

Comparing Simple Fractions

Chapter 8: Fair Share · Topic 2

Key Concept

When fractions have the same top number (numerator), the fraction with the smaller bottom number (denominator) is bigger - so $\frac{1}{2}$ is bigger than $\frac{1}{4}$, since dividing into fewer parts means each part is bigger.

We can understand this using pictures - if we divide two identical circles, one into 2 parts and one into 4 parts, the 2-part circle's pieces (halves) look bigger than the 4-part circle's pieces (quarters).

This might seem surprising since 4 is bigger than 2, but a bigger denominator means the whole is divided into smaller pieces.

Comparing fractions this way helps us understand that fraction size depends on both the numerator and denominator, not just the numbers alone.

Quick Revision Notes

- $\frac{1}{2}$ is bigger than $\frac{1}{4}$.
- With the same numerator, a smaller denominator means a bigger fraction.
- Dividing into fewer parts makes each part bigger.
- Pictures help us compare fraction sizes visually.
- A bigger denominator means smaller pieces.
- Fraction size depends on both numerator and denominator.
- $\frac{1}{3}$ is bigger than $\frac{1}{4}$ for the same reason.
- Comparing fractions builds deeper number understanding.

Practice Questions

- 1 Draw and compare $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ using circles.
- 2 Compare $\frac{1}{3}$ and $\frac{1}{5}$ using drawings.
- 3 Explain why $\frac{1}{2}$ is bigger than $\frac{1}{3}$.
- 4 Find an example of comparing fractions in daily life, like sharing food.
- 5 Order $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, and $\frac{1}{3}$ from smallest to biggest.
- 6 Draw pictures showing why a bigger denominator means smaller pieces.