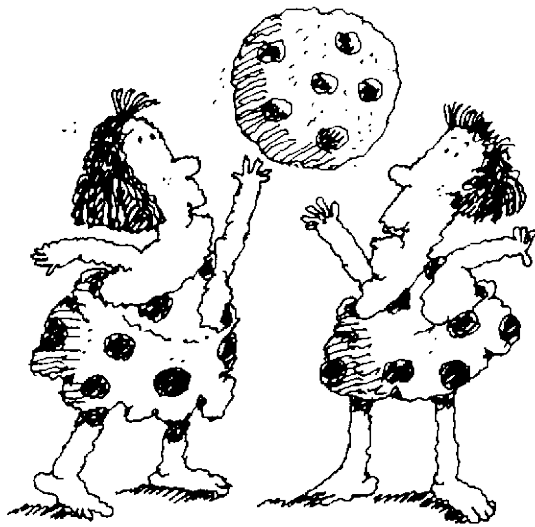


SKILL 3:
Drawing and Identifying Fractions

Name _____

The History of Fractions: A Play in One Act

Written and Performed by the Students in Ms. Webster's Class



NARRATOR: No one knows for sure who discovered fractions. But experts suspect it had something to do with the invention of the cookie, back in the Stone Age.

STONE AGE MOM: Look, kids! It's one of those newfangled cookie things!

STONE AGE KID: I want it.

OTHER KID: No, I want it.

MOM: Now look what you did. You broke the cookie in two different-sized parts. Hmm—that gives me an idea. You take this part. And you take this other part. *(She gives a part to each kid.)*

BOTH KIDS: Gee, thanks.

NARRATOR: Experts believe this method of dividing cookies was used for thousands of years. But as the Iron Age dawned, kids began to squabble over the size of the cookie pieces they got.

IRON AGE KID: His piece is bigger than mine!

OTHER KID: No, hers is bigger!

IRON AGE KID: Hey, what's going on in there?

IRON AGE MOM: *(to Dad)* Let me borrow your ax. *(She cuts another cookie into two equal pieces.)*

DAD: What do you call this strange new method of peacemaking?

MOM: I call them HALVES.

BOTH KIDS: Wow.

NARRATOR: And so it was discovered that two halves of something had to be of equal size. (And so did three thirds, and four quarters, and five fifths.) Following this discovery, fractions flourished in the Ancient World. True, there were those years during the time of the Romans when fractions were very difficult to write and use.

ROMAN MOM: *(shopping at Roman store)* Let's see...I'd like a VIIIth of a

pound of Roman Meal Bread.

ROMAN SHOPKEEPER: Oy. There must be a better way.

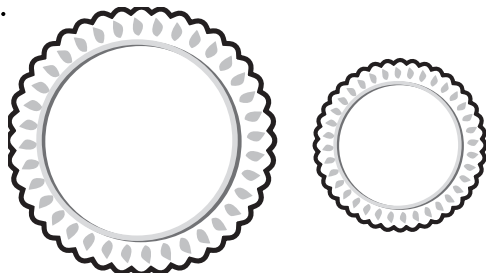
NARRATOR: Let's fast-forward to a More Recent Age. Two inventors, Francine Numerator and Larry Denominator, get together for an historic agreement...

FRANCINE NUMERATOR: So it's a deal. We'll call the top part of the fraction the numerator—

LARRY DENOMINATOR: —and the bottom part the denominator. Let's shake on it!

NARRATOR: And so modern fractions with numerators on the top and denominators on the bottom were born. People from all different walks of life found uses for fractions. For example, this piemaker...

PIE MAKER: My customer wants $\frac{1}{2}$ of this big pie, and $\frac{2}{3}$ of this small pie.



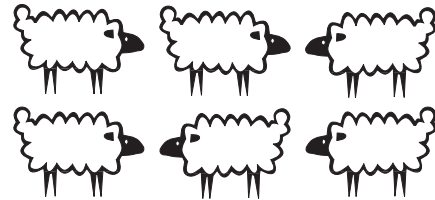
NARRATOR: ...this carpenter...

CARPENTER: I need to paint $\frac{3}{4}$ of this long board and $\frac{1}{4}$ of this short board.



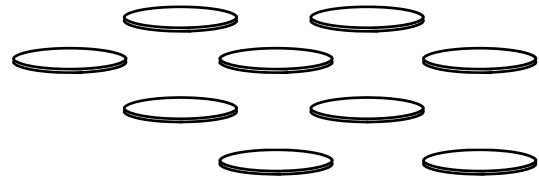
NARRATOR: ...this shepherd girl...

SHEPHERD GIRL: I need to round up $\frac{5}{6}$ of my flock.



NARRATOR: ...even this miser...

MISER: I need to save $\frac{4}{9}$ of these coins.



NARRATOR: Yes, fractions were extremely useful. But the most useful purpose of all wasn't discovered until the very recent past. Here we join a teacher sitting up late at night.

MS. WEBSTER: I need something that my students will find truly fun and fascinating. Wait! I've got it! Fractions!

NARRATOR: And so the best use of fractions was found: to make the students in Ms. Webster's class happy!

KID IN CLASS: Please, Ms. Webster, give us more fractions for homework...

ANOTHER KID: Oh, yes. Please! Please!

MS. WEBSTER: Well, okay. If you insist.

ALL THE KIDS: Hurray!

NARRATOR: So what are you waiting for, kids? Settle down and do these fractions!

KID: They're so cute and cuddly...

ANOTHER KID: and good for you, too!

WHOLE CLASS: Goodnight, everyone.

THE END (curtain)

PROBLEMS

1. Mark and color in $\frac{1}{2}$ of the pie maker's large pie.

2. Mark and color in $\frac{2}{3}$ of his small pie.

3. Mark and color in $\frac{3}{4}$ of the carpenter's long board.

4. Mark and color in $\frac{1}{4}$ of her short board.

5. How many sheep does the shepherd girl need to round up? _____

6. How many coins does the miser need to save? _____

7. Use any kind of drawing you like to show the fraction $\frac{3}{5}$.

8. Use any kind of drawing you like to show the fraction $\frac{7}{10}$.

9. Draw 6 shapes. Color in $\frac{1}{2}$ of the shapes.

10. Draw 12 shapes. Color in $\frac{2}{3}$ of the shapes.

Note: Ideas expressed in this play are solely those of Ms. Webster's class. Any resemblance to anything real is strictly a coincidence. Any historical facts that turn out to be true are likewise a coincidence. We MADE ALL THIS UP! Yours truly, Ms. Webster's Class.