



Smart Cookie Club
S T A Y • P L A Y • L E A R N

Recognizing Numbers & Counting **Activity Pack**

Recognizing Numbers

The more children are exposed to written numbers, the easier it will be for them to recognize and differentiate between them. It's important for adults to provide many different opportunities for children to see, touch and use numbers throughout the day.

After multiple exposures, children will begin to understand what a number is. They will begin to use numbers arbitrarily; pretending to count, and often mixing up numbers with letters.

To teach your child number recognition and ordering at home, consider how memories are made. Try printing the numbers 1-10 (very large) on sheets of paper. Post them in different parts of the house in an order and along a path that follows your daily routine. For example, put 1 by the entrance, 2 by the table and so on, up to 10 over their bed. Casually begin pointing them out as you go through your daily routines. You will be amazed how quickly your child will be able to recognize and order the numbers you have posted!

Counting and 1:1 Correspondence

Children typically begin to rote count (saying numbers in a sequence from memory) before developing one-to-one correspondence. 1:1 correspondence is the ability to accurately coordinate the number names with the objects being counted.

Understanding 1:1 correspondence is necessary before a child can carry out meaningful counting and higher calculations. An effective way of teaching it is by modeling.

Slowly count a set of objects, touching each one as you say the number. Your child will see you matching number names to a set of objects.

Please remember that each child will develop these skills at a different rate! Multiple exposures and learning through play will be the key to their success.

Click the titles below to follow the circle-time links

Good Morning Numbers

Five Green & Speckled Frogs

Number Detective

Introduce the topic with DIY counting sticks!

Materials needed: Dry pasta (or beads), large popsicle sticks, glue gun and glue, playdough ([print our simple playdough recipe here](#)).

Activity instructions:

1. Use your glue gun to attach pieces of pasta to the popsicle sticks. Each stick will have a different number of pieces on it and label with the corresponding number.
2. Make some playdough with your child. Measuring, and counting as you ‘cook’ together.
3. Invite your child to press the sticks into the playdough, creating opportunities to explore number concepts and counting using one-to-one correspondence.

Questions and conversation during this activity:

- “Let’s try and make a number line, starting with 1, then 2, etc.” (see photo)
- “How many pieces do you have on that stick? Let’s count them together!”
- “What will happen if you press the #2 stick in a line with the #1 stick and count them all together? Let’s try it!”



Keep in mind your child’s skill level and make sure to set them up for success while challenging their abilities. Younger children may not yet be counting, but parents can count for them and model the language and actions of using one-to-one correspondence as your child explores. Older children can work on more advanced mathematical concepts like adding and subtracting.

Rock Puzzle (Literacy and Language)

Materials needed: Rocks, paper, permanent marker.

Activity Instructions:

1. Collect some rocks.
2. Trace the rock outlines onto a piece of paper.
3. Using your permanent marker, label each rock and it’s outline with a number and the corresponding amount of dots.
4. Invite your child to help you sort the rocks, matching them by number.

Older children can help you to make the numbers and dots on the rocks and will be able to match numbered rocks to dots on the paper. Make only a number on your rock and only dots on the outline to make this activity more difficult.



Peek-a-hoo Numbers (Literacy and Language)

Materials needed: Recycled wipes packages, sturdy cardboard, number stickers, glue gun.

Activity instructions:

- 1. Use your glue gun to stick the wipe package openings to the sturdy cardboard.
- 2. Open the flaps and stick a number sticker (or draw your own) on the cardboard.
- 3. Invite your child to explore recognizing numbers as they open and shut the flaps.



This activity is most appropriate for toddlers.

Counting Secret Poms (Math)

Materials needed: Muffin tray, post it notes, markers, pom poms or small items for counting.

Activity instructions:

- 1. Place a different number of pom poms inside each muffin cup.
- 2. Cover with a post-it note.
- 3. Invite your child to uncover the pom poms and use their markers to draw how many they find.



Older children can begin to form the number as well.

Counting Quantities (Math)

Materials needed: Toilet paper rolls, marker, sticks, glue, cardboard strip.

Activity instructions:

- 1. Glue your toilet paper rolls upright onto your cardboard strip.
- 2. Label the rolls in order 1-5/10/20 (depending on which numbers you are working on).
- 3. Collect some sticks and use them to count using one to one correspondence.
- 4. Invite your child to place the corresponding number of sticks into each roll using one-to-one correspondence.



Use a muffin tray, an egg carton or an ice cube tray if you don't have enough toilet paper rolls on hand.

Numbered Car Park (Math)

Materials needed: Cardboard box, markers, cars, masking tape (or paper and tape).

Activity instructions:

- 1. Use your marker to divide the box into parking spaces (consider the size of your child’s toy cars).
- 2. Label each parking space with a number and then label the corresponding car with the same number using masking tape and markers.
- 3. Invite your child to park all of their cars in their new parking garage as they recognize, sort and match numbers on their cars to the numbers on the parking spaces.



Finger Numbers (Sensory)

Materials needed: Rubber gloves, water.

Activity instructions:

- 1. Fill your rubber gloves with water and tie closed at the wrist. I usually make a knot, but a very tight elastic also works well.
For an added sensory experience, try adding hot water to one of the gloves and cold water to the other.
- 2. Invite your child to explore the gloves making representations of different numbers using the fingers. “Can you show me the number 2 with your rubber fingers?”
- 3. Try playing a game with your child. Both you and your child will each take a glove. Create a number by holding up an amount of fingers on the glove and invite your child to copy the number representation.

