Lesson 7: Unit Rate as the Constant of Proportionality

Classwork

Example 1: National Forest Deer Population in Danger?

Wildlife conservationists are concerned that the deer population might not be constant across the National Forest. The scientists found that there were deer in a square mile area of the forest. In another part of the forest, conservationists counted deer in a square mile area. Yet a third conservationist counted deer in a square mile plot of the forest. Do conservationists need to be worried?

* 1. Why does it matter if the deer population is not constant in a certain area of the National Forest?
  2. What is the population density of deer per square mile?

The unit rate of deer per square mile is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Constant of Proportionality:

Explain the meaning of the constant of proportionality in this problem:

* 1. Use the unit rate of deer per square mile (or ) to determine how many deer are there for every square miles.
  2. Use the unit rate to determine the number of square miles in which you would find deer?

**Vocabulary:**

A **constant** specifies a unique number.

A **variable** is a letter that represents a number.

If a proportional relationship is described by the set of ordered pairs that satisfies the equation , where is a positive constant, then is called the **constant of proportionality**. It is the value that describes the multiplicative relationship between two quantities, and . The pairs represent all the pairs of values that make the equation true.

Note: In a given situation, it would be reasonable to assign any variable as a placeholder for the given quantities. For example, a set of ordered pairs would be all the points that satisfy the equation where is the positive constant, or the constant of proportionality. This value for specifies a unique number for the given situation.

Example 2: You Need WHAT???

Brandon came home from school and informed his mother that he had volunteered to make cookies for his entire grade level. He needs cookies for each of the students in grade. Unfortunately, he needs the cookies the very next day! Brandon and his mother determined that they can fit cookies on two cookie sheets.

* 1. Is the number of cookies proportional to the number of cookie sheets used in baking? Create a table that shows data for the number of sheets needed for the total number of cookies baked.

Table:

The unit rate of is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Constant of Proportionality:

Explain the meaning of the constant of proportionality in this problem:

* 1. It takes hours to bake sheets of cookies. If Brandon and his mother begin baking at p.m., when will they finish baking the cookies?

Example 3: French Class Cooking

Suzette and Margo want to prepare crêpes for all of the students in their French class. A recipe makes crêpes with a certain amount of flour, milk, and eggs. The girls already know that they have plenty of flour and milk to make crêpes, but they need to determine the number of eggs they will need for the recipe because they are not sure they have enough.

* 1. Considering the amount of eggs necessary to make the crêpes, what is the constant of proportionality?
  2. What does the constant or proportionality mean in the context of this problem*?*
  3. How many eggs are needed to make crêpes?

Lesson Summary

If a proportional relationship is described by the set of ordered pairs that satisfies the equation , where is a positive constant, then is called the **constant of proportionalit*y***.

Problem Set

For each of the following problems, define the constant of proportionality to answer the follow-up question.

1. Bananas are /pound.
   1. What is the constant of proportionality, ?
   2. How much will pounds of bananas cost?
2. The dry cleaning fee for pairs of pants is .
   1. What is the constant of proportionality?
   2. How much will the dry cleaner charge for pairs of pants?
3. For every that Micah saves, his parents give him .
   1. What is the constant of proportionality?
   2. If Micah saves , how much money will his parents give him?
4. Each school year, the th graders who study Life Science participate in a special field trip to the city zoo. In , the school paid for students to enter the zoo. In , the school paid for students to enter the zoo. In , the school paid for students to enter the zoo.
   1. Is the price the school pays each year in entrance fees proportional to the number of students entering the zoo?
   2. Explain why or why not.
   3. Identify the constant of proportionality and explain what it means in the context of this situation.
   4. What would the school pay if students entered the zoo?
   5. How many students would enter the zoo if the school paid ?