

# Making Fractions Make Sense

## Considerations for Secondary and Intensive Intervention

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National Center on  
**INTENSIVE INTERVENTION**

at American Institutes for Research ■

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# Welcome

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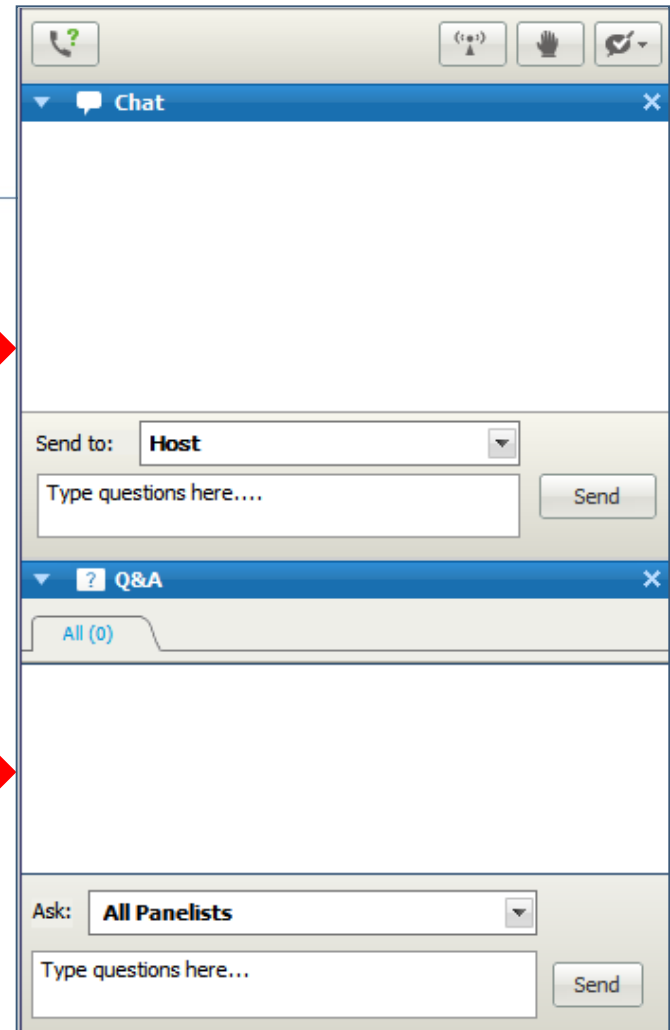


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# A Note About Questions...

Please type questions related to technical issues in the **Chat box**.

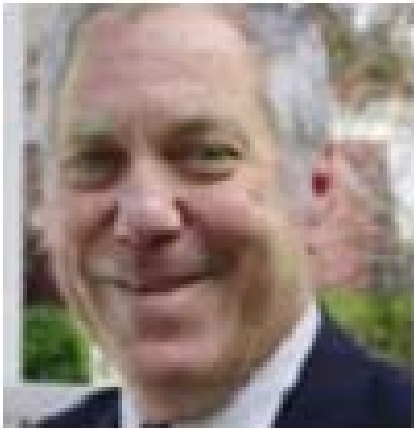
Please type questions related to webinar content in the **Q&A box**.



The screenshot shows two overlapping windows. The top window is titled 'Chat' and has a 'Send to:' dropdown menu set to 'Host'. Below it is a text input field with the placeholder text 'Type questions here....' and a 'Send' button. The bottom window is titled 'Q&A' and has an 'Ask:' dropdown menu set to 'All Panelists'. Below it is a text input field with the placeholder text 'Type questions here...' and a 'Send' button. Two red arrows originate from the text boxes on the left: one points to the 'Type questions here....' field in the Chat window, and the other points to the 'Type questions here...' field in the Q&A window.

# Presenters

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Russell Gersten  
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# The Case for Emphasizing Fractions in Intervention

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Russell Gersten, Ph. D.

Instructional Research Group &

Professor Emeritus, Special Education, University of Oregon

# Represents the Research Of

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- Center for Improving the Learning of Fractions  
<https://sites.google.com/a/udel.edu/fractions/home>
- Institute of Education Sciences Practice Guide on Fractions  
<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/practiceguide.aspx?sid=15>

# The Case for Emphasizing Fractions in Intervention



# Case for Emphasizing Fractions

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1. Fractions knowledge (understanding and procedural but especially understanding of the ideas) is critical for success in algebra (National Mathematics Panel, 2009) mathematically.
2. Reason is that fractions opens up a level of abstraction necessary for future mathematics.
3. Can only be done by demonstrating understanding.



# Why Is This Important?

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***It appears that if you can't do these types of problems well, algebra success is unlikely.***

Sources: Siegler, Duncan et al. (2012). *Using longitudinal data from U.S. & UK*

Nationally representative sample of algebra teachers  
(NMAP, 2008)

National Mathematics Advisory Panel. (2008). *Mathematical analysis*

# Poll Item

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In which of the following are the three fractions arranged from least to greatest?

A.  $\frac{5}{9}, \frac{1}{2}, \frac{2}{7}$

B.  $\frac{5}{9}, \frac{2}{7}, \frac{1}{2}$

C.  $\frac{2}{7}, \frac{1}{2}, \frac{5}{9}$

D.  $\frac{1}{2}, \frac{2}{7}, \frac{5}{9}$

E.  $\frac{1}{2}, \frac{5}{9}, \frac{2}{7}$

# That Was a NAEP Item

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- Eighth graders in 2007 only correctly solved this problem 49 percent of the time!
- Demonstrates critical importance of magnitude of fractions and how complex it is.

