

The mean (average) of a small set – a gentle first look

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES

The mean is the fair, even share. Gather every amount together into one total, then share that total out equally so each one has the same. Add first, then share.

→ $3 + 5 + 2 + 6 = 16$, then 16 shared between 4 friends gives a mean of 4 cubes each.

→ Four towers of 3, 5, 2 and 6 level out to 4 each.

MODEL THIS ON THE BOARD

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.

16			
4	4	4	4

DISCUSSION STARTER

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

ANSWER KEY

Scaffold: visual check on the page

Q1: 4

Q2: 3

Q3: 5

Q4: 6

a) Sometimes — For 2, 4, 6 the mean is 4; for 1, 1, 4 the mean is 2, which is new.

b) Always — Mean = sum of values ÷ how many values.

c) Never — The mean is often whole, but sharing the total equally can give a decimal.

d) Never — The mean always lies between the smallest and largest values.

EXTENSION SHEET · STRETCH ANSWERS

S1: 14

S2: 11

S3: 11

S4: 8

S5: 15

Investigation: Make the mean — open-ended; scan pupils' working for valid solution paths rather than a single answer.