



CHAPTER 6

See the math

The best way to help your child make sense of math is to connect pictures or models to the symbols and language of mathematics.

There are many ways to create images, called representations, of mathematics processes.

Make a picture in your head

Just as we encourage students to make pictures in their head when they are reading, we encourage them to make pictures in their head when they are trying to understand mathematical concepts.

If your child is learning about fractions, try this activity:

- ◆ Ask your child to make a picture that represents one quarter in his/her head. You can make a picture too.
- ◆ Now tell your child to erase that picture and make a new picture to represent one quarter.
- ◆ Tell each other about the pictures you made.



Was it a 25 cent coin, a pie with one quarter eaten, a measuring cup with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of milk?

Use a model

Sometimes creating a model of the math, rather than looking at a picture in a book, helps your child to understand the concept being presented.

If your child is learning about 3D figures – cubes, cones, spheres – look for similar shapes in your home and see what you can find.



Older students may be learning about volume. Using building blocks will allow your child to create a model of volume.

If your child is learning how to measure length, ask him/her to show you 1 cm, 10 cm and 1 m.

Whenever your child is engaged in math, be sure to encourage him/her to see the math.