

Interpreting Equations

Introduction

Revise the notion of variables in algebra with the learners.

Hand out a mini white board (or a blank piece of paper) to each learner (or pair of learners). Write the equation $x = 4y$ on the board, or display the first slide of the PowerPoint presentation if you are using it. Ask them to discuss in pairs which is bigger: x or y . If you think further whole class discussion is needed, continue with other slides in the PowerPoint, if you are using it; otherwise ask them to make an equation linking e and b when e is the number of eggs and b is the number of eggs boxes, each holding six eggs (see Figure 1).

What is the equation? Why?

Let e be the **number** of eggs.
 Let b be the **number** of egg boxes.
 There are 6 eggs in each box.
 Find an equation linking e and b .

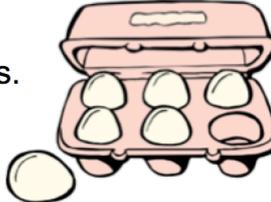


Figure 1: Make an equation (1)

Go on to ask them the questions in Figure 2, below. Note that this question relates to the **cost** of eggs and egg boxes, rather than the **number** of eggs and egg boxes, as was the case previously.

What is the equation? Why?

Let e be the **number** of eggs.
 Let b be the **number** of egg boxes.
 There are 6 eggs in each box.
 Find an equation linking e and b .





$b = 6e$

$e = 6b$

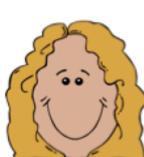


Figure 2: Make an equation (2)

Card matching activity

Put the learners into pairs. Each group should have:

- the definition of the variables
- a set of expression cards (E1-E12)
- a set of solution cards (S1-S10)
- a large sheet of paper
- glue or Prestik/blutack.

Explain to them that they should match equation cards with statement cards. You might like to point out that it is not a one-to-one match and they should end up with nine groups of cards.

Discussion

Have all the statement cards up on the board. Ask learners to come up and find matching equation cards and to stick these alongside (or under) the statement cards. Alternatively, hand out a big version of the equation cards to each pair and ask them to stick the card alongside (or under) the correct statement.

Keeping a record

Give each student a record sheet. Explain that the statements are given, and they should fill in the equation that matches with each statement. This can be done during the discussion. These record sheets can then be stuck in the students' books.