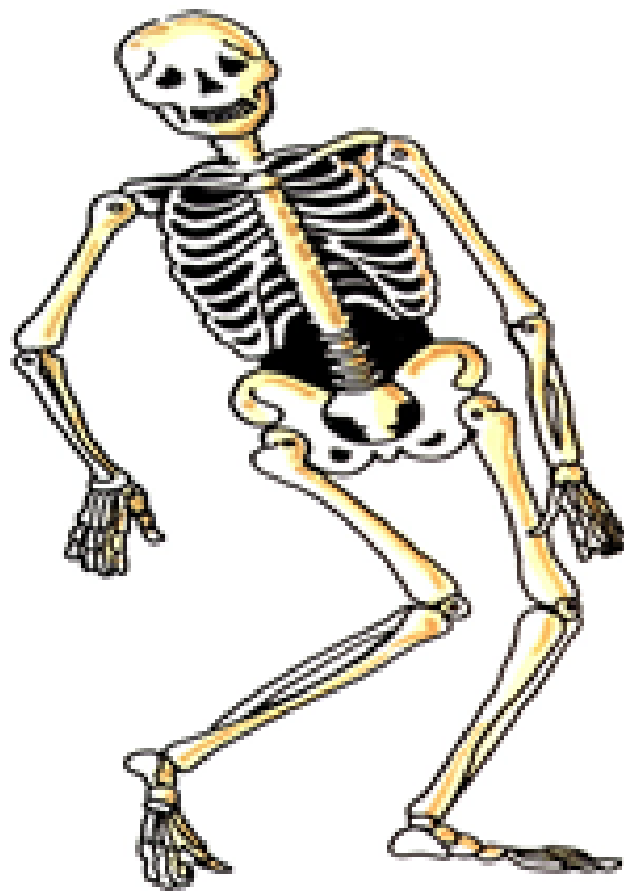


Early Scholars Learning Center

Decoding Word Problems



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Question

At the beginning of the year, the population of students at the Fairfield elementary school was 620. By the end of the year, the student population decreased by fifteen percent of 620.

The underlined keywords are clues. Should you add, subtract, multiply, and/or divide?

Answer

*A common multiplication key word is **percent of**, and **decreased by** is a common subtraction keyword.*

Step 1: To solve fifteen percent of six hundred twenty students, you must multiply 0.15 by 620

Step 2: Then, to figure out how much it has **decreased by**, subtract 620 by the number you found in step 1

Question

Jane's dog is 2ft. tall, and Mark's dog is 4ft. tall. How much shorter is Jane's dog than Mark's dog.

What does the underlined keyword mean? Should you add or subtract?

Answer

Look to subtract when you see words ending in “er” such as farther, longer, higher and heavier.