

Math Translation Guide

The chart below gives you some of the terms that come up in a lot of word problems. Use them in order to translate or “set-up” word problems into equations.

English	Math	Example	Translation
What, a number	x, n , etc.	Three more than a number is 8.	$n + 3 = 8$
Equivalent, equals, is, was, has, costs	=	Danny is 16 years old. A CD costs 15 dollars.	$d = 16$ $c = 15$
Is greater than Is less than At least, minimum At most, maximum	$>$ $<$ \geq \leq	Jenny has more money than Ben. Ashley’s age is less than Nick’s. There are at least 30 questions on the test. Sam can invite a maximum of 15 people to his party.	$j > b$ $a < n$ $t \geq 30$ $s \leq 15$
More, more than, greater, than, added to, total, sum, increased by, together	+	Kecia has 2 more video games than John. Kecia and John have a total of 11 video games.	$k = j + 2$ $k + j = 11$
Less than, smaller than, decreased by, difference, fewer	-	Jason has 3 fewer CDs than Carson. The difference between Jenny’s and Ben’s savings is \$75.	$j = c - 3$ $j - b = 75$
Of, times, product of, twice, double, triple, half of, quarter of	x	Emma has twice as many books as Justin. Justin has half as many books as Emma.	$e = 2 \times j$ or $e = 2j$ $j = c \times \frac{1}{2}$ or $j = e/2$
Divided by, per, for, out of, ratio of ___ to ___	\div	Sophia has \$1 for every \$2 Daniel has. The ratio of Daniel’s savings to Sophia’s savings is 2 to 1.	$s = d \div 2$ or $s = d/2$ $d/s = 2/1$