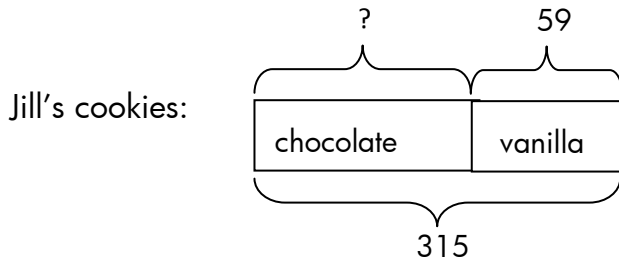The difference in addition and subtraction word problems lay in their semantic structure. There are three typical ways that subtraction word problems are phrased.
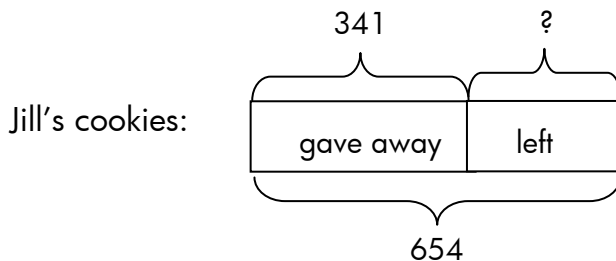
1. **Group** - This is a part-whole situation (two subsets).
   Ex: Jill baked 315 cookies. 59 were vanilla cookies and the rest were chocolate. How many chocolate cookies did she bake?

?	59
chocolate	vanilla

Jill's cookies: (bracket above showing ? and 59, bracket below showing 315)

315

2. **Change** - The initial value will change either by increasing or decreasing.
   Ex: Jill had 654 cookies. She gave 341 cookies to Ann. How many cookies does Jill have now? (Although there are 2 people involved in the word problem, we aren't comparing them)

341	?
gave away	left

Jill's cookies: (bracket above showing 341 and ?, bracket below showing 654)

654

3. **Compare** - Two absolute values are compared and there is a relative value.
   Ex: Jill has 316 cookies; Ann has 49 cookies more than Jill. How many cookies does Ann have?

316   49

Jill
Ann

?