

Text times

Annotation

Maia can write an additive equality statement for a situation that involves an unknown and can explain her reasoning for the notation she uses. She recognises that she could solve the unknown using an inverse operation.

Problem: Text times

The teacher shows the student the following problem, reading it to them as required:

Last week, Piripi sent 172 texts, and Joanne also sent lots of texts. Between the two of them, they sent 421 texts altogether.

Then the teacher asks:

Before doing any calculations to find out the number of texts that Joanne sent, can you write an equation that describes the situation?

Student Response

$$172 + \boxed{} = 421$$

Teacher: Tell me about what you have written.

Maia: Well, we don't know how many texts Joanne sent, so I've used an empty box sign to show that this bit is unknown. The 172 are Piripi's texts, and the 421 is the total that we are told. What I've written says 172 plus something - that's Joanne's texts - equals 421. To work it out though, I'd subtract 172 from 421.