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When it comes to teaching first-grade students the common core standards of mathematics, there's no better way to practice than with worksheets geared toward repeatedly applying the same basic concepts such as counting, adding and subtracting without carrying, word problems, telling time, and calculating currency. As young mathematicians progress through their early education, they will be expected to demonstrate comprehension of these basic skills, so it's important for teachers to be able to gauge their students' aptitudes in the subject by administering quizzes, working one on one with each student, and by sending them home with worksheets like the ones below to practice on their own or with their parent. However, in some cases, students may require additional attention or explanation beyond what worksheets alone can offer—for this reason, teachers should also prepare demonstrations in class to help guide students through the coursework. When working with first-grade students, it's important to start from where they understand and work your way up, ensuring that each student masters each concept individually before moving on to the next topic. Click on the links in the rest of the article to discover worksheets for each of the topics addressed. One of the first things first graders have to master is the concept of counting to 20, which will help them quickly count beyond those basic numbers and begin to understand the 100s and 1000s by the time they reach the second grade. Assigning worksheets like "Order the Numbers to 50" will help teachers assess whether or not a student fully grasps the number line. Additionally, students will be expected to recognize number patterns and should practice their skills in counting by 2s, counting by 5s, and counting by 10s and identifying whether a number is greater than or less than 20, and be able to parse out mathematical equations from word problems like these, which may include ordinal numbers up to 10 In terms of practical math skills, the first grade is also an important time to ensure students understand how to tell time on a clock face and how to count U.S. coins up to 50 cents. These skills will be essential as students begin to apply two-digit addition and subtraction in the second grade. First-grade math students will be introduced to basic addition and subtraction, oftentimes in the form of word problems, over the course of the year, meaning they will be expected to add up to 20 and subtract numbers below fifteen, both of which won't require the students to re-group or "carry the one." These concepts are easiest understood through tactile demonstration such as number blocks or tiles or through illustration or example such as showing the class a pile of 15 bananas and taking away four of them, then asking the students to calculate then count the remaining bananas. This simple display of subtraction will help guide students through the process of early arithmetic, which can be additionally aided by these subtraction facts to 10. Students will also be expected to demonstrate a comprehension of addition, through completing word problems that feature addition sentences up to 10, and worksheets like " Adding to 10, " Adding to 15, " and " Adding to 20" will help teachers gauge students' comprehension of the basics of simple addition. First-grade teachers may also introduce their students to a base-level knowledge of fractions, geometric shapes, and mathematical patterns, though none of them are required course material until the second and third grades. Check out "Understanding 1/2," this "Shape Book," and these additional 10 Geometry worksheets for late Kindergarten and Grade 1. When working with first-grade students, it's important to start from where they are. It is also important to focus on thinking concepts. For instance, think about this word problem: A man has 10 balloons and the wind blew 4 away. How many are left? Here's another way to ask the question: A man was holding some balloons and the wind blew 4 away. He only has 6 balloons left, how many did he start with? Too often we ask questions where the unknown is at the end of the question, but the unknown can also be put at the beginning of the question. Explore more concepts in these extra worksheets: For years, a debate has raged as to whether actively managed funds or passively managed index products are the best choice for client portfolios. The best active managers can add value, especially in challenging market environments like the one we've seen thus far in 2018. On the other hand, passive indexing is low-cost and has outperformed a high percentage of many actively managed funds. However, there are more options to choose from than the binary "active" versus "passive." The emergence of smart beta products in has created an interesting "middle ground" alternative to consider as well. Why not use both to build the best possible portfolio for your clients? Smart beta combines many of the benefits of passive investing with the advantages of active investing. While there is no single, definitive approach, smart