# U.S. Children and Adults Have Particularly Poor Fractions Knowledge

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- “Is  $13/15 \times 12/17 > 13/15$ ?”
  - Sixth and eighth graders: 30 percent correct
  - Preservice teachers: 30 percent correct (real danger sign)
  - Carnegie Mellon mathematics/science students: 95 percent correct
  - Only 50 percent of eighth graders correctly ordered  $2/7$ ,  $1/12$ , and  $5/9$  (NAEP, 2007)
  - Only 29 percent of 11th graders correctly translated 0.029 as  $29/1000$  on NAEP

(Siegler & Lortie-Forgues, in preparation)

# Relations Between Fraction Magnitude Representations and Mathematics Achievement Scores: Eighth Graders

| Measure of Magnitude          | Mathematics Achievement |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Number line 0–1 PAE           | <b>-0.63**</b>          |
| <b>Number line 0–5 PAE</b>    | <b>-0.86**</b>          |
| Magnitude comparison accuracy | <b>0.62**</b>           |

**\*\* $p < .01$**

# Why Are Fractions So Hard for So Many?

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- Fractions usually look like two numbers but are really one number.
  - Some students, for example, may not think of  $7/3$  as one number but as a “bunch of numbers.”
  - One number can be represented in an infinite number of ways (e.g.,  $3/4$ ,  $36/48$ ,  $75/100$ ).

# Why Are Fractions So Hard for So Many?

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- The same number can look quite different to the naked eye (e.g.,  $14/21$  and  $2/3$ ), yet they are precisely the same number with precisely the same magnitude.
- Often when numerals get bigger, the value of the fraction gets smaller (e.g.,  $1/3$  is bigger than  $1/8$ ) BUT not ALWAYS.
  - $2/5$  smaller than  $8/11$ .
  - $1/4$  is the same as  $5/20$ .

# Incorrect Whole Number Strategies

- Students used two main whole number strategies to solve problems with like denominators.

| Strategy                  | Example  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Independent whole numbers | $\frac{3}{6} + \frac{1}{6} = \frac{4}{12}$ $\frac{3}{4} - \frac{1}{4} = \frac{2}{0}$ |
| “Add all”                 | $\frac{3}{6} + \frac{1}{6} = \underline{16}$   |



# Why Is Early Fraction Knowledge Uniquely Predictive of Later, More Advanced, Mathematic Achievement?

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- Fractions, including ratios and proportions, are heavily used in high school mathematics—algebra, geometry, trigonometry, etc.
- Fractions involve a level of abstraction not encountered in work with whole numbers.

(Siegler et al., 2012)

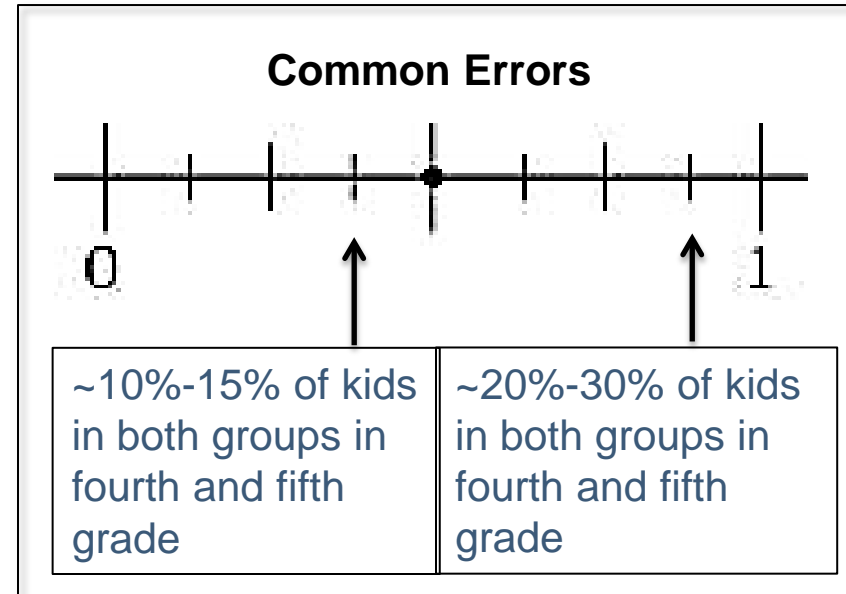
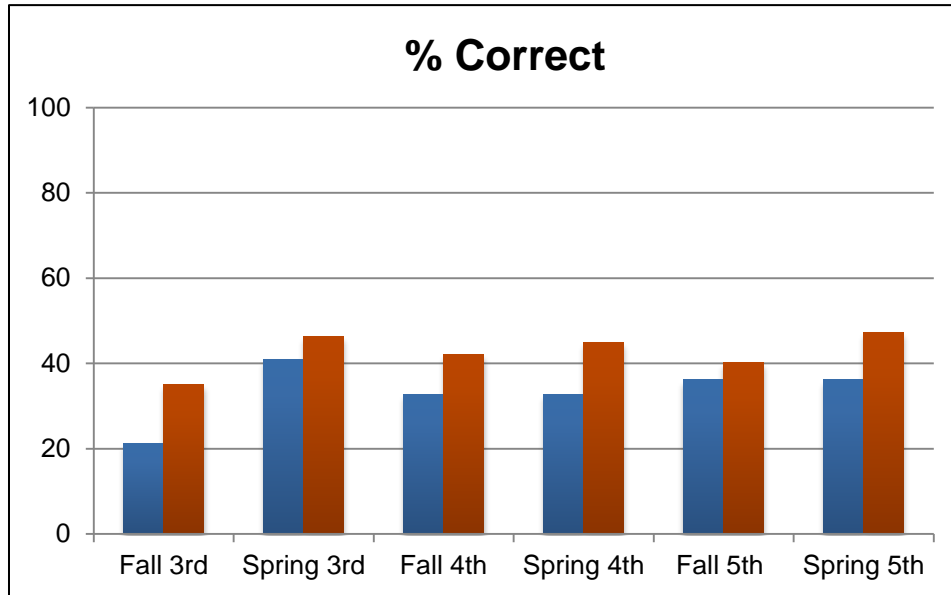
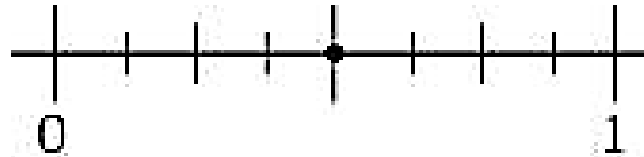
# Grappling With Infinity

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- With whole numbers, students learn to find “how many numbers are there between, say 8 and 10 OR 7 and 11.”
- An infinite number of numbers exist between two fractions (e.g.,  $\frac{1}{5}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$ ).

