Activity 5: Comparing Numbers

1. Before beginning Activity 5, have several sets of post-its notes and place the following information on the post-its notes, one item per sticky note. A set will include 20 post-it notes.

- Half
- ½
- three quarters
- .50
- 10%
- One quarter
- ¼
- .5
- 75%
- a tenth
- a third
- 1/3
- .25
- 25%
- .1
- 33%
- ¾
- .75
- 50%
- 40 out of 80

2. Give each pair of participants a set of post-it notes and a sheet of chart paper. Ask them to work together to organize the information on the post-its. What do they see as commonalities? Are there some that do not belong to a group? Have them group them on the chart paper. Ask them to include a label for each group so everyone can be clear about the groupings.

[For example, some groups may choose to group by type of number such as percents versus decimals, while others may choose to group by representation such as ½ is the same as .50, etc. What is important is that they are able to articulate the reason for their groupings. This is an informal assessment; you do not have to tell them how you expected them to group the numbers.] Suggest that they put any post-its that don't seem to have a "home" off to the side. When everyone is finished, have each pair post their results and then walk around the room comparing groupings.

3.   When everyone has organized their post-its, ask: What were some of the criteria that you used to decide your groups? Then ask: What was easy about this task? Were there certain numbers that caused a problem for you?

4.   Then explain that this activity serves as a way to assess what they already know about benchmark fractions, decimals, and percents. Explain that, just as if they now have benchmark measurements, they are going to add some important fractions, decimals, and percents to their set of benchmarks.