

Unit 4 – Subtraction

Part 1 – Making Subtraction Stories

Subtraction is the reverse process of addition. Instead of adding on, we take away. When two parts or sets are put together, we add to find how many there are altogether. If one part is missing, we subtract to find out how many are in the missing part.

The “–” (minus) sign means to “take away”. Read subtraction equations in a variety of ways to your student, depending on the situation they represent. For example, “ $8 - 3 = 5$ ” can be read as, “eight take away three is five” or “eight minus three equals five” or “When we subtract three from eight, we get five”.

In this part, the emphasis is on understanding the meaning of subtraction, rather than the memorization of facts. Encourage your child to make up stories to illustrate subtraction.

There are two subtraction situations on p. 38.

1. Taking away: Take 3 carrots from 9; there are 6 carrots left. 8 birds are on a branch, three fly away (take away 3), there are 5 left.
2. Part-whole: There are 7 children. 2 are girls. How many are boys? Subtract to find out.

Another subtraction situation – finding the difference between two sets – will be taught in the first unit of *Primary Mathematics 1B*.

Illustrate subtraction concretely. In the teaching activities below, counters are used, but you can use other objects.

Material

Counters, pennies

Other objects for subtraction stories: toys, pictures, etc.