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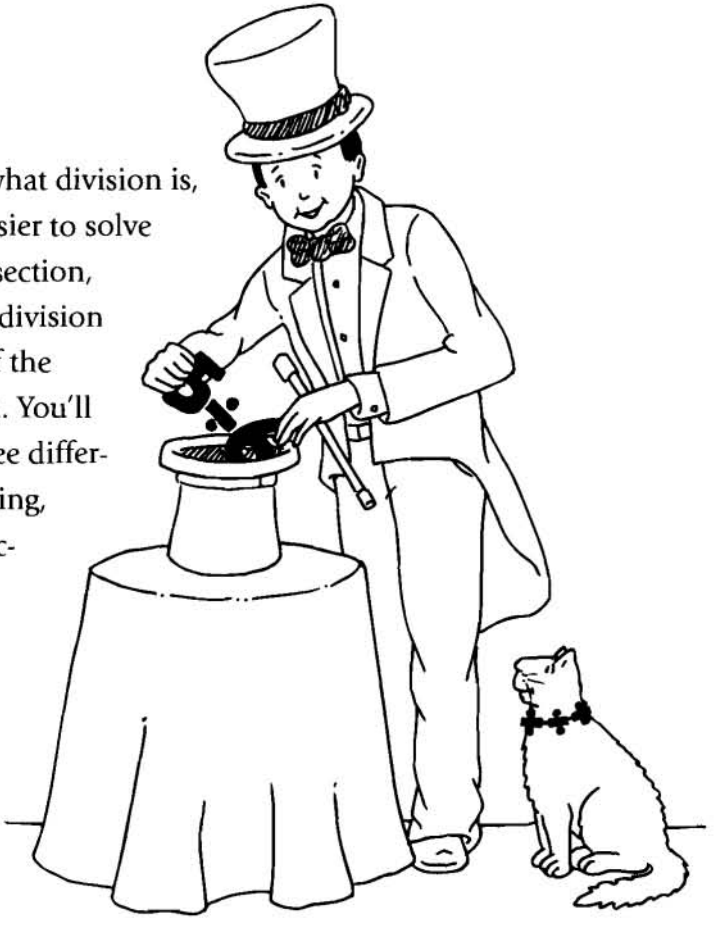
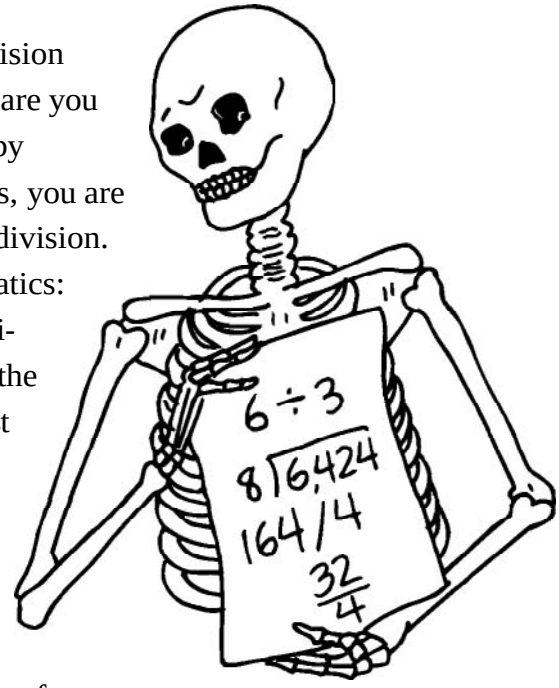
The Magic of Division

Once you understand what division is, you'll find it much easier to solve division problems. In this section, you'll learn how to write a division problem, and the names of the parts of a division problem. You'll also look at division in three different ways: division as grouping, division as repeated subtraction, and division as the opposite of multiplication. All of these exercises will help you understand division and prepare you for learning division facts.



1 Anatomy of a Division Problem



What is division? How do you write a division problem? How do you read one? What are you actually doing when you divide one number by another? Once you can answer these questions, you are well on your way to discovering the magic of division.

There are four basic operations in mathematics: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Division is usually taught last since it is the hardest to master, but learning to divide is just as important as learning to add, subtract, or multiply.

Each of the four basic operations can be expressed as a symbol. The plus sign (+) tells you to add two numbers together. The minus sign (-) tells you to subtract one number from another. The multiplication sign (x) tells you to multiply one number by another. The division sign (÷) tells you to divide one number by another. The problems 6 + 4, 6 – 4, 6 x 4, and 6 ÷ 4 are different problems that have different answers.

There are other ways to indicate division besides using the division sign. Sometimes a division problem is written in the form $8\overline{)6,424}$. This problem is read as six thousand, four hundred twenty-four divided by eight. The problem $2\overline{)222}$ is two hundred twenty-two divided by two. And $10\overline{)5}$ is five divided by ten.