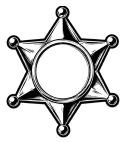
Price Detective

Name _____ Date _____

Case #21: four cereal boxes. Which one is the REAL deal? Detectives don't trust big signs. They find the price per ounce: price ÷ ounces.



A	B	C	D
Honey Stars	**Oat Rings**	BIG VALUE! **MEGA Flakes**	**Store Brand Corn Flakes**
12 oz	18 oz	24 oz	16 oz
$3.60	**$4.50**	**$7.20**	**$3.20**

Box	Price	Ounces	Price per ounce
A	$3.60	12	
B	$4.50	18	
C	$7.20	24	
D	$3.20	16	



1. Which box is the real deal?

2. Is the MEGA Flakes "BIG VALUE!" sign true?

MY MONEY CHOICE

Would you pay more for the brand you like? Why?

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Price Detective

The quick lesson (read aloud, about 1 minute)

> Big boxes and BIG VALUE signs don't always mean a better deal. Smart shoppers find the **unit price**: the price for one ounce (or one item). Divide the price by the number of ounces. Many U.S. stores print the unit price on the shelf tag, in small print.

Two teaching points

1. Unit price = price ÷ amount.
2. Signs sell; math tells.

Answer key

Price per ounce: A 30¢ · B 25¢ · C 30¢ · D 20¢.
1. **D, the store brand**, is the real deal at 20¢ an ounce. 2. **No.** MEGA Flakes costs 30¢ an ounce, the same as the small Honey Stars box. The sign is selling, not saving.

10-minute run

1. Do box A together: $3.60 ÷ 12.
2. Solve B, C and D (5 min).
3. Crack the case: which is the real deal?

Ask

"Why would a store put a BIG VALUE sign on a box that isn't the best deal?"

Goal

The best deal is the lowest price per ounce, not the biggest box or the loudest sign.

Take it further

Bring real shelf tags or a store flyer. Find the unit price for two sizes of the same product.

Standard: National Standards for Personal Financial Education (Council for Economic Education and Jump$tart), area: **Spending**. Print double-sided: the activity on the front, this teaching side on the back.

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