

Working with Questions in MathXL for School

The pages below provide best practices for entering answers into the MathXL question player to ensure students get proper credit for their answers.

When viewing questions in the MathXL question player, you will use different areas of the screen for viewing the question, entering your answer, checking your answer, and accessing tools to help you learn.

The screenshot shows the MathXL question player interface with several callout boxes:

- Question**: Points to the question text: "Write the ratio as a fraction in simplest form. 6 ft to 4 yd".
- Answer entry**: Points to the input field: "The ratio in simplest form is ".
- Special instructions for answering the question**: Points to the instruction: "(Type the ratio as a simplified fraction.)".
- Tap or click assignment status bar to access any question on the assignment**: Points to the top navigation bar showing "5 of 15 (0 complete)".
- Tools to help you learn (usually not available during tests)**: Points to the "Question Help" button.
- Check Answer button (not available during tests)**: Points to the "Check Answer" button.
- Number of parts in the question**: Points to the "All parts showing" indicator.
- General instructions**: Points to the instruction: "Enter your answer in the answer box, then click Check Answer."
- Use arrow buttons to move through the assignment**: Points to the left and right arrow buttons.

Question Types

There are a variety of question types used in the program. The most common question types are:

- 1) **Multiple choice** Select one answer among several options provided.
- 2) **Fill-in-the-blank** Select one answer from a drop down menu.
- 3) **Free response** Enter your own answer using the math palette and the keyboard.

Answering Multiple Choice Questions

For multiple choice questions, select your answer from the options provided.

The screenshot shows a homework interface for '1-1 Homework K'. The score is 0 of 1 pt, and 7 of 15 questions are complete. The question is titled 'Multiple Representations' and asks for three different ratios of color paint to white paint based on the number of buckets sold. The question text is: 'One day, the local hardware store sold 27 buckets of basic house paint and 17 buckets of ultimate house paint. A bucket of basic house paint uses 2 cans of white paint and 5 cans of color paint. For a bucket of basic house paint, write the ratio of cans of color paint to cans of white paint in three different ways. Use pencil and paper. Draw a picture to represent the correct ratio in a fourth way.' The instruction is 'Choose the correct answer below.' There are six radio button options: A. 27 to 2, 27:2, and $\frac{27}{2}$; B. 5 to 17, 5:17, and $\frac{5}{17}$; C. 5 to 2, 5:2, and $\frac{5}{2}$; D. 2 to 27, 2:27, and $\frac{2}{27}$; E. 17 to 5, 17:5, and $\frac{17}{5}$; F. 2 to 5, 2:5, and $\frac{2}{5}$. A callout box with an orange border points to the radio buttons and contains the text 'Select one correct answer.' The interface also includes a 'Check Answer' button, a 'Question Help' link, and a 'Save' button.

Answering Fill-in-the-Blank Questions

Homework: 1-1 Homework K Save ⚙

Score: 0 of 1 pt ◀ 14 of 15 (0 complete) ▶ HW Score: 0%, 0 of 15 pts

1.1.14 Question Help

Think About the Process What is the first step in writing a ratio equivalent to $\frac{8}{14}$ with lower terms? Find such an equivalent ratio.

The first step is to find of 8 and 14.

Fill-in-the-blank answer selection

Click to select your answer(s), then click Check Answer. ?

1 part remaining Clear All Check Answer ◀ ▶

Fill-in-the-blank questions have an answer box with an arrow pointing down.

- 1) Click or tap on the arrow to display the answer choices.
- 2) Click or tap your answer selection to make it appear in the answer box.

1.2.4

You want to buy some noodles. A 7-ounce package costs \$2.59. buy?

The -ounce package of noodles is the best buy.

22
12
7

Click or tap the arrow to display the answer choices, then click or tap the answer you'd like to select.

Answering Free-Response Questions

Homework: 1-1 Homework K Save

Score: 0 of 1 pt ◀ 12 of 15 (0 complete) ▶ HW Score: 0%, 0 of 15 pts

1.1.12 ☰ Question Help

Mental Math The ratio of girls to boys at a movie is 5:3. If there are 12 boys, how many girls are at the movie?

There are girls at the movie.

Enter your answer into this box.

Enter your answer in the answer box, then click Check Answer. ?

All parts showing Clear All Check Answer ◀ ▶

In order to answer a free-response question, follow these steps:

- 1) Click or tap inside the answer box to reveal the blue button.
- 2) Start typing the answer using your keyboard to enter numbers and/or variables (x or y , for example). If you need to enter a math symbol, click or tap on the blue button that appears under the answer box:

1.1.12

Mental Math The ratio of girls to boys at a movie i

There are girls at the movie.

1. Click or tap inside the answer box to reveal the blue button.

2. Click or tap on the blue button to open the math symbol palette.

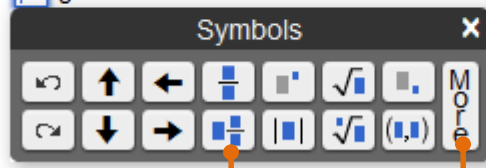
3. Once you click or tap on the blue button, the symbol palette will appear.

4. Click or tap “More” to see more symbols and operators.

1.1.12

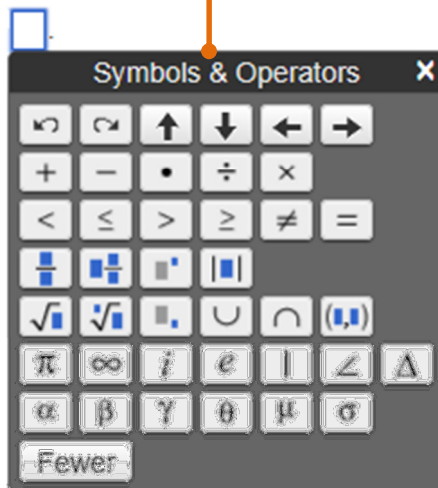
Mental Math The ratio of girls to boys at a movie is 5:3. If there are 12 b

There are girls at the movie.



