



Playing with Number Sense

Number sense is the ability to think and work with numbers and to understand their uses and relationships. Counting is one aspect of number sense.

Some Books

Big Fat Hen, by Keith Baker

Five Little Monkeys books by Eileen Christelow

The Doorbell Rang, by Pat Hutchins

Over in the Arctic, by Marianne Berkes

Ten, Nine, Eight, by Molly Bang

Anno's Counting Book, by Mitsumasa Anno

Some Activities

1. Count everything! Count steps to the door. People at the table. Shoes in the closet. Point to each object as you count, reinforcing that the last number names the amount.
2. Give your child a set number of blocks. See how many ways you can make the number ____ with the blocks. Encourage kids to use different shape blocks, stack them, put them in rows, and have plenty of time to learn to concept of ____ with blocks.
1. Next time do the same block activity, but after kids have built sets of a set number, let them trace around the blocks to make pictures that represent their sets.
2. If the children seem ready, they can add the symbol of the number to their picture. Only after a thorough understanding of the connection between manipulatives and pictures and symbols are children ready to work with symbols alone. Don't rush it!
3. It's fun to get active with numbers! You can do movement and actions using numbers. Clap 3 times. Stretch 3 times. Hop 3 times. Blink 3 times. . . etc.
4. Have kids count on their fingers each time you read a counting book or sing a counting rhyme.
5. Count during snack and mealtimes. How many spoons should we put on the table? How many grapes do you want? If you have two crackers and I give you one more, how many do you have?
6. Sing songs and rhymes that use numbers, such as "1, 2, Buckle my shoe" and "Baa baa black sheep."
7. When playing board games, help your child count. If they are on number 5 and spin or roll a 3, say "We need to count three more, so say 6 -7 -8. Now you're on 8!"
8. Think of a number between 1 and 10. Give your child clues like "bigger" or "smaller" until they guess. Draw numbers on your child's back in the bathtub and see if they can guess the number.
9. Point out comparisons when reading stories or in daily life. This bear is much bigger than the first bear. Do you think this fish is shorter or longer than his friend? Who is the tallest person you know? Can you get me the biggest ball?



Fun with Math & Science

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