

**ZMATH 2013d.00399**

**Whitin, David J.; Whitin, Phyllis**

**Making sense of fractions and percentages.**

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From the text: Because fractions and percentages can be difficult for children to grasp, connecting them whenever possible is beneficial. Linking them can foster representational fluency as children simultaneously see the part-whole relationship expressed numerically (as a fraction and as a percentage) and visually (as a pie chart). NCTM advocates these linkages: “Flexibility in moving from one representation to another . . . [is] useful in deepening students’ understanding of rational numbers and helping them think flexibly about these numbers” [Principles and standards for school mathematics. Reston, VA: NCTM (2000), pp. 220–221]. Capitalizing on children’s sense-making efforts by embedding these concepts in a meaningful context is also important, as is inviting students to estimate their answers using rounding and “nice” numbers. In this article, the authors describe how they put these instructional guidelines into practice as they worked with two fifth-grade classes in an investigation of foods advertised during children’s television programming. They describe here two of the graphs that the children created during the project. The first shows the results of the data about the food advertisements on TV. The second reflects the findings from a survey about who in the family decides which cereals to buy. In both cases, the authors illustrate how this topic of food advertising provided a context for the children to grapple with the meaning of fractions and percentages as represented on a pie chart.

*Classification:* F43 D43 U83

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