# Fractions on the Number Line

On the portion of the number line below, a dot shows where  $\frac{1}{2}$  is. Use another dot to show where  $\frac{3}{4}$  is.



█ ≤ 35th percentile in mathematics achievement  
█ > 36th percentile in mathematics achievement

*Even by the end of fifth grade, less than half of students can correctly identify fractions on the number line.*

*This points toward the need to further develop the understanding of a fraction as a location on a number line.*

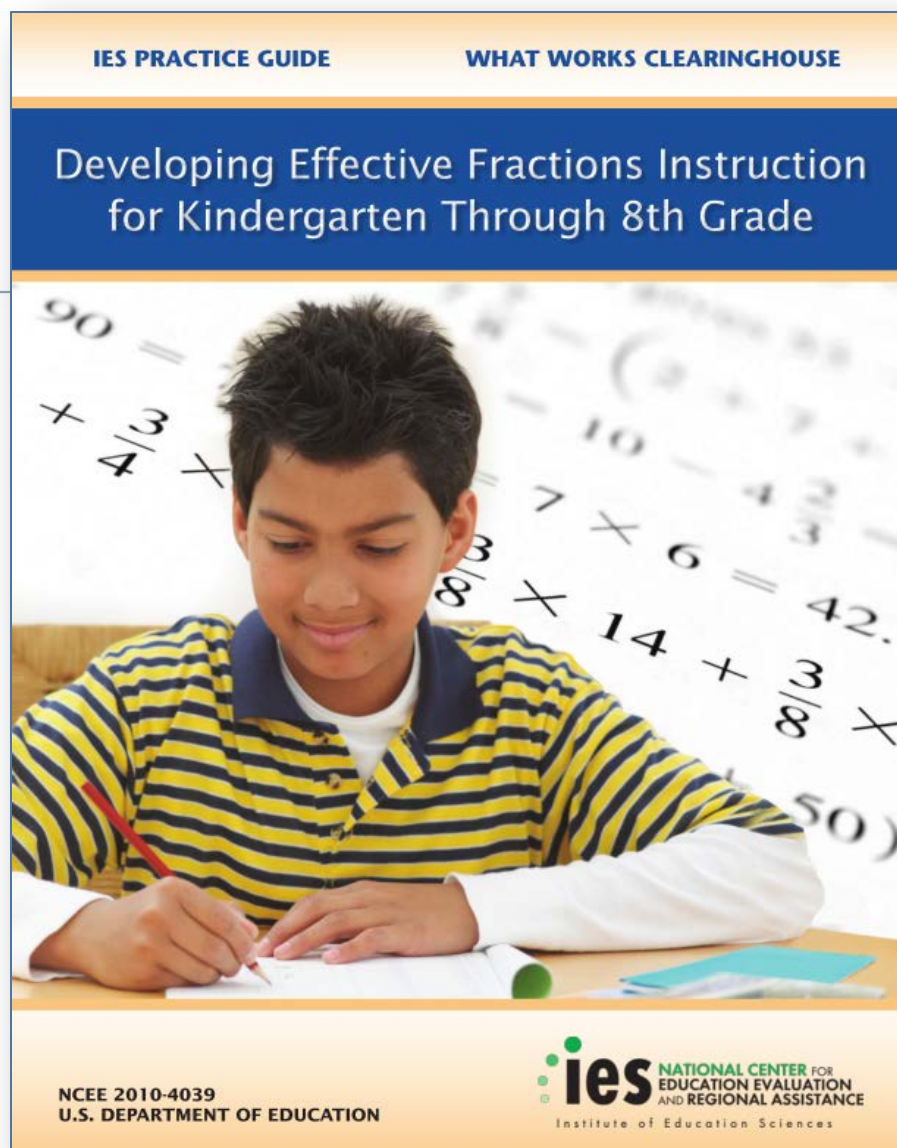
# Sense of Betrayal

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- Students learn fractions as part of a whole in Grade 3.
- Example:
  - Half of the class went to museum the first day. There are 18 students in the class. How many went?
  - Put  $\frac{9}{4}$  on a number line.

# Mathematics Fractions Practice Guide

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/practiceguide.aspx?sid=15>



# Levels of Evidence

| Recommendation   | Level of Scientific Evidence |
|--|------------------------------|
| Build on students' informal understanding of sharing and proportionality to develop initial fraction concepts.   | Minimal                      |
| Help students recognize that fractions are numbers and that they expand the number system beyond whole numbers. Use number lines as a central representational tool in teaching this and other fraction concepts from the early grades onward. | Moderate                     |
| Help students understand why procedures for computations with fractions make sense.  | Moderate                     |
| Develop students' conceptual understanding of strategies for solving ratio, rate, and proportion problems before exposing them to cross-multiplication as a procedure to use to solve such problems.   | Minimal                      |
| Professional development programs should place a high priority on improving teachers' understanding of fractions and of how to teach them.   | Minimal                      |

# What Prerequisite Skills Do Students Need Before They Encounter Fractions?

It is important for students to have fluent fact mastery so that they can execute fraction procedures correctly.



**Second and Third  
Grade CCCS**

**Fluently add and subtract within 20  
by the end of second grade.**

**Fluently multiply within 100 by the  
end of third grade.**



# So What Does This Mean For Struggling Students?

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- Recommendations from practice guides remain important across secondary (Tier 2) and intensive intervention.
- Intensive intervention content for Grades 5 and up must include this material.
- Excellent if it is linked to grade-level content (e.g., fractions computation in Grade 5, proportions in Grade 6, and simple linear equations in Grade 7).

