

The equals sign means balance

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES

The equals sign means the two sides are worth the same amount. It does not mean the answer comes next.

- $3 + 4 = 7$ because both sides are worth 7, so a balance holding them would hang level.
- 5 on one pan and $2 + 3$ on the other pan both make 5, so the beam stays level.

MODEL THIS ON THE BOARD

LEVELLING THE BUILDING PANS

- 1 See 6 cubes already on the left pan of the maker balance.
- 2 Build a matching set on the right pan with 4 cubes and then 2 more.
- 3 Both pans are now worth 6 so the beam hangs level and we write $6 = 4 + 2$.

DISCUSSION STARTER

REFLECT Does equals still mean 'the answer comes next', or something else now?

ANSWER KEY

Scaffold: visual check on the page

Q1: $3 + 3$

- a) **Always** — That is exactly what balance means.
 b) **Never** — It means the sides match in value, not that an answer follows.

c) **Always** — Equal values keep the balance beam level.

d) **Never** — $3 + 4$ is worth 7, not 6, so the beam would tip.

EXTENSION SHEET · STRETCH ANSWERS

S1: $x = 19$

S2: $x = 9$

S3: $x = 10$

S4: distributive property

S5: associative property