51. (a) A small segment of the rope has mass and is pulled down by the gravitational force of the Earth. Equilibrium is reached because neighboring portions of the rope pull up sufficiently on it. Since tension is a force *along* the rope, at least one of the neighboring portions must slope up away from the segment we are considering. Then, the tension has an upward component which means the rope sags.

(b) The only force acting with a horizontal component is the applied force $\vec{F}$. Treating the block and rope as a single object, we write Newton's second law for it: $F = (M + m)a$, where a is the acceleration and the positive direction is taken to be to the right. The acceleration is given by $a = F/(M + m)$.

(c) The force of the rope F_r is the only force with a horizontal component acting on the block. Then Newton's second law for the block gives

$$F_r = Ma = \frac{MF}{M + m}$$

where the expression found above for a has been used.

(d) Treating the block and half the rope as a single object, with mass $M + \frac{1}{2}m$, where the horizontal force on it is the tension T_m at the midpoint of the rope, we use Newton's second law:

$$T_m = (M + \frac{1}{2}m)a = \frac{(M + \frac{1}{2}m)F}{(M + m)} = \frac{(2M + m)F}{2(M + m)} .$$