# Evidence-Based Fraction Intervention at Fourth Grade: Tier 2

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# Big Ideas

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- Our goal: Build conceptual understanding of fractions as numbers; focus on two interpretations.
- Primary focus: Measurement understanding
  - Number lines
  - Magnitude; ability to reason about size
  - Infinite equivalencies
  - Focus of instruction in Asian countries
- Secondary focus: Part-whole understanding
  - Shaded regions
  - Focus of instruction in United States

# Fraction Skills Addressed

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- Understanding fractions as numbers
  - Naming fractions from regions
  - Fraction equivalencies to  $\frac{1}{2}$  and 1 whole (quick retrieval)
  - Fraction equivalencies with multiplication
  - Identify proper, improper, and mixed numbers (less than 2) + converting

# Fraction Skills Addressed

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- **Magnitude activities**
  - Comparing fractions (2) with  $<$ ,  $>$ ,  $=$
  - Ordering fractions (3)
  - Number line 0–1 (place two fractions on number line)
  - Number line 0–2 (place one fraction on the number line)

# Fraction Skills Addressed

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- **Fraction calculations**

- Simple addition and subtraction
  - Same denominators
  - Different denominators (only one fraction to change)

# How Do You Think About Fractions?

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## Question 1:

- Compare:  $\frac{4}{6}$  and  $\frac{5}{12}$

# How Do You Think About Fractions?

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## Question 1:

- Compare:  $\frac{4}{6}$  and  $\frac{5}{12}$ 
  - A. Did you find a common denominator?
  - B. Did you think about magnitude of each fraction versus a benchmark fraction?



# How Do You Think About Fractions?

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## Question 2:

- Where would you decide to place  $7/12$  on a 0–1 number line?

# How Do You Think About Fractions?

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## Question 2:

- Where would you decide to place  $7/12$  on a 0–1 number line?
  - A. Did you mentally divide the number line into 12 equal parts?
  - B. Did you think about  $1/2$  ( $6/12$ ) to approximate where  $7/12$  goes?

# Instructional Design

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1. Introduce concept with manipulatives/visuals
  - Fraction circles, fraction tiles, number lines
2. When relevant, provide context
  - Equal sharing example for unit-fraction understanding
3. Provide procedures for solving each task
  - Decrease demand on working memory, gradually fade prompt cards
4. Include fluency practice for foundational skills
5. Independent practice to demonstrate learning

# Fraction Skill: Equivalency ( $\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 Whole)

## ■ Introduce

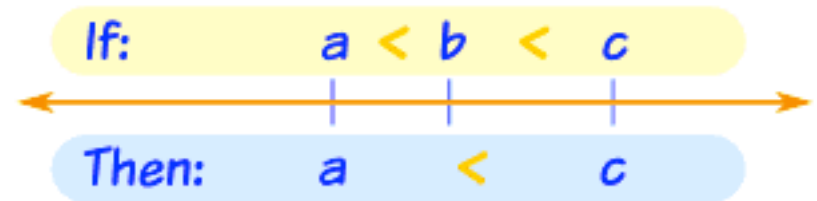
- Fraction tiles
- Fraction circles
- Number lines with varying denominators
- Football analogy (quarters and half time)

## ■ Build Understanding

- Show it with multiplication
- Doubling rule (double the numerator equals denominator)

## ■ Goal: Quick Retrieval

- Able to use as benchmark for evaluating magnitude in other activities:  
Transitive property



# Fraction Skill: Comparing

- Introduce with fraction circles and tiles
- Build understanding
  - “equal sharing” with context of same numerators
  - “number of pieces” with same denominators
- Use  $\frac{1}{2}$  as a benchmark fraction for determining magnitude relationship
- Transitive property

## Compare Card

### Same Denominators?

Bigger Numerator  
Bigger Fraction

### Same Numerators?

Fewer Parts  
Bigger Fraction

## Both Different?

**Label:**  
Proper (P), Improper (I), or Mixed (M)

Are they equivalent?

Is one fraction equivalent to  $\frac{1}{2}$ ?  
• Rewrite  $\frac{1}{2}$  with the same denominator

Are none equivalent to  $\frac{1}{2}$ ?  
• Compare each fraction to  $\frac{1}{2}$   
• Write L or G  
• OR rewrite an equivalent fraction to make the denominators the same

# Fraction Skill: Ordering

## Ordering

$$\frac{a}{d} \quad \frac{b}{e} \quad \frac{c}{f}$$

### Label:

Proper (P), Improper (I), or Mixed (M)



Change I to M

### Compare:

#### Same Denominators?

Bigger Numerator  
Bigger Fraction

#### All Different?

1. Compare to  $\frac{1}{2}$  *and*  
Write L, G, or =

#### Same Numerators?

Fewer Parts  
Bigger Fraction

2. LL or GG?  
Compare and write < or >

Order fractions from smallest to largest.

A.  $\frac{3}{4}$     $\frac{1}{2}$     $\frac{2}{6}$

\_\_\_\_\_

B.  $\frac{1}{4}$     $\frac{1}{10}$     $\frac{1}{2}$

\_\_\_\_\_

C.  $\frac{1}{2}$     $\frac{8}{12}$     $\frac{3}{8}$

\_\_\_\_\_

# Fraction Skill: Number Line

## Number Lines

Which number line?



Find  $\frac{1}{2}$



Compare to  $\frac{1}{2}$  and write L or G



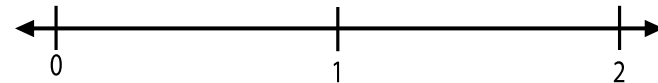
LL or GG?  
Compare and write < or >

**Label:**  
Proper(P), Improper(I), or Mixed(M)  
↓  
Change I to M

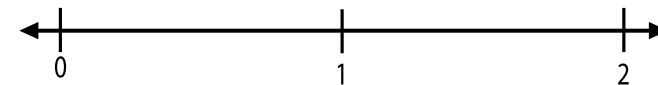


**If Proper:**  
Look at 0-1  
Compare to  $\frac{1}{2}$  and write L or G

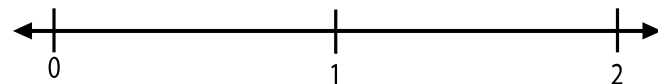
**If Mixed:**  
Look at 1-2  
Compare to  $1\frac{1}{2}$



$$\frac{7}{10}$$



$$1\frac{1}{5}$$

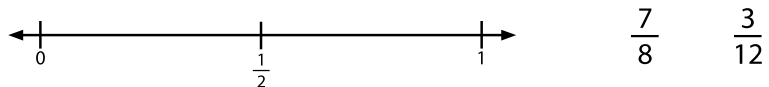


$$\frac{3}{4}$$

# Building Magnitude Understanding

- Relating magnitude activities
- Use the same three fraction for each magnitude activity
  - Comparing
  - Ordering
  - Number line

|               |                |               |          |       |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------|-------|
|               | Least          |               | Greatest |       |
| $\frac{7}{8}$ | $\frac{3}{12}$ | $\frac{1}{2}$ | _____    | _____ |



