes.
7. **Function Challenges - 20 Questions** - Students will compete in a game to generate equations for functions that meet certain criteria, as given by the instructor.
8. **Guess My Rule - Linear** - Students will try to determine the equation to match their partner's created graph and work together to correct their own mistakes.
9. **Guess My Rule - Non-Linear** - Students will produce algebraic expressions starting from non-linear graphs produced by other students in the class.
10. **Jason's Tree House** - Students will extract data from a story and use tables and graphs to answer questions about proposed scenarios.
11. **Same and Different** - Students will compare graphs of linear functions, looking for similarities and differences, and will produce algebraic expressions, again identifying what is the same and what is different about each one.
12. **Sound Loudness** - Students will examine a non-linear function depicted in a graph and generate the corresponding function table and equation.
13. **Who Shares My Function? - Linear with All Representations** - Students will work in groups after finding other students who have the same linear function represented by a story, a table, a graph, or an equation. They will attempt to explain and discuss why the different representations refer to the same function.
14. **Who Shares My Function? - Linear with Graphs and Stories** - Students will make groups by finding other students who have the same quadratic or linear function in different representations.
15. **Who Shares My Function? - Linear with Graphs, Tables, and Equations** - Students will make groups by finding other students who have the same linear function, as shown in representations of graphs, tables, or equations. They will then generate a story to go with the function.
16. **Who Shares My Function? - Linear with Negative and Fractional Slope** - Students will find other functions that are the same as theirs, starting from a table, a graph, or an equation. Once they have identified the same function represented in a different way, they will create a story that describes all of the different representations of the same function.
17. **Who Shares My Function? - Quadratics** - Students will make groups by finding other students who have the same quadratic or linear function in different representations.