

**Magical Math**

# **WACKY WORD PROBLEMS**

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**Games and Activities  
That Make Math Easy and Fun**

**Lynette Long**



**WILEY**

**John Wiley & Sons, Inc.**



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That Make Math Easy and Fun**

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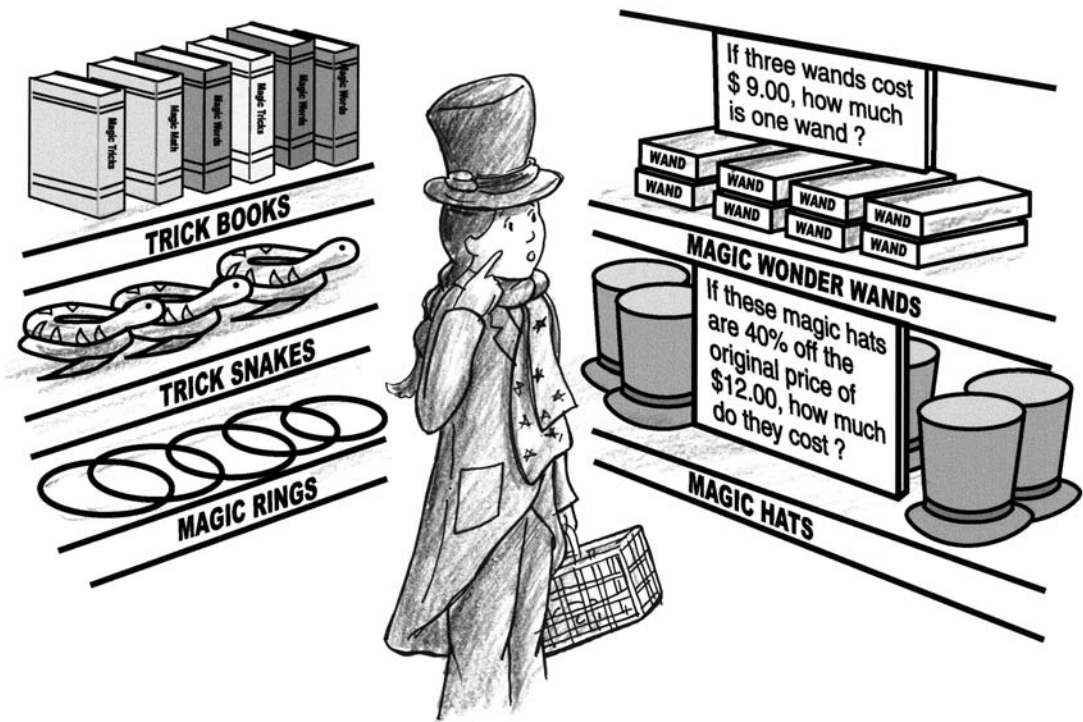


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# THE MAGIC OF WORD PROBLEMS



**W**hen you're not in class, how often do you ask yourself, "What is  $821 + 53 + 444$ ?" or "What is  $16 \times 4$ ?" or "What is 32 divided by 8?" Probably not very often, unless you're reading your homework out loud. So why study math? Well, although you may not realize it, you answer these kinds of questions in word problems all the time.

For example, your parents are driving you to your favorite amusement park. You sit in the back seat, wondering, *How long until we get there?* If your parents tell you the distance to the park and how fast the car is going, can you figure it out? This is a word problem!

You stop at a restaurant after school. You look at the money in your pocket and wonder, *Do I have enough to get a meal and dessert?* You know the prices from the menu. Can you figure it out? Another word problem!

You get your spelling test back. Your score is 17 out of 21. You ask yourself, *What percentage did I get correct?* You know you'll get a B or better if you got more than 80 percent right. Can you figure it out? Yep, that's a word problem.

You go clothes shopping, and your favorite store has a sale on all jeans—30 percent off. You wonder, *How much will those jeans really cost me?* You know the original price of the jeans. Can you figure out the sale price? Another word problem.

You will be surprised at how many word problems you try to solve every day—problems about time, distance, money, percentages, and measurement, to name a few. In fact, word problems can be about anything, as long as they are written as a story and pose a mathematical problem.

Some students think word problems are difficult, because they pose a problem but don't tell you how to solve it. Word problems don't tell you to add these three numbers or multiply these two numbers. They just ask a question and give you the facts you need to solve it. The trick is to know what to do with those facts. That's what you're about to find out!

In this book you'll practice until you become a word problem master. You'll learn what to do when solving the most common types of word problems. It's not as hard as you think. There are clues to look for, rules to learn, and a few formulas to memorize, but after that, the word problems you encounter every day will seem like a breeze.

Why not get started? A lot of fun activities await you.



# COMPUTATION

**T**he word problems in this section use simple computation. To solve these problems, you will add, subtract, multiply, or divide. Learning how to solve these basic word problems is the first step in becoming a word problem master.

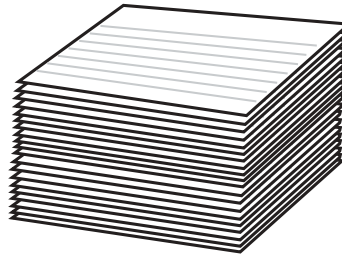
In this section you will play a card game as you learn to identify word cues, make up word problems about yourself, use the phone book to play a word problem game, and express your creativity by creating word problems to match mathematical expressions. Word problems are not just about math; they are also about words and the special way words are used and interpreted in word problems.





# Word Clues

*Learn what key words to look for  
in word problems while you  
play a card game.*



## MATERIALS

pencil  
index cards



### Game Preparation

Write each of the following words on a different index card. Each of these words is commonly found in word problems, and every word provides a clue about how to solve the word problem. Some words mean you should use addition, some mean that you use subtraction, some mean that you use multiplication, and some mean that you use division to solve the word problem.

sum	difference	times	split
perimeter	less	area	divide
total	fewer	product	average
all	change	percent	share
altogether	minus	of	part