3. Tap or click a symbol on the symbol palette to enter it in the answer box.

4. Tap or click **More** to see more symbols and operators.



Using Templates from the Symbol Palette

If your answer requires special formats (for example, fractions or square roots), use the symbol palette to help you insert your answer.

1. For example, if you want to enter $2\frac{1}{3}$ as your answer, you would click or tap this template on the symbol palette:



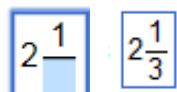
2. Blue boxes are then inserted into the answer box. Click or tap inside the blue boxes. (You can also use the tab or the arrow buttons/keys to move into and out of the blue boxes.)



3. Enter the correct number in each box, using the arrow keys or buttons to move between boxes.




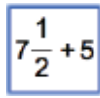
4. Once you have entered a number into a blue box and then moved outside of that box, the blue background disappears in that box.



5. In some cases, when you have finished entering numbers in the blue boxes, you will need to use the arrow buttons (or keys) to move outside the template to continue entering your answer.

For example, if you are entering $7\frac{1}{2} + 5$, make sure you move

the cursor to the right of the fraction template before starting to type "+ 5."

INCORRECT:  **CORRECT:** 

Other templates available on the symbol palette include:



Square roots



Exponents



Absolute Value

Each template works the same way:

- 1) Click or tap the template on the math palette to move it into the answer box.
- 2) Click, tap, or tab into the blue box.
- 3) Enter the correct number(s) into each blue box.
- 4) After entering numbers into the template, use your arrow buttons to enter any information that belongs outside the template.

Entering Math Symbols from the Keyboard

Here are the symbols and shortcuts that will be accepted as correct from your keyboard.

Common operation symbols

To use this symbol...	Enter this shortcut...	For example
+ (plus)	Plus sign on keyboard	$2 + 3$
- (minus)	Dash on keyboard	$2 - 3$
= (equal)	Equal sign on keyboard	$2^2 = 4$
· (multiplication dot)	* (asterisk) (For example: $2 * 3$)	$2 \cdot 3$
× (times sign)	\times (For example: 2×3)	2×3
÷ (divided by)	\divide	$2 \div 3$
< (less than)	Left angle sign on keyboard (For example: $2 < 3$)	$2 < 3$
≤ (less than or equal to)	< = (left angle sign and an equal sign) (For example: $2 \leq 3$)	$2 \leq 3$
> (greater than)	Right angle sign on keyboard (For example: $3 > 2$)	$3 > 2$
≥ (greater than or equal to)	> = (right angle sign and an equal sign) (For example: $3 \geq 2$)	$3 \geq 2$
≠ (not equal)	<> (left and right angle signs) (For example: $3 \neq 2$)	$3 \neq 2$

Important Tips for Entering Answers

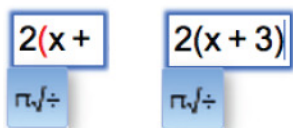
1. When entering math symbols, it is best to use the symbol palette provided, otherwise your answer may not be marked “correct.”

Multiplication symbol: When you need to enter a multiplication symbol, do not use the letter “x” from the keyboard, a “bullet,” or small dot. Even though these entries may look correct, they will not be recognized as correct.

Use the multiplication symbol on the symbol palette or type an * (asterisk) from your keyboard. (See acceptable keyboard entries on page 8 above.)

Negative sign: When you need to enter a negative sign, do not use the _ (underscore). You may use the minus sign or hyphen from your keyboard.

Parentheses: Don’t forget to enter parentheses in your answer where needed. The opening parentheses will display in red until you have entered the closing parentheses:



You can also use the following template for entering x and y coordinates with parentheses:



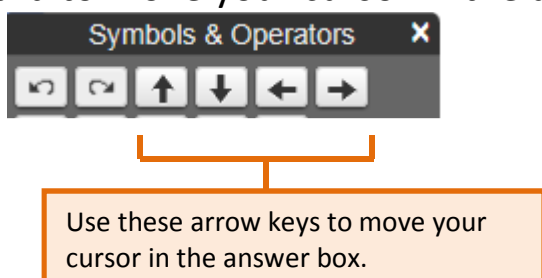
2. **Spaces:** When entering numbers, it’s important not to enter spaces between the digits. For example, when entering the number twelve (12), do not enter a space between the one and the two (1 2). The extra space will make your answer incorrect.

If you enter a space between a number and a symbol, however, the spaces will be ignored by the program:

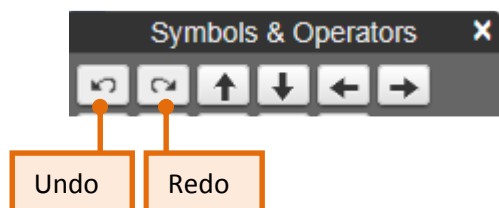
$2 + 3$ (with spaces) will be scored the same as $2+3$ (without spaces)

$2 < 3$ (with spaces) will be scored the same as $2<3$ (without spaces)

3. Do not copy and paste answers or symbols from other programs or locations on your computer. Copying and pasting symbols or answers from other programs can sometimes introduce hidden symbols that will cause your answer to be scored incorrectly. The symbol palette and the keyboard provide everything you need.
4. Do not use letters (such as a lower case L or an upper case i) for the number one.
5. You can use the tab key or the arrow keys on the palette or on the keyboard to move your cursor in the answer box.



6. Use the “un-do” and “re-do” arrows to remove your entry and then put it back.



7. Use the “Clear All” button at the bottom of the player window to delete everything you have entered in the answer box.

