There are several ways that equipartioning can be taken up in the classroom. Wilson and colleagues (2012) gave an example of students fairly sharing 24 gold coins between pirates. This activity is highly adaptable in that the teacher can easily change the focus based on the question asked. In order to focus on partitive division, they may ask something like, “If there are six pirates, how many coins would each get?” This question can easily be reversed to emphasize quotative division by asking, “If each pirate got four gold coins, how many pirates were in the group?” The students can also be given manipulatives to stand in for the coins and can be asked to create a separate pile for each pirate. During this activity, teacher will want to pay close attention to the strategies that students use, as their partitioning methods can give great insight into how they see the values involved and how well they are attending to the mathematical practice of attending to “regularity in repeated reasoning” (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010, p. 8). Students may “deal” the coins individually or in small groups until they are all gone or they may divide the number of coins by the number of pirates if their understanding is more advanced. If the student creates nonequal shares, the teacher might ask a question such as, “Which share of treasure would you rather have?” (Wilson et al., 2012, p. 484). If a student selects one group because it has the most gold coins, this is a sign that their splitting algorithm did not create fair shares, and the student may need to reconsider their approach. Similarly, if the student does not use all of the coins, they may be asked what should happen to those coins.

This splitting activity can also help students to “look for and make use of structure” (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010, p. 7) by using multiple equivalent representations of the fractions involved. Students may use the manipulatives previously described, draw pictures of the groups, and write fractions in symbolic notation. Students who are beginning to develop the measurement conceptualization of fractions may also be able to convert their unit fractions into decimals or percentages such that each pirate in our example gets of the coins, which is around 16.7% of the total number of coins.