$\frac{3}{12}$     ○     $\frac{1}{2}$



# Fraction Skill: Computation

- Limited instruction for computation
- Discussed denominators needed to be the same; demonstrated with fraction circles
- Explained an equivalent fraction needed to be written to add correctly

## Group Worksheet

Day 27

Solve.

A.  $\frac{5}{10} + \frac{3}{10} =$

B.  $\frac{7}{8} - \frac{3}{8} =$

C. 
$$\begin{array}{r} \frac{3}{4} \\ - \frac{1}{2} \\ \hline \end{array}$$

D. 
$$\begin{array}{r} \frac{1}{2} \\ + \frac{5}{6} \\ \hline \end{array}$$

E.  $\frac{9}{10} - \frac{1}{2} =$

F.  $\frac{1}{2} - \frac{2}{6} =$

G. 
$$\begin{array}{r} \frac{6}{10} \\ + \frac{1}{2} \\ \hline \end{array}$$

H. 
$$\begin{array}{r} \frac{5}{6} \\ + \frac{3}{6} \\ \hline \end{array}$$

I.  $\frac{8}{12} - \frac{2}{12} =$

J.  $\frac{1}{2} + \frac{5}{6} =$

K. 
$$\begin{array}{r} \frac{1}{2} \\ - \frac{2}{8} \\ \hline \end{array}$$

L. 
$$\begin{array}{r} \frac{4}{10} \\ + \frac{1}{2} \\ \hline \end{array}$$

# Fraction Skill: Improper to Mixed

- Demonstrate with fraction circles
- Relied on addition skills
- Limited whole number to 1
- Improper fractions  $< 2$

## Writing Mixed Numbers as Improper Fractions

Mixed Number:  $1\frac{1}{2} = 1 \text{ and } \frac{1}{2}$

### STEP 1:

Write a fraction equal to 1 with the same denominator  $\frac{2}{2}$

### STEP 2:

Answer to Step 1 plus proper fraction

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

Your New Improper Fraction!

## Writing Improper Fractions as Mixed Numbers

Improper Fraction:  $\frac{3}{2}$

### STEP 1:

Write a fraction equal to 1 with the same denominator

$$\frac{2}{2}$$

### STEP 2:

Subtract

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

### STEP 3:

Answer to STEP 2 plus 1

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

Your New Mixed Number!

# Fluency: Magnitude Understanding

- Meet or beat your score!
- Looking at progress over three days—totals are graphed daily
- Activity resets after three days

## Activity: Two Flashcard Types

- Single flashcards: 2 min. on clock
  - State whether fraction is equal to  $\frac{1}{2}$  or not.
  - State whether fraction is proper, improper or mixed.
- Compare flashcards: 2 min. on clock
  - State which fraction is bigger.
  - If correct, move on; if incorrect, state correct answer explaining rule.
  - Fraction comparison types increased in difficulty as lessons progressed.

# Embedded Motivation System

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- Students have three ways to earn fraction money
- On-task behavior
  - Unidentified intervals, group contingency
- Solving problems correctly
  - Last activity of the day
- Meeting or beating fluency score
  - Tutors were instruction to give bonus money to increase focus as needed based on group needs

# Embedded Motivation System (cont.)

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- Denominations of dollars include the following:
  - Whole dollars
  - Half dollars
  - Quarter dollars
- The Fraction Store opens every three days with prizes at various price points: \$1, \$7, \$13, \$20.
- Students can choose to save or spend each time store opens.

# Results From Three Years of Research

| Assessment   | Tutoring vs Control (Y1) |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| Comparing    | 1.82                     |
| Number Line  | 1.14                     |
| NAEP         | 0.94                     |
| Calculations | 2.51                     |

| Assessment   | Fluency vs Control (Y2) | Conceptual vs Control (Y2) |
|--------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Number Line  | 0.99                    | 0.80                       |
| NAEP         | 0.60                    | 0.63                       |
| Calculations | 1.12                    | 1.13                       |

| Assessment   | M – WP vs Control (Y3) | A – WP vs Control (Y3) |
|--------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Number Line  | 1.10                   | 0.81                   |
| NAEP         | 0.44                   | 0.33                   |
| Calculations | 1.22                   | 1.70                   |

# Implications for Intervention

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- Students increased their ability to reason about fraction magnitude (number line results across three years).
- Students performed well on procedural computation (i.e., addition and subtraction) after extensive experience working on magnitude activities (calculation results across three years).
- We specifically addressed some of the common misconceptions or whole number bias that Russell spoke about:
  - Infinite equivalencies, numeral/value differences when in numerator versus denominator, a fraction is one number
  - See NAEP results across three years.

# Intensive Intervention With Fractions

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National Center on  
**INTENSIVE INTERVENTION**

at American Institutes for Research ■





# Response to Intervention (RTI) in Mathematics

## ■ Tier 1

- Evidence-based mathematics intervention



We need lots of work here.

## ■ Tier 2

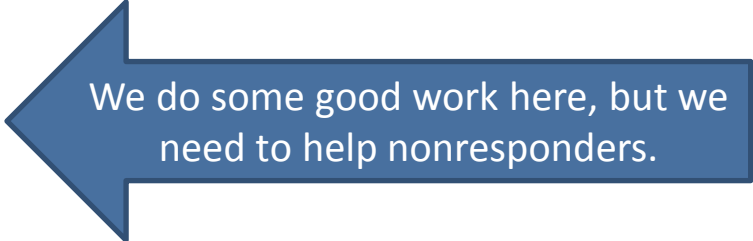
- Evidence-based mathematics intervention



We know quite a bit/some here.

