Real Life Computation

Math isn't just something you need to figure out and use in school. You need some basic math skills in every day life, especially if you ever plan to buy anything and get your money's worth. Read on!

You want to buy your little sister a birthday present. Naturally, you have a limited amount of money and need to get the most bang for your buck, so to speak. Your little sister is nuts about stuffed animals, and you're in luck when you see the following ads in the paper:

Lots-of-Fun

3 for $4.89

Since you're such a good reader, you, of course, read both ads and get the gist of each before deciding where to buy a stuffed animal!

You think you're onto something. If you buy a stuffed animal from Toys, Toys, Toys at $2.29, you can get one for your little sister and one for yourself.

The real question is which store offers the lowest price per stuffed animal. YOU FIGURE IT OUT! Use the space below. THEN, write about how your estimation/prediction skills could have helped you arrive at the cost per item. Since you don't always have a calculator in the store, you'll need to rely on your brain!

Toys, Toys, Toys

$2.29
Buy one at regular price, get the second at ½ price!

Adapted from:
Lanius, Cynthia. 2000-2004. "Shopping Fun." 13 July 2004 <http://math.rice.edu>.

If you knew how to **estimate**, you'd have been in better shape because you probably don't carry a calculator around with you! Here's what you need to know to estimate correctly. To estimate a sum or a difference, **round the numbers** to make the computation easier. **Estimate 58,281 + 23,685.**
Round each number so it is easier to add. For example, round both numbers to ten thousands.

	Add.
58,281 rounds to 60,000.	60,000
23,685 rounds to 20,000.	+ 20,000
So, 58,281 + 23,685 is about →	80,000

Let's try another estimation sample. Estimate 310 + 305 + 298 + 296 + 302 by using a number that is close to all of the numbers, which is called **clustering.** Each of the numbers is close to 300. There are 5 numbers.
300 + 300 + 300 + 300 + 300 = 5 × 300 = 1500 SO, 310 + 305 + 298 + 296 + 302 is about 1500. The exact answer is 1511. Estimation works pretty well! Work these problems and see for yourself.

1. 2,118 + 4,628
   _____ + _____ = _____

2. 93,803 – 52,524
   _____ - _____ = _____

3. 1,281 – 908
   _____ - _____ = _____

4. 759,833 + 48,395
   _____ + _____ = _____

5. Estimate 1,891 + 1,994 + 2,159 using clustering.
   a. What number is close to the three numbers being added?_____
   b. How many numbers are being added?_____
   c. Estimate 1,891 + 1,994 + 2,159. _____

6. Estimate 468 + 525 + 491 + 501 using clustering. _____

Estimate.

7. 38,624 + 83,102_____ 8. 47,623 – 12,385_____ 9. 37 + 42 + 43_____ 10. 387 + 410 + 405_____

Estimation section taken from: Charles, Randall I., ed. Whole Numbers. Glenview: Prentice Hall, 2001.