# **Subtraction Comprehension Check**

1. Use your own words to describe and define subtraction.
2. What is the counting back strategy?
3. Use the counting back strategy to solve the following problem: 23 – 5.
4. What is a number line? How can this math tool be used to subtract?
5. Use a number line to solve the following problem: 61 – 24.
6. Solve the following problem using two different strategies: 57 – 49.
7. Think back to Question 6. Which strategy was more efficient for you? Why?
8. Sometimes subtraction can be written as an unknown change problem. Describe the strategy you used to solved the following unknown change problem: 52 - ? = 13. What is the missing number?
9. Although this book is titled “Subtraction,” the authors wrote a lot about addition. Why might this be? How are subtraction and addition related?
10. This text focused on describing many subtraction strategies rather than just one way to subtract. Why do you think it helpful to be able to solve problems in many ways?

# **Subtraction Comprehension Check Answer Key**

1. Use your own words to describe and define subtraction.
   1. Subtraction is represented by the – symbol and can be used to find the difference between two amounts. Many people think about subtraction as taking away from something.
2. What is the counting back strategy?
   1. The counting back strategy is the opposite of the counting up addition strategy. Counting back from a total can help us subtract a specific amount.
3. Use the counting back strategy to solve the following problem: 23 – 5.
   1. Students should note counting back 5 from 23. Some may use number lines, others may represent the situation with pictures, whereas others may write “22, 21, 20, 19, 18” on their paper to find the solution. 23 – 5 = 18.
4. What is a number line? How can this math tool be used to subtract?
   1. A number line is a tool mathematicians use to help them visualize or solve problems. Number lines typically show digits in order from least (left side of the line) to greatest (right side of the line). Although number lines can go on for ever and ever, we can use them to help us visualize specific numbers or groups of numbers.
5. Use a number line to solve the following problem: 61 – 24.
   1. Students should draw and label a number line showing 61 toward the right end. They should model jumps back until they find the difference of 37. Students might count back by ones, but it is more likely they will use jumps of 10 combined with counting back or counting on strategies to find their solution.
6. Solve the following problem using two different strategies: 57 – 49.
   1. 57 – 49 = 18. Students’ strategies and explanations will vary.
7. Think back to Question 6. Which strategy was more efficient for you? Why?
   1. Students’ answers will vary but should include reasoning related to efficiency.
8. Sometimes subtraction can be written as an unknown change problem. Describe the strategy you used to solved the following unknown change problem: 52 - ? = 13. What is the missing number?
   1. 52 – 39 = 13, so the missing number is 39. Students’ strategies and explanations will vary.
9. Although this book is titled “Subtraction,” the authors wrote a lot about addition. Why might this be? How are subtraction and addition related?
   1. Even though this book is mainly about subtraction, the authors included addition because the two operations are so closely related. They are opposite in nature and can be used to solve the same problems with different strategies and in different ways.
10. This text focused on describing many subtraction strategies rather than just one way to subtract. Why do you think it helpful to be able to solve problems in many ways?
    1. Students’ answers will vary but might include ideas linked to thinking flexibly with numbers. Students might suggest that some strategies work better for certain mathematical situations than others. Mathematicians who think flexibly about numbers and how to approach problems can be more efficient at solving than those who focus on only one method.