## ■ Tier 3

- Evidence-based interventions mixed with intensive intervention



We do some good work here, but we need to help nonresponders.

# Tier 1

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# Tier 2

Home > Tools Charts >

## Academic Intervention

This tools chart presents information about studies that have been conducted about academic intervention programs. The first tab, *Study Quality*, includes ratings from our TRC members on the technical rigor of the study design. The second tab, *Effect Size*, includes information about the results of the studies. The third tab, *Intensity*, provides information related to the implementation of the program as an intensive intervention. The fourth tab, *Additional Research*, provides information about other studies and reviews that have been conducted on the intervention. **Additional information** is provided below the chart.

Grade Level  Subject

| Study Quality                                      |  |                |          |                              |                     |                    |
|--|--|----------------|----------|------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Title ▲  | Study  | Participants ⓘ | Design ⓘ | Fidelity of Implementation ⓘ | Measures Targeted ⓘ | Measures Broader ⓘ |
| Academy of MATH                                    | Torlaković (2011)  | ●              | ●        | ○                            | ○                   | ○                  |
| focusMATH Intensive Intervention                   | Styers & Baird-Wilkerson (2011)  | ●              | ●        | ●                            | ●                   | ○                  |
| Fraction Face-Off! (previously Fraction Challenge) | Fuchs, Schumacher, Long, Namkung, Hamlett, et al. (2012)                   | ●              | ●        | ●                            | ●                   | ●                  |
| Fusion   | Clarke, Doabler, Strand Cary, Kosty, Baker, et al. (2013) Technical Report | ●              | ●        | ●                            | ○                   | ●                  |
| Hot Math Tutoring                                  | Fuchs, Fuchs, Craddock, Hollenbeck, Hamlett, et al. (2008)                 | ●              | ●        | ●                            | ●                   | ●                  |
| Math Recovery                                      | Smith, Cobb, Earran, Cordray, Munter, et al. (2007)                        | ○              | ○        | ●                            | ○                   | ●                  |

Other Tier 2 interventions may be listed on the WWC or BEE.

# Tier 3

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**Intensive intervention** addresses *severe and persistent* learning or behavior difficulties. Intensive intervention should be:

- Driven by data
- Characterized by increased intensity (e.g., smaller group, expanded time) and individualization of academic instruction and/or behavioral supports

# What Is NCI's Approach to Intensive Intervention?



- Data-Based Individualization (DBI): A systematic method for using data to determine when and how to provide more intensive intervention
- Origins in data-based program modification/experimental teaching were first developed at the University of Minnesota (Deno & Mirkin, 1977) and expanded upon by others (Capizzi & Fuchs, 2005; Fuchs, Deno, & Mirkin, 1984; Fuchs, Fuchs, & Hamlett, 1989).
- It is a process, not a single intervention program or strategy.
- It is not a one-time fix but an ongoing process comprising intervention and assessment adjusted over time.

# DBI Rests on Six Assumptions

- ✓ 1. Validated programs are not universally effective programs; 3 percent to 5 percent of students need more help (Fuchs et al., 2008; NCII, 2013).
- ✓ 2. Students with intensive needs often require 10–30 times more practice than peers to learn new information (Gersten et al., 2008).
- ✓ 3. Students with disabilities requiring special education need specially designed instruction to progress toward standards.
- ✓ 4. A data-driven, systematized approach can help educators develop programs likely to yield success for students with intensive needs.
- ✓ 5. DBI is a distinctively different and more intensive approach to intervention, compared to primary prevention's (Tier 1's) core program and secondary prevention's (Tier 2's) validated, supplementary programs (NCII, 2013).
- ✓ 6. In a longstanding program of field-based randomized control trials, DBI has demonstrated improved reading, mathematics, and spelling outcomes, compared to business-as-usual special education practice (e.g., Fuchs et al., 1989).

# How Is NCII Addressing the National Need for Intensive Intervention?

- Operationalized DBI, a systematic, data-driven approach to intensive intervention
- Product development to articulate components of DBI
- Intensive technical assistance made up of ongoing on-site and distance training and implementation coaching
- Capacity building through local education agencies and regional or state technical assistance networks
- Connecting research to technical assistance with assessment and intervention tools charts
- Rigorous technical assistance evaluation
- Efforts to raise awareness, including targeted and universal technical assistance

# Intensive Intervention With Fractions

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## Worksheet

### Fraction Magnitude: Comparing Fractions With Different Denominators

**Objective:** Given two fractions, compare them using greater than (>), less than (<), or equal to (=). Write the fractions with a common denominator when necessary.

**Note:** If the student struggles with this worksheet, try the Scaffolded Fraction Magnitude Worksheet.

**Directions:**

1. Look at the two fractions. Can you compare them or do you need to find a common denominator?
2. Multiply to find a common denominator, if necessary.
3. Compare the fractions using the greater than (>), less than (<), or equal to (=) symbol.
4. Check your work with the fraction tiles.
  - a. If your answer is correct, draw a check mark and move to the next problem.
  - b. If your answer is incorrect, go back and fix your work.

| Fraction 1    | Fraction 2    | Show Work | <, >, or = | Check With Tiles |
|---------------|---------------|-----------|------------|------------------|
| $\frac{1}{2}$ | $\frac{3}{6}$ |           |            | ✓                |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ | $\frac{3}{8}$ |           |            |                  |

**Directions:**

1. Look at the two fractions. Can you compare them or do you need to find a common denominator?
2. Multiply to find a common denominator, if necessary.
3. Compare the fractions using the greater than (>), less than (<), or equal to (=) symbol.
4. Check your work with the fraction tiles.
  - a. If your answer is correct, draw a check mark and move to the next problem.
  - b. If your answer is incorrect, go back and check your work.

| Fraction 1    | Fraction 2     | Show Work and Write the Common Denominator | Compare: <, >, or = |
|---------------|----------------|--|---------------------|
| $\frac{2}{5}$ | $\frac{3}{4}$  |  |                     |
| $\frac{2}{3}$ | $\frac{1}{3}$  |  |                     |
| $\frac{5}{7}$ | $\frac{1}{2}$  |  |                     |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ | $\frac{3}{8}$  |  |                     |
| $\frac{4}{5}$ | $\frac{7}{10}$ |  |                     |

## Fraction Magnitude

**Common Core State Standards Addressed:** Extend understanding of fraction equivalence and ordering.

4.NF.2. Compare two fractions with different numerators and different denominators, for example, by creating common denominators or numerators, or by comparing to a benchmark fraction such as  $\frac{1}{2}$ . Recognize that comparisons are valid only when the two fractions refer to the same whole. Record the results of comparisons with symbols >, =, or <, and justify the conclusions, for example, by using a visual fraction model.

