

April 20 Further Ideas to support your Nursery child's learning:

Focusing on Mathematical Development

There are many stages of development for children as they become aware of numbers. They will become interested in numbers having a meaning and children often become interested in numbers that are important to them, such as '3' when they are three years of age.

Support your child's learning by looking out for numbers around you and explain their purpose, such as:



There are many examples within our homes:



Children often show that they understand that numbers have a purpose when they first attempt counting for themselves and they can be heard saying random number names, e.g. "3, 5, 9, 2..."

Nursery rhymes and counting songs are used on a daily basis in Nursery as an enjoyable way to help your child become secure with the correct number order

and we encourage the children to begin to match numbers to amounts by using their fingers as they sing along.



- Here are some songs that are familiar to your child and could be watched together on social media, such as You Tube.
- Start with songs that practise counting forwards e.g.:
1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Once I Caught a Fish Alive
Hickory Dickory Dock
One Elephant went out to Play
1 2 Buckle My Shoe
1 Potato, 2 Potato
Peter/ Johnny hammers with One Hammer
Number One, tickle your tum.

Children need practise counting in everyday situations as part of your daily routine and whilst playing. Remind your child that

- The first number that they say when they begin counting is always '1.'
- The last number that they say tells them the total, the overall amount of the items they have counted.
- Also talk about the meaning of '0' as zero/ nought and that it indicates that there is nothing or none left.
- Use phrases when demonstrating with your fingers/ counting objects such as 'one more', 'another one' and 'add one' to help your child understand basic mathematical concepts, ready for practical addition sums at a later stage.

So your child can recite numbers in order. What's next?

Ask your child to count out amounts, ensuring they can repeatedly and securely count out amounts to 5, before moving on to larger amounts. When this is achieved, move on to counting amounts to 10.



A common error is that a child may count the same object twice, so teach your child to line up objects first and count them from left to right, ensuring that they touch each object as they say the corresponding number. Most children will need reminding to slow down so their finger speed matches the number they are saying and touching at the same time. With regular practise, you will soon see progress.

By practising his/her counting of amounts, your children will develop his/her concept of amounts and what amounts look like. It is the understanding that being given 10 sweets is more than 3 sweets.

When children grasp this, they are able to recognise small amounts of 3 or 4 items without counting because they recognise what the amount look likes.



When your child is confident with counting amounts by arranging them, the next step is to ask them to count out smaller amounts from a larger amount, e.g. counting out 4 biscuits from the biscuit tin or 6 cat treats out of the bag.

If your child can confidently touch-count amounts to 10, extend this up to 20. Mastering the order of the 'teen' numbers is tricky because some 'teen' numbers do not follow the expected number order. You may be

asked why we say thirteen instead of 'threeteen' and fifteen instead of 'fiveteen'?!

Now your child can securely count amounts to at least 10, practise counting backwards, so your child experiences basic subtraction in a practical way. Counting songs that demonstrate subtraction which are familiar to your child from Nursery include:

5 Little Speckled Frogs

5 Currant Buns

5 Little Ducks

Alice the Camel

There Were Ten in the Bed

10 Fat Sausages

Spaceship Countdown, ending with 'Blast Off!'

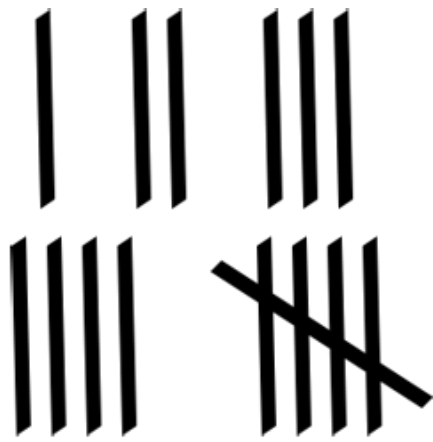
In readiness for simple addition/ subtraction sums, practise one more, then 'one less' for amounts 1-5, then extend to 1-10. This should be done with objects initially, e.g. felt-tip pens, toy cars or clothes pegs. Eventually your child will know these facts without needing to work out the answer with objects.



My child is keen to write numbers/ draw marks that represent amounts.

We introduce simple tallying in Nursery as the first step in the children making marks to represent totals. One of the easiest ways to do this is keep a score when playing a game, such as skittles. Skittles are also easy

to improvise by using squash bottles filled with water outside. Ask your child to draw a straight line for each skittle knocked down, then count after two or three goes to find the total. If your child is confused



by drawing a line to represent the fifth object, then just draw straight lines instead.

Tallying Games:

- Fill up a bucket with strips of newspaper. Hide small objects within the paper and give your child a set amount of time to pull out as many objects as they can, then record their total by tallying. Repeat this and see if your child can beat their score.
- If you have a sand tray, hide 'treasure', dig it up and tally the total.
- Roll a dice with dots, then record this as tally marks.



My child wants to write numbers...

Just like letters, numbers require correct formation. Watch online demonstrations.

- If you have a tea tray, an idea is to fill it with a layer of salt, your child can use a finger/ earbud or brush to make numbers.



- If your child has play dough, write large numbers 1-9 on paper, then make dough versions to sit on top of the written version.
- Make collage numbers by sticking material or any craft objects available onto a large number drawn onto paper or card.
- Help your child twist newspaper to make large-scale numbers, which could always be fixed to a wall outside for a temporary number line.
- Write numbers 0-10 on individual sheets of paper and peg on the washing line. Play a game where you remove a number and your child has to work out which number is missing. If needed, remind him/her to count from 1 to work out the answer. Extend to 20, if needed.

As your child's counting skills improve and they are interested in reading and writing numbers, they would benefit from activities that help them match the numeral to corresponding amount.

Ideas for matching numbers to amounts:

- Give your child a bag with a number written on it. Challenge them to find different objects to fill their bag until they reach the required amount.

- If you have a pack of playing cards, and some small, safe objects, ask your child to place an object on each symbol of the card so the objects match the number on the card.



- Make a simple bingo set where your child has a base card divided into 9 squares with numbers from 0-9 (excluding any one number). The caller needs a set of cards with numbers 1-9 represented in dots, in the same pattern for 1-6 that you see on a dice, then 7, 8 and 9 are represented in lines. A blank card represents zero. The caller shows the child a card with dots, the child counts the dots, then covers over the corresponding number if they have it. This can be simplified by the caller using a set of numerals instead and calling them out.



Next...

Basic subtraction and addition sums need to be introduced in very practical ways. If your child is ready, you could ask them to work out everyday problems by combining two groups of objects, e.g. "I have 4 potatoes on my plate and you have two potatoes. How many potatoes are there altogether?"

Or "Have you eaten an apple from the fruit bowl? There were 4 apples, how many are there now?"

I hope this helps you support your child's learning at home. Remember that it is better to keep activities fun and match the duration of the activity to suit your child's attention span.

Kind Regards,

Miss Sapsed

