

Finding the missing number ($\square + 4 = 10$)

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES

A box in a number sentence stands for one missing number we have to find. Use the whole and the known part to work out the hidden number so both sides match.

→ In $\square + 4 = 10$ the box hides 6.

→ In $\square - 2 = 6$ the box hides 8.

MODEL THIS ON THE BOARD

CUBES HIDING IN THE BOX

- ① Look at the level balance: one pan holds **10** cubes and the other holds **4** cubes plus a box.
- ② The beam is level so both pans are equal: $\square + 4 = 10$.
- ③ The whole is **10** and one part is **4**, so the missing part is $10 - 4$.
- ④ The box hides **6** cubes. Check: $6 + 4 = 10$.

DISCUSSION STARTER

REFLECT When a box is missing, do you count on, take away, or picture the balance?

ANSWER KEY

a) 4

b) 7

c) 4

Q1: 4

a) **Sometimes** — This works when the box is a part, but when the box is the whole we add the parts instead.

b) **Always** — The beam stays level only when the two pans hold the same total.

c) **Always** — In $\square - 3 = 5$ the box is the whole, found by adding $5 + 3$.

d) **Never** — The missing number can be any value within the lesson range, such as 2 or 4.