Division

Do make sure that while you are working on multiplication that you frequently refer to division, thus underlying the relationship between these two processes and helping your child think fluidly between them.

Thus when she is working on her multiplication facts, make sure you also say things like “36 divided by 6 equals what?” And when she says 5 times 4 equals 20, make sure she knows that 20 divided by 5 is 4. And that 20 divided by 4 is 5.

Use the worksheets to review and consolidate. Work with the 100 problems drill as with multiplication drill.

The main goal with division this year is to work with remainders and to take the first steps in long division. Some people sigh when confronted with long division and immediately reach for a calculator. It is certainly true that long division can be tedious and in our age can seem irrelevant and a waste of time. However, our age, perhaps more than any other, demands clear and rigorous thinking and long division is a superb step in that direction. To successfully solve a long division problem with pencil and paper means one must know one’s times tables, remember the steps (algorithm) to solve the problem, not get mixed up and not get lost. One needs perseverance, alertness, memory, clarity and precision. One needs none of these things (at least not too such a degree) when using a calculator.

After reviewing basic division, quickly move through the first steps of division with a remainder. Move at a pace that challenges but does not overwhelm your child. Show her the steps on the board, have her do a couple of problems out loud in front of you, then give her some to practice. Move on. Work with the various kinds of division worksheets: some that have no remainder; some with a remainder; some horizontal; and some in “the little house”.

Now we go on to long division. This year we won’t go too far. Next year we’ll tackle very long multi-step long division (of course, if your child is ready, move ahead this year).

Write the following problem on the board:

$$25\overline{)435}$$

Ask your child — Does 25 go into 4? No. So we put a zero above.