### Activity One: Comparing Fractions With Different Denominators

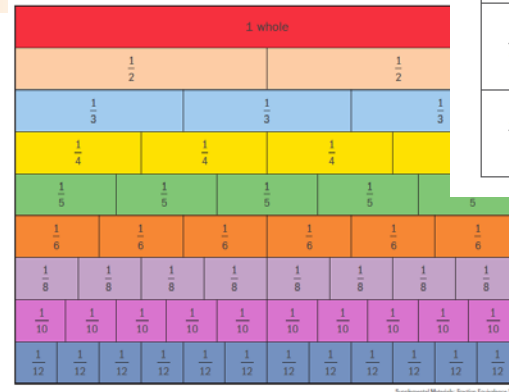
**Purpose:** To compare fraction magnitude between two fractions by finding common denominators.

**Principles of Intensive Intervention:**

- Provide concrete learning opportunities (including use of manipulatives).
- Provide explicit error correction and have the student repeat the correct process.
- Use precise, simple language to teach key concepts or procedures.
- Use explicit instruction and modeling with repetition to teach a concept or demonstrate steps in a process.

**Materials (available for download from NCII):**

- Comparison flashcards (see Supplemental Materials section)
- Multiplication chart (optional; see Supplemental Materials section)
- Fraction tiles or fraction circles for justifying conclusions (see Supplemental Materials section)
- Worksheet: Fraction Magnitude: Comparing Fractions With Different Denominators
- Worksheet: Scaffolded Fraction Magnitude: Comparing Fractions With Different Denominators



# Explicit Instruction

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- Requires instructors to clearly teach the steps involved in solving mathematical problems
- May take the form of teaching students how to use manipulatives, teaching specific algorithms for solving computational problems, or teaching strategies for solving more advanced mathematical concepts

# Teaching Vocabulary and Symbols

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- Students with a strong mathematical vocabulary will have a better understanding of the skills being taught.
  - Use precise, simple language when teaching mathematical skills.
  - Integrate explicit teaching of vocabulary and mathematical symbols into all lessons.

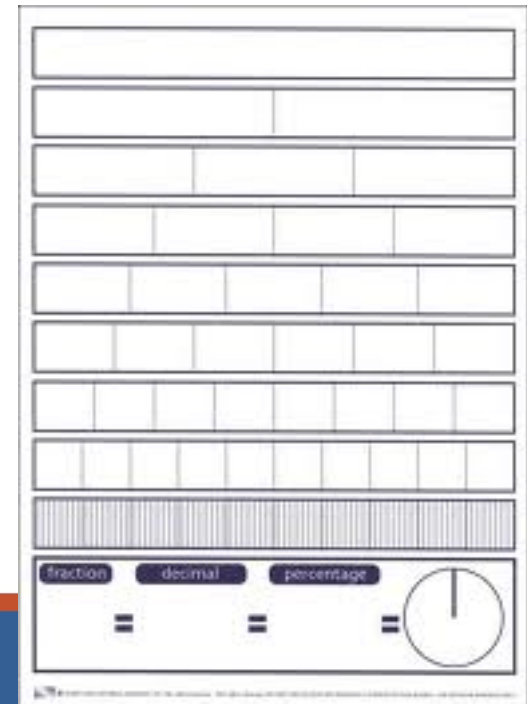
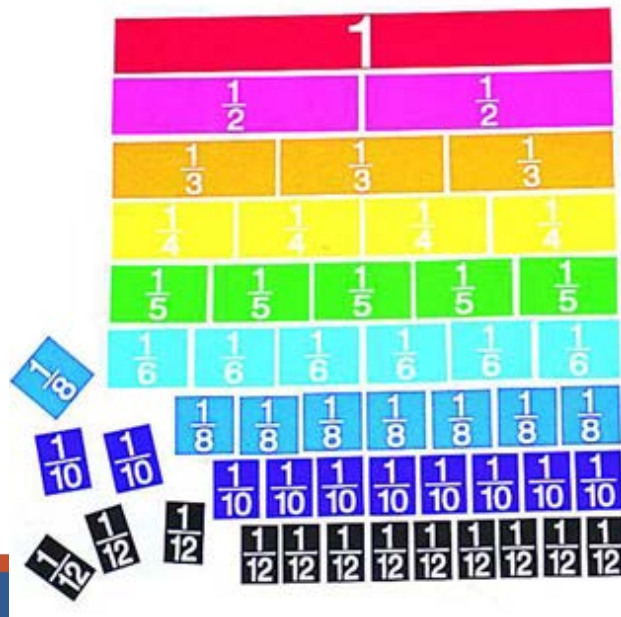
# Graphic Organizers

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- Helpful tools in mathematics that allow a great deal of information to be organized in one place
- Instructors explicitly teach how to use the graphic organizer and the content provided.
- Uses:
  - In place of extensive note-taking
  - To teach most mathematical concepts

# Concrete-Representational-Abstract Model

- Model allows students to develop conceptual understanding before moving onto algorithms, rather than simply memorizing facts and algorithms.
- Three phases
  - Concrete
  - Representational
  - Abstract



# Fluency Building

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- Provide students with activities to build their fluency so that they are able to focus on higher level thinking skills as mathematical concepts become more complicated.
- Suggested activities
  - Timed worksheets
  - Flashcards
  - Learning centers
  - Computer software
  - Instructional games
  - Note: Many of these activities can be incorporated into peer tutoring activities.

