

Learning possibilities for counting

Rote Counting

This is when children memorise the name of numerals and can recite them, for example: as they walk up the stairs, count some toys, count the number of grapes in their bowl. Young children may often leave out numbers or get the counting order confused.

Remember, like any other aspect of your child/children's development accurate counting skills take time and practice to develop.

One-to-one correspondence

This is when children count each object separately and assign a counting word to the object. Young children may often repeat a counting name, miss an object or count the same object twice.

Play ideas to try

- Play the fishing game with your child/children fishing game. Make a fishing rod using a ruler and piece of string with a small magnet attached to the end. Scatter the fish on the floor or a table and invite your child/children to go fishing. When your child/children catch a fish, help them to count the dots on it and match it to a fish on the base board and to keep count of the fish they have caught, 'Yes that fish has two spots on it, let's see if we can find a matching one.' 'Look how many you have caught now... one, two, three, four fish!'
- Play a game of I spy with your child/children using counting clues, for example, 'I spy with my little eye, something that has four legs' (e.g. chair, table, dog), 'I spy with my little eye, something with three buttons' (e.g. shirt, cushion, teddy). Encourage your child/children to take turns giving and responding to the clues when they are confident with the game.
- Make tidying up a counting game. Have a large container or toy box ready to use. Invite your child/children to play and explain the rules, 'When you hear the number, that's how many toys you have to put in the box. Ready, set, four!' Make it fun by commentating as your child/children tidy, 'Here comes Ella with her second toy... Now she has three... And one more makes four!' Invite your child/children to show how many items they have collected by counting them when they are done.

Resources

'One, two, buckle my shoe' (action song)

One, two, buckle my shoe (pretend to tie shoe)

Three, four, knock on the door (pretend to knock on door)

Five, six, pick up sticks (pretend to pick up sticks)

Seven, eight, lay them straight (pretend to lay sticks down)

Nine, ten, a big fat hen!

Video

Goodnight numbers

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=slH8_oqK2So

Text: McKellar, D. 2017, *Goodnight Numbers*, Crown books for young readers, New York.

Engage

Step 1. If you have this book at home, encourage your child/children to predict what the story is about from the cover. If not use the suggested video link in the resources box and watch the story together.

Step 2. Read/watch the story.

Step 3. Here are some questions to ask your child/children about the story.

1. What pet can you see? (cat or dog)
2. (look at the picture for eight) Tell me what is happening here? (mummy is reading a bedtime story)
3. (look at the picture for three) What might the mummy be saying to the boy?
4. (look at the page for one) How can we tell that the baby is having dinner?

Play ideas to try

- Encourage your child/children to look carefully at how many times each number is represented in the picture on a page, for example three pots, bins, wheels on the tricycle, stars, cushions, flowers, buttons, stripes, pictures on the wall. Support your child to identify and count groups of objects for the number on each page.
- Involve your child/children in washing up the dishes. Provide a secure step stool for your child and ensure the water is not too hot. Demonstrate the washing movements and how many times to do them for each item, for example 'Show me how you can brush a big circle around on the plate. That's perfect Sammy, can you do that three times?' Support your child/children to count the number of items they have washed, 'You have washed all of cups the Sammy. Can you count how many there are there altogether?'
- Have a game of hide and seek and count from 1 to 20 while your child/children hide. Play the game a few times and then encourage them to count while you hide. This is a lovely way to practise counting while having lots of fun.