Multiplying and Dividing Fractions Word Problems

How can you tell them apart?

Multiplication Word Problems:

Example: Billy’s dad left $\frac{1}{3}$ of a pizza to eat as a snack the next day at work. He only ate $\frac{1}{2}$ of the pizza he brought for snack. How much pizza did he eat for snack?

* In this problem, we need to figure out what is $\frac{1}{2}$ OF the $\frac{1}{3}$ he brought to work.
* Any time you see that word OF, especially in reference to fractions, you should think multiplication.

$$\frac{1}{2}×\frac{1}{3}=\frac{1}{6}$$

Billy’s dad ate $\frac{1}{6}$ of a pizza for snack.

Division Word Problems:

Example: Sara bought 5 cups of sunflower seeds. If each serving of sunflower seeds is $\frac{1}{3}$ of a cup, how many servings are in the 5 cups she bought?

* In this problem, you HAVE something and are splitting it up.
* Always remember, what you HAVE (the 5 cups of sunflower seeds) is the dividend and the AMOUNT YOU ARE SPLITTING IT INTO is your divisor ($\frac{1}{3}$).
* You can also read it in a way where you are trying to find how many $\frac{1}{3}$’s are in 5.

$$5÷\frac{1}{3}=15 $$

 Sara has 15 servings total.