



## The Gingerbread Man

A mathematics story based off of the book "The Gingerbread Man."

Citation:  
Hunia, F. (1999). *The Gingerbread Man*. Loughborough: Ladybird.

Once upon a time, there was a cheery, little elf named Benny who lived in a cheery, little cottage near Sugar Cane River. Benny had been working tirelessly, day and night, at the toy workshop. He was famished! He stepped into his kitchen and poked around in the cabinets. He finally decided that a gingerbread man would do the trick!



Famished means to be very hungry.

The gingerbread dough recipe called for 2 cups of sugar, however Benny only had  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup measuring tool. The angry elf was really stumped and needed help! No matter how hard he focused, he couldn't figure out how many  $\frac{1}{3}$  cups he would need to make 2 cups of sugar.

Can you help Benny?



Think how many  $\frac{1}{3}$  pieces are in 1 cup?

Benny rolled out the dough and carefully cut it in the shape of a gingerbread man. He placed two perfect raisins for eyes, a cinnamon drop for a mouth, and three chocolate chips for buttons. Benny then slid the gingerbread man in the oven and closed the door. He couldn't help but peer through the oven window - waiting impatiently.



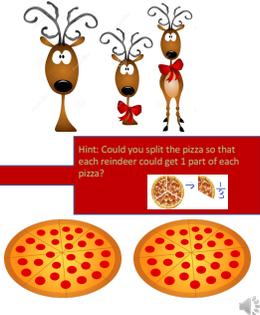
When the gingerbread man was finally done, Benny eagerly opened the oven door, but before the delicious scent hit his nostrils, the gingerbread man hopped up and sprinted straight through the kitchen and out of the cottage shouting, "Don't eat me!"

The shocked elf ran after the gingerbread man. "Stop!" he yelled. The gingerbread man ran even faster, chanting "Run! Run! As fast as you can! You can't stop me, I'm the gingerbread man!"

The gingerbread man ran across the white snow, jumped across the river and slipped sideways through the gate. Benny was right behind him, but he could not get through the hole in the gate. He tried and tried, but he was just too big.



Nearby, three reindeers sat around beginning their picnic. Benny could see that the gingerbread man was getting away so he urgently ran over to the reindeers and begged for help. The reindeers agreed to share the code to the gate, but only if he helped them first. The reindeers were eating pizza and were arguing over how to split the pizza evenly. You see, there were only 2 pizzas, but there were three reindeers eating. Can you help Benny figure out how the 3 reindeer could share the pizza equally?



Hint: Could you split the pizza so that each reindeer could get 1 part of each pizza?

Great job helping Benny!



Benny plugged the **code**  into the gate and to his surprise, the door opened. He looked ahead and saw the gingerbread man racing towards the Grinch Bridge. "You sure do look delicious" the Grinch said to the gingerbread man. Then suddenly the Grinch bit off  $\frac{1}{5}$  of the gingerbread man. The gingerbread man then ran over the bridge. 

"Run! Run! As fast as you can! You can't stop me, I'm the gingerbread man!"

When Benny approached the bridge, the Grinch yelled that the elf must answer a **riddle** to pass. 

"If I were to share this  $\frac{1}{5}$  piece of gingerbread with you, what fraction of the gingerbread man would we each receive?"

Benny was tired, **puzzled** and hungry. Can you help Benny answer the riddle?



*Think:  $\frac{1}{5}$  divided into 2 pieces.*

"Thank you so much" said Benny! The Grinch was grouchy and said he could pass, but he wasn't going to share his piece of the gingerbread man.

Benny looked ahead and saw that the gingerbread man had stopped to take a rest near the old oak tree. When Benny got near, he could see the gingerbread man was **crying**. Tears were falling from his raisin eyes. Benny realized that although the gingerbread man had been taunting him, he was really frightened and alone. Suddenly, Benny wasn't hungry anymore. The elf and the gingerbread man spent the rest of the day talking and playing near the old oak tree.

