Getting to Know You
Goal: Take a survey to find out what half the group has in common

1. **Come up with questions**
   Together, brainstorm about five yes-or-no questions. Record them on large paper.

2. **Together, brainstorm about five yes-or-no questions. Record them on large paper.**
   Everyone writes Y or N below each question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a pet?</td>
<td>yyYYY NNnN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were you born in the U.S.?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you speak Spanish at home?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Find a fraction

What do you notice about half the group? Almost half the group?

Tito says about half of us have a pet. How did you find half? What counts as “about half?”

Variations

More or less (easier). Start with all children sitting down. Call out a question. Those with yes answers stand; others remain seated. Children count to see if more answered yes or more answered no. For more challenge, they determine if at least half answered yes.

Use 3/4 and percents (harder). Children find questions that about 3/4 (or 1/4) of the group answered yes. Or, they find questions that about 100%, 75%, and 50% of the group answered yes.

Math Spotlight

Finding half

In this activity, children use fractions to make sense of survey results. To find half, they can compare the Y’s and the N’s. “Exactly half” means the same number of Y’s and N’s—they match up. If the total is odd, “about half” means one extra Y or N. So if there are 9 answers, 4 Y’s and 5 N’s is about half of each.
## Everyday Connections

### Developing survey questions

- 7 out of 10 dentists recommend *Shiny toothpaste*.
- 8 out of 10 citizens want better law enforcement.
- 9 out of 10 voters want me to win the election.

Advertisers and politicians make claims based on survey results. Should we believe those results? Maybe, maybe not. Sometimes, the people who create the survey ask the questions so that they get a certain answer. If they asked the question a slightly different way, they would get a different answer.

When children create their own survey questions, they grasp the importance of how the question is worded. For instance, the answer to “How many people do you live with?” may not be the same as the answer to “How many people are in your family?”

### Grades

2-6+

### Minimum number of participants

4
Suggested grouping

individual

Time

10-20 minutes

Math

fractions; collecting data

Materials

large sheet of paper

several markers

Prerequisites

reading

Books about children's lives
