



# MathStart®

**Give Me Half!**  
**Understanding Halves**  
**Level 2 Ages 6+**

## Activity Ideas

### Recognizing that half means one of two equal parts leads to understanding fractions.

When a boy tries to eat a whole pizza without sharing half with his sister, it's not pretty. Of course, she isn't too keen on sharing her juice or cupcakes. With a little adult prodding, however, they soon learn the benefits of sharing and split everything in half, including clean-up chores. Illustrated by G. Brian Karas.

- Encourage your child or class to tell the story using math vocabulary: "Half," "Whole," "Share," etc. Introduce the word "divide" by saying that each item is "divided equally."
- Gather up pieces of paper in a variety of sizes and shapes. Work together with your child or class to find different ways to fold the pieces in half.
- Identify halves in a recipe: one half of a one cup, one half of one stick of butter, or halves of fruits or vegetables. Slice food items of varying shapes into halves and then share them.
- **TEACHER IDEA!** We act out the stories. For "Give Me Half!," we cut out a circle for a pizza. We also use juice boxes and cookies. Then we share them by halves and thirds. My partner and I can pretend to be the mother and act it out. The kids need to clean up! I send home books during the year for kids and parents to read and share. We rotate them through the classroom. Thanks Michelle Collins, Goodnoe Elementary School, Newtown, PA!
- **TEACHER IDEA!** I go into classrooms as a kind of coach/mentor/math guru. We try to tie math concepts and lessons to literature and it's so easy with the MathStart books. The kids can relate to the stories. "Give Me Half!" is one of my favorites. I always start by asking: "Does anybody have a brother or sister that doesn't like to share with them?" You have that hook and the kids are thinking it's the coolest thing. They start to asking all kinds of questions like, "I have two brothers and so we cut it into threes and so what do you call that one?" It is just such a natural springboard for fractions. Thanks Tracy Keegan, Topeka Public Schools, Topeka, KS!

**Sign up for Stuart J. Murphy's **FREE** e-newsletter!**

**[www.stuartjmurphy.com](http://www.stuartjmurphy.com)**

**"Storybooks that make math fun!"**