

Water and Wine

Solution

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There is exactly as much water in the wine glass as wine in the water glass.

After the two transfers, each glass is back to its original volume: one teaspoon went each way.

Look at the glass that originally held only wine. Every bit of its original wine that is now missing must be in the other glass. Since this glass is still just as full as it was, the missing wine has been replaced by exactly the same amount of water.

So the amount of wine in the water glass equals the amount of water in the wine glass.

Notice that we never needed to calculate a mixing ratio. In fact, perfect mixing is not needed for the equality. What matters is that equal volumes are transferred in the two directions and none is lost. As usual for this puzzle, treat the liquids' volumes as additive.

History and sources: [companion history PDF](#).