Help me, Mom!

Abir Yousef

BEFORE YOU READ: What English words are help-ful when you are doing math "in English"?

When I was a small girl, I said, "Mom, please help me with my math homework." I didn't have any-

Now I learn English to help me in math. cried because she didn't go to school when she was a g

one to help me. She cried because she didn't go to school when she was a girl. This was so hard for

me. I practiced by myself for a long time. I feel I am strong in life. Math is important. I did well in math. I remember my teacher in school told me, "In the future, you must study to be an engineer."

My children like math and they do well too. Sometimes they tell me, "Mom, please help us." But I feel sad because it is hard to help them. I need more English. When my children were small, I could teach them math. As they've gotten older,



Division (÷ or /) example: 56 ÷ 8 = 7 56 divided by 8 equals 7. 8 into 56 is 7. some of the problems are too hard. Sometimes, it takes me one hour to find the right answer. Now I learn English to help me in math also. I use math all



the time in my life. I like math. I want to find a job very fast and math will help.

Abir Yousef is a student at the IRIS Mother & Child ESOL Program in New Haven, CT. She is from Syria, where she studied psychology at Damascus University. When she went to Jordan, she worked for the International Rescue Committee helping refugees. Now she wants to study to be an ultrasound technician in the USA and work part-time because she has seven children.

AFTER YOU READ: Think of more ways of expressing the math problems in the box below (left). Try using phrases like "more than" and "less than."

Many Ways to Say It!

Sylvia has 3 siblings. Dana has 6 siblings. Mario has 1 sibling.

Write two statements comparing the number of siblings that Sylvia, Dana, and Mario have. Use phrases like: more than, less than, twice as many, half as many, etc. Check with your classmates. How many different ways can you express the relationship between the number of siblings that they each have? Draw a picture to help you see the relationships.

Mario - X