beta funds generally use a rules-based approach tied to a benchmark. Like active funds, these strategies may seek to add alpha, reduce risk or increase diversification beyond a standard benchmark, at a lower cost than traditional active management, but higher than true passive investing. Most smart beta products use factors, or characteristics defined by the fund manager, to attempt to outperform their benchmark. Factor-based ETFs generally employ a strategy that carves out a slice of a benchmark that is either developed internally or is provided by an industry benchmark provider. The fund will be rebalanced periodically and perhaps once or twice per year, the benchmark will be re-screened with certain stocks being eliminated and others added. Some examples of factors include: Quality ETFs invest in companies with strong balance sheets and consistent earnings growth. These companies often have solid management teams in place and have a trend of consistent and growing dividend payouts. FlexShares Quality Dividend Fund (QDF) is an example of a fund that combines quality and dividend factors.Momentum ETFs invest in stocks that are likely to gain in price either absolutely or relative to a peer group. iShares MSCI USA Momentum Factor Index ETF (MTUM) is an example of an ETF using this factor.Low volatility ETFs screen for stocks whose prices should tend to fluctuate less than the rest of the market. iShares Edge MSCI Min Vol USA ETF (USMV) and Invesco S&P 500 Low Volatility Portfolio (SPLV) are two of the largest low-volatility ETFs in the marketplace.Value ETFs invest in stocks that generally have lower valuations or slower growth than their peers within their universe of stocks. iShares Edge MSCI Intl Value Factor ETF (IVLU) is an ETF that invests in international large and mid-cap stocks with lower valuations.Size factor ETFs tilt their portfolios to include more exposure to small cap stocks than the benchmark. Small caps, especially small-cap value stocks, have long been shown to add value over time. iShares Edge MSCI USA Size Factor ETF (SIZE) invests in large and mid-cap stocks with a tilt toward stocks with a lower market capitalization.Multi-factor ETFs will combine one or more smart beta factors in order to meet predetermined objectives. JPMorgan Diversified Return U.S. Equity ETF (JPUS) is an example of a multi-factor smart beta ETF. JPUS uses the relative value, quality and momentum factors simultaneously in screening large cap U.S. stocks. Most smart beta funds exhibit some of the features of both active and passive funds. Like active funds, smart beta ETFs rely on a rules-based process to differ from the benchmark. While a traditional index fund endeavors to passively track an index like the S&P 500, smart beta funds restrict (or expand) their investment universe in comparison to the benchmark in order to deliver a specific investment goal. Smart beta ETFs are like passive products because they still passively follow an index. Where active managers will buy and sell securities in order to meet an investment objective, smart beta ETFs passively observe rules that tie them to an industry (or custom) benchmark. Smart beta funds are generally more expensive than a passive, market cap weighted index fund, but less expensive than a full actively managed fund. Smart beta funds offer an alternative to pure passive or pure active management. These funds can be used to enhance a client's allocation to tilt the portfolio's focus in a specific direction. They can be used in conjunction with both traditional index and active funds as a tool to help achieve your client's investing objectives. Actively Disliked It's no secret that actively run mutual funds are unpopular. They have suffered net outflows for three of the past four years. Meanwhile, the combination of index mutual funds and exchange-traded funds has enjoyed positive net sales. The grim news (for active managers) appears below. The universe consists of all mutual funds and ETFs, save for money market funds and funds of funds. For convenience's sake, I classify all index funds as "passive," although many ETFs hold idiosyncratic portfolios that should properly be regarded as active. But such funds are almost always small and thus immaterial to the overall picture. It's also no secret that most indexing occurs with stocks. The only reason that active funds remained competitive from 2009 through 2012 was that active bond funds handily outsold bond indexers. That ended in 2013, when the reputation (although not performance) of bond-fund leader PIMCO Total Return (PTTRX) imploded. At least active bond funds enjoyed a nice run. As a group, active equity funds have registered no net inflows over the past decade, save for a brief stretch during 2013-14. Over the full 10-year period, from 2009 through 2018, they logged \$1 trillion in net redemptions. That's no way to make a living. Data Check At this point, your sympathies are likely to be muted. Actively managed stock funds received their just desserts. Had they performed better, they would have retained investor loyalties. However, as we also all know, their average returns