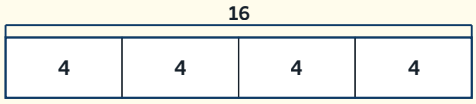
Lesson 102 The mean (average) of a small set — a gentle first look

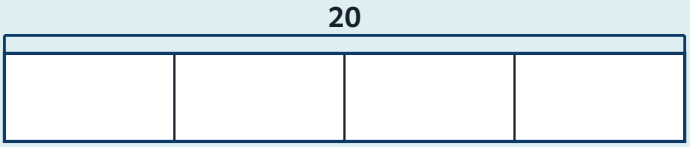
THE MEAN OF 3, 5, 2 AND 6

1. Add the four amounts: 3 + 5 + 2 + 6 = **16**.
2. Share the total fairly between the **4** amounts: 16 \div 4 = **4**.
3. Each share is **4**, so the mean is **4**.



WARM-UP

Use the blank bar models to show levelling to the mean.



1. Draw bars for 2, 4 and 6 then level them to show the mean of 4
2. Draw bars for 5, 1 and 3 then level them to show the even share
3. Draw bars for 4, 4, 4 and 8 then level them to show the mean of 5

PRACTICE

1. Three cousins have cube towers of **2**, **4** and **6**. If they level the towers out fairly, how many cubes does each one have?
2. Three friends stack **5**, **1** and **3** cubes. Share the cubes evenly between them — what is the fair share for each?
3. Four pals build towers of **4**, **4**, **4** and **8** cubes. When the towers are levelled, how high is each one?
4. Five family members have **5**, **5**, **5**, **5** and **10** cubes. If they gather them all and share evenly, how many cubes does each one have?

SPOT THE MISTAKE

Aoife finds the mean of 3, 5, 2 and 6 like this:

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3 + 5 + 2 + 6 = 16
Mean = 16 ÷ 3 = 5 r1
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Find Aoife's mistake. What's the correct mean?

The mistake _____ Correct answer _____

IRISH FACT — Average Irish class size

The average primary-school class in Ireland has about **23 pupils**. Four classes of **22, 24, 21 and 25** share fairly as **23** each — that fair-share number is the mean.

Department of Education statistics

REFLECT Did thinking of the mean as a fair share help you find it? What still feels tricky?

DATA & CHANCE