Subtract Whole Numbers

Find the difference. 5,128 − 3,956

Estimate first.
Think: 5,128 is close to 5,000. 3,956 is close to 4,000.
So, an estimate is 5,000 − 4,000 = 1,000.

Write the problem vertically. Use grid paper to align digits by place value.

Step 1 Subtract
the ones.

	5,	I	2	8	
−	3,	9	5	6	
				2	

8 − 6 = 2

Step 2 Subtract
the tens.

		0	12		
	5,	1̸	2	8	
−	3,	9	5	6	
			7	2	

There are not enough tens to subtract.
Regroup 1 hundred as 10 tens.
12 tens − 5 tens = 7 tens

Step 3 Subtract the
hundreds.

	4	10̸0̸	12		
	5,	1̸	2	8	
−	3,	9	5	6	
		I	7	2	

There are not enough hundreds to
subtract. Regroup 1 thousand as
10 hundreds.
10 hundreds − 9 hundreds = 1 hundred

Step 4 Subtract the
thousands.

	4	10̸0̸	12		
	5,	1̸	2	8	
−	3,	9	5	6	
	I	I	7	2	

4 thousands − 3 thousands =
1 thousand

The difference is ____1,172____. Since 1,172 is close
to the estimate of 1,000, the answer is reasonable.

Estimate. Then find the difference.

1. Estimate: _____

$$\begin{array}{r} 6,253 \\ -\ 3,718 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

2. Estimate: _____

$$\begin{array}{r} 74,529 \\ -\ 38,453 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

3. Estimate: _____

$$\begin{array}{r} 232,318 \\ -\ 126,705 \\ \hline \end{array}$$