Fraction Flower Bouquets

Students design beautiful blooms as they develop an understanding of fractions as parts of a group.

Materials

- ❊ 3-inch construction paper squares in assorted colors
- ❊ scissors
- ❊ crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- ❊ green pipe cleaners
- ❊ empty 20 oz. plastic water or soda bottles (labels removed)

1. Review the concepts of numerators and denominators. On chart paper or the whiteboard, draw a simple picture of a group of flowers. Color some of the flowers differently to reflect fractional parts of the group. See examples at right.

2. Ask students what fraction of the flowers is yellow ($\frac{3}{5}$) and what fraction is pink ($\frac{2}{5}$). Model how to write these fractions. Remind students that when a fraction represents a part of a group, the denominator (bottom number) tells the total number in the group, and the numerator (top number) tells how many are in a set that's part of the group—in this case, flowers of a particular color.

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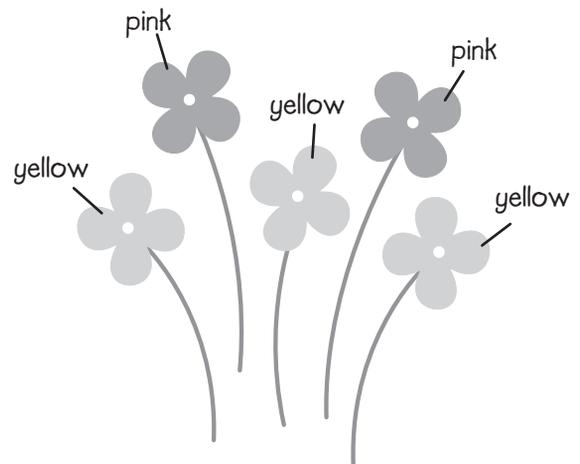
3. Tell students that they are going to create a multi-colored bouquet of flowers that represents different fractions. Have students choose two or three different colors of paper squares. Then have them make flowers by following these steps:

❋ Depending on students' abilities, you might tell them to make a specific number of flowers and how many of each color.

❋ As an added challenge, ask students to reduce fractions to their lowest terms.

- Fold a paper square in half, then in half again.

- Draw the shape of a petal on the folded paper. The shape should start on one of the folded edges and end on the other folded edge. Be sure not to draw all the way to the folded corner.

- Cut out the shape, through all of the layers, and unfold the resulting flower. Decorate, if desired.

- Punch a hole through the center of the flower.

- Poke a pipe cleaner through the hole and curl or bend the end to hold the flower on the stem.

4. When students have completed their bouquet, have them insert the stems in a plastic bottle, then add a construction paper label that describes, in fractions, the color of the flowers in their bouquet.

Explore More

As a variation, have students each make five or six flowers in one color of their choice. Then they can team up with one or more other students and put their flowers together in different combinations. Have them determine what fractional part of their combined bouquets is a specific color. Encourage them to change the number of flowers and colors in their group bouquet several times to come up with different fractional parts.