# Effective Questioning and Feedback

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- Students who have difficulty in mathematics need many opportunities to respond to effective questions, explain their thinking, and receive feedback in order to improve their learning.

# Error Analysis

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- The process of analyzing student work to determine why they solved a problem incorrectly
  - Many errors can easily be detected, such as regrouping the ones rather than the tens, or adding denominators rather than finding common denominators.
  - Other errors that are specific to an individual's understanding of a process are more difficult to identify.



# What Is Happening in Other States?

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# Colorado

- RTI Implementation
  - <http://www.cde.state.co.us/rti/toolsresourcesrti>
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Online Academy with training on mathematics intervention
  - [http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/CDE\\_MTSS\\_OnlineAcademy\\_Spring2014.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/CDE_MTSS_OnlineAcademy_Spring2014.pdf)
- Extensive guidance on use of RTI/MTSS for specific learning disability identification
  - <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-sld>
- Mathematics curriculum samples for Grades K–8 and algebra and geometry
  - <http://www.cde.state.co.us/StandardsAndInstruction/Curriculum/Mathematics.asp>

# Michigan Integrated Behavior and Learning and Support Initiative (MiBLSi)

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- MTSS in mathematics is an emerging work area pilot phase
- Long-range vision for how mathematics will be integrated into MiBLSi's model involves three main components.
- The data, systems, and practices for reading, mathematics and behavior will be fully integrated within the district cohort model.
- MiBLSi's model that integrates mathematics will include supports at Tiers 1, 2, and 3 with an emphasis on building strong Tier 1 foundations.
- The model will focus on early intervention and prevention for Grades K–5.
- <http://miblsi.cenmi.org/EmergentWork/MathMTSS.aspx>

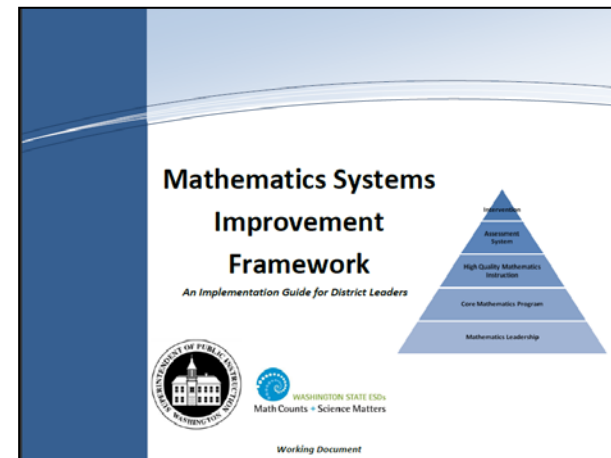
# Rhode Island



- Office of Special Education Programs State Personnel Development Grant with emphasis on integrating MTSS systems to incorporate academics and behavior, including mathematics
- Piloting implementation of middle school RTI in mathematics with initial evidence of positive impact
- RTI Technical Assistance Project:
  - <http://www.ritap.org/rTI/about/overview.php>

# Washington (state)

- Mathematics Systems Improvement Framework organized around an RTI structure:
  - Mathematics Leadership
  - Core/Tier I Mathematics Program
  - High-Quality Mathematics Instruction
  - Mathematics Assessment System
  - Tier II and Tier III Mathematics Intervention



- <http://www.k12.wa.us/Mathematics/SystemsImprovement.aspx>

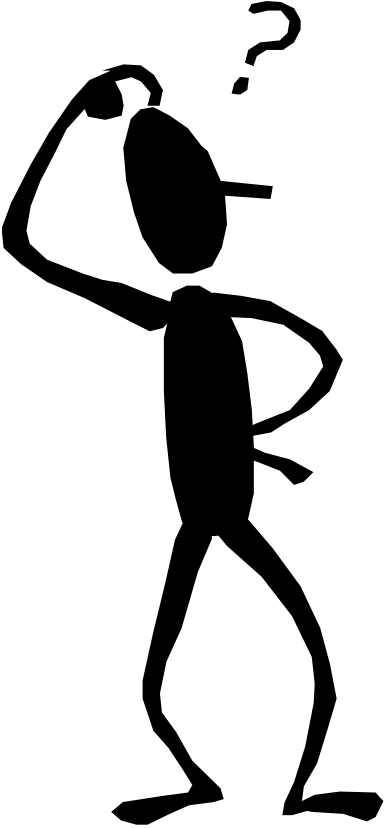
# Wisconsin

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- State RTI Center
- RTI process required for specific learning disabilities eligibility
- Mathematics initiatives
  - Universal mathematics screening
    - <http://www.wisconsinrticenter.org/assets/files/Screening%20survey%20results/Universal%20Math%20Screening%20results.pdf>
  - Intervention
    - [http://www.wisconsinrticenter.org/assets/files/Mathematics\\_interventions.pdf](http://www.wisconsinrticenter.org/assets/files/Mathematics_interventions.pdf)
  - Reviewing universal mathematics instruction (with resources)
    - <http://www.wisconsinrticenter.org/math.html>

# Questions

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# Connect to NCII and NCSI

- Sign up on our website to receive our newsletter and announcements.
- Follow us on YouTube and Twitter:
  - YouTube Channel: [National Center on Intensive Intervention](#)
  - Twitter handle: [@TheNCII](#)
- Contact NCSI at
  - [NCSI@wested.org](mailto:NCSI@wested.org)

The NCII Newsletter 

Signup for our newsletter and updates!

See us on:  



# Additional Information on Research on Fractions:

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Shellenbarger, S. (2013). Why Are Fractions Key to Future Math Success? The Wall Street Journal. <http://on.wsj.com/15rlupS>

Sparks, S.(2013, July 18). Federal Research Suggests New Approach to Teaching Fractions. *Education Week*.  
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2013/07/18/37fractions.h32.html?tkn=TZQF7yozo%2FHWKGzn2KNa%2B63GIKKpFCTtESVi&cmp=clp-edweek>

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