

Answers to Practice Exercises for Chapter 12 – The Four Rules for Mixed Numbers

Set A - Question 8

Working

$$3\frac{1}{5} - 3\frac{1}{8}$$

$$= \frac{8}{40} - \frac{5}{40}$$

$$= \frac{13}{40}$$

Comment

Subtract the integers and subtract the fractions. The integers become 0 and can be dropped. The lowest common multiple of 5 and 8 is 40, so this will be the common denominator.

Subtract the fraction numerators.

Note: Because mixed numbers are actually little addition sums, $3\frac{1}{5} - 3\frac{1}{8} = 3 + \frac{1}{5} - (3 + \frac{1}{8})$. Everything inside the bracket is negative. So, when the expression is rearranged to combine the integers and fractions, it becomes $3 - 3 + \frac{1}{5} - \frac{1}{8}$.