

Comparing and ordering decimals

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES

To compare two decimals, line up the points and read the tenths first. Only if the tenths are equal do you look at the hundredths. The one with more tenths (or, on a tie, more hundredths) is bigger.

- 0.7 is more than 0.4 because 7 tenths beats 4 tenths.
- 0.25 is less than 0.5, even though 25 looks bigger than 5.
- 0.6 and 0.60 are the same length.

MODEL THIS ON THE BOARD

WHICH PRICE IS DEARER: €0.30 OR €0.03?

- 1 Line up the points: 0.30 and 0.03.
- 2 Read the tenths first: 0.30 has 3 tenths and 0.03 has 0 tenths.
- 3 3 tenths is greater than 0 tenths, so €0.30 is dearer.



0.30



0.03

DISCUSSION STARTER

REFLECT

When two decimals look different, how do you check if they are really the same amount?

ANSWER KEY

- a) 0.5
b) 0.7
c) same

Q1: <

a) Always — 6 tenths equals 60 hundredths, so they are the same amount.

b) Always — 0.25 has 2 tenths while 0.5 has 5 tenths, so 0.25 is smaller.

c) Never — 0.25 has more digits than 0.5 but is smaller, so length of writing does not decide it.

d) Always — If the tenths tie, the hundredths become the deciding digit.

EXTENSION SHEET · STRETCH ANSWERS

S1: $2.52 = 2 + 0.5 + 0.02$

S2: $4.88 < 6.89 < 9.4$

S3: $7.02 > 1.83$

S4: $4.8 < 9.84$

S5: $9.48 = 9 + 0.4 + 0.08$

Investigation: Fraction-decimal twins — open-ended; scan pupils' working for valid solution paths rather than a single answer.