5.1 Like Terms And Unlike Terms

In an algebraic expression such as 2x + 3y + 8, we call the parts that are added together **terms** of the expression. There are 3 terms in 2x + 3y + 8, and they are 2x, 3y and 8.



In the term 2x, the numerical part, 2, is called the **coefficient** of x. The term 8 with no variable is called a **constant term**.

Let us consider another expression, $4p^2 - 3q$. Since $4p^2 - 3q = 4p^2 + (-3)q$, there are 2 terms in $4p^2 - 3q$. They are $4p^2$ and -3q. Here, the coefficients of p^2 and q are 4 and -3 respectively.