were well below those of index funds. Let's test that belief. Using the same universe and a similar time period (in this case, the trailing 10 years through Oct. 31, 2019), we can calculate the 10-year average category rankings for both active and passive stock funds. If actively run equity funds were indeed generally worse, their collective failure should be readily apparent. Vanguard Won the Loser's Game It was. The average risks for passive and active equity funds were similar, albeit with more outliers for the active funds. But the returns were not. The typical index fund placed just outside the top third of its category for the decade, while the typical active fund was ... typical. It could scarcely be otherwise: All children cannot be above average. (Yet, you protest, the average return percentiles for both passive and active equity funds each are below 50. How can that be? Good question. That puzzled me for a while. The oddity owes to an additional screen I neglected to mention: oldest share class. Using only one share class per fund prevents overcounting funds that have multiple share classes, but it also slightly improves the field, because the oldest share class tends to be cheaper than its successors.) Meeting Expectations The index fund result was as predicted in this space's "Revisiting International Equity Indexing," published two weeks ago. That article explained how U.S. stock index funds have ridden style tailwinds over the past decade, while their international cousins faced a headwind. (Market-cap-weighted index funds are neutrally positioned with respect to the markets, but not to their actively run rivals. Within Morningstar Categories, index funds can be hurt or helped by their disparities in investment style.) Consequently, the 10-year return percentiles for most domestic-stock index funds place near the top quintile, while those of the international indexers cluster around the 50th percentile. Combining those two results leads to an expected average return percentile of about 35 for the universe of all equity index funds—precisely what they did achieve. (My apology for this rather boring paragraph, but it illustrates how all the data pieces must fit, or else the researcher has erred.) The percentile difference between passive and active equity funds translates to a total return difference of about 50 basis points per year, which, as Jack Bogle would say, sums to real money over time. That performance gap also closely mimics the expense difference between the two groups, which is narrower than you might think, because 1) the oldest share classes of active funds are relatively cheap; and 2) most internationaland small-company index funds aren't priced near zero. Expense-Ratio Buckets Which leads to the following question: If, on average, stock index funds have outgained their active competitors by approximately the amount of their differences in expense ratios, then might active stock funds that are priced similarly to index funds fare equally well? Does equity indexing's advantage come solely from costs, as opposed to structural features? This column is not the first to pose such queries, but I think it offers a clearer answer than most. No, there are not significant performance benefits to equity indexing above and beyond its usual (but not inevitable) cost advantage. The support for that statement appears below. Once again, the table shows the 10-year category rankings for passive versus active equity funds, although this time I have omitted the risk scores, because they are largely similar. This time, though, funds are sorted into four expense-ratio buckets: 1) less than 0.30%, 2) more than 0.30% but less than 0.60%, 3) more than 0.60% but less than 1.00%, and 4) more than 1.00%. The Cost Driver The conclusion seems obvious. Expense differences explain just about everything. True, index funds slightly beat their active rivals within the two lowest expense-ratio buckets, for reasons (technical details) that aren't worth explaining here, but the overwhelming effect came from the expense-ratio sorting. Each group in a lower-cost bucket always outperformed each group in a pricier bucket. Whether the groups were passive or active was beside the point. Of course, there are nonperformance reasons for preferring index funds, such as transparency, ease of selection, and less need for monitoring. Index funds also don't "blow up," as can the most extreme of active funds. (Although this danger can be avoided when investing in actively managed stock funds by buying only the cheapest offerings, which almost always are conservatively run.) There is no question that the practice of indexing confers many benefits. But higher total returns are not among them, if the active fund dares to match the indexer's costs. John Rekenhalter has been researching the fund industry since 1988. He is now a columnist for Morningstar.com and a member of Morningstar's investment research department. John is quick to point out that while Morningstar typically agrees with the views of the Rekenhalter Report, his views are his own.

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