



Study Link Help: Ballpark Estimates

Grade 4, Study Link 2-7, 2-9

Ballpark Estimates are useful in many contexts in everyday life. People often make ballpark estimates when shopping, traveling, scheduling, etc. Making a ballpark estimate can also help decide whether a final answer is likely to be correct—whether it is “in the ballpark.” Especially when computing with calculators, ballpark estimates become essential for checking computations to see if answers are reasonable.

Help with Study Link Problems

- Encourage your child to round numbers to quantities that are easy to work with mentally. Regular rounding rules can be useful, but when making estimates, it is more important that the numbers are easy to work with mentally.

Example:

Estimate the answer to 37×27

Think:

38 is close to 40 and 27 is close to 25.

4×25 (which is like 4 quarters) would be 100

40×25 would be 1000

1000 is a reasonable estimate for the answer for 38×27 .

1000 is in the ballpark

- Encourage your child to think about whether their estimate is likely to be lower than or higher than the final answer. It is not always easy to tell. In estimating 38×27 using 40 and 25, it may be difficult. If we had used 30×40 to estimate, both numbers would be rounded up. The estimate would be a bit high compared to the answer.

Extra Practice Ideas

- Asking your child to estimate in the context of real-life situations can reinforce the value of making ballpark estimates. For example, when you go shopping, have your child estimate or make a ballpark estimate as to whether you have enough money to buy certain items.
- Pick several places you might travel to and have your child estimate the distance and find out how much gasoline you might need for the trip; or have your child estimate about how long it might take to make the journey.