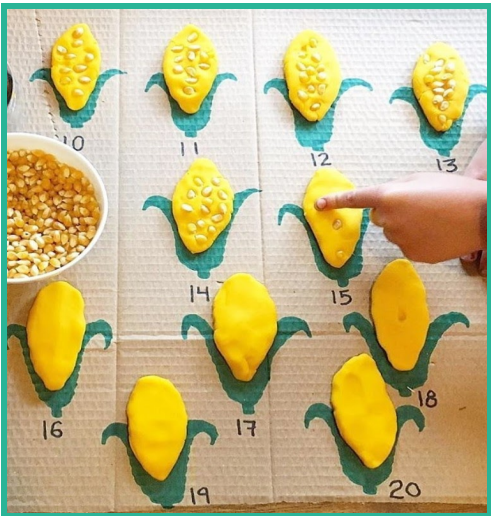


Counting Corn (Sensory)

Materials needed: Playdough, flattened cardboard box, popcorn kernels (or beads or beans or cheerios), green marker.

Activity Instructions:

- 1. Make oval shapes using yellow playdough.
- 2. Place them on your cardboard and use your green marker to make husks on either side of the yellow ovals (see photo) to make corn cobs.
- 3. Label each corn cob with a number (choose numbers that will challenge your child).
- 4. Invite your child to add corn kernels (or dried beans, cheerios or other counters) to the corn cobs, counting the correct amount onto each cob using one-to-one correspondence.



Fill the Dots (Science)

Materials needed: Dropper, coloured water in a small bowl, marker, ziplock bag.

Activity instructions:

- 1. Draw some different sized circles on a piece of paper and tuck the paper inside of a ziplock bag.
- 2. Help your child squeeze out any air and seal the bag, laying it flat on the table.
- 3. Fasten the bag to the table using tape so the bag doesn't move around while you're exploring with this activity.
- 4. Use your dropper to fill the dots with coloured water.
"How many drops will it take to fill the different sizes of circles?"
- 5. Count the drops as you add them using one-to-one correspondence.



Adapt this activity to play outside by using chalk to make circles on pavement. Use a turkey baster or spoon to count the amount of drops or scoops it will take to fill the circle.

Hole Punch Counting (Fine motor)

Materials needed: Coloured paper squares, hole punch, marker.

Activity instructions:

- 1. Use your marker to make numbers on your coloured paper squares or strips.
- 2. Invite your child to use a hole puncher to make holes in the papers as they count using one-to-one correspondence.
- 3. Match the number of holes to the number printed on the paper.

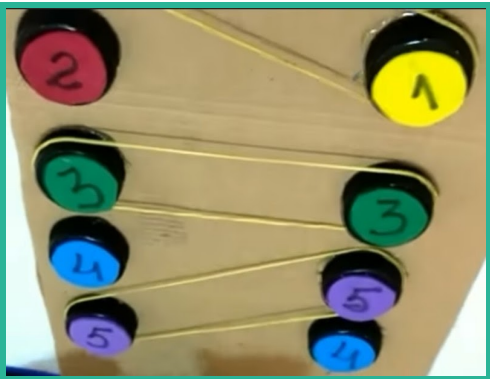


Elastic Lid Stretch (Fine motor)

Materials needed: Plastic bottle caps, marker, coloured paper (for toddlers), elastics, flattened cardboard box, glue gun and glue.

Activity instructions:

- 1. Glue the bottle caps along either edge of your cardboard.
- 2. Label the caps with numbers.
- 3. Mix them up a bit so that they are in different orders on either side.
- 4. Invite your child to stretch the elastics around the bottle caps with matching numbers.



Younger toddlers may find this activity a bit tricky. Set your toddler up for success by labelling the caps with colours associated to the numbers. For example,

both caps with the number 2 are yellow, both caps with number 4 are blue, etc.

Try using a muffin tin for this activity. Turn the tin upside down and use the muffin cups to stretch the elastics around. Use stickers to label the muffin tin with numbers, and stretch the elastics around the matching numbers.

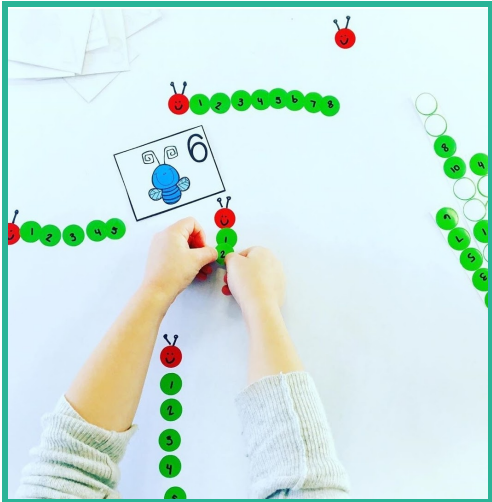


Caterpillar Counting (Creative):

Materials needed: Stickers, paper, black and red markers.

Activity instructions:

1. Use the red marker to make caterpillar heads on your paper.
2. Invite your child to add circles to make the rest of the caterpillar body.
3. Your stickers may be different colours or shapes.
4. Count using on-to-one correspondaence as your child adds stickers.
5. Use your marker to label the stickers with numbers.



If you don't have any stickers on hand, try using your finger and paint instead of stickers. Invite your child to dip their finger in paint and then dab it on the paper, counting each dot as you make the caterpillar's body. "How long can you make it?" (How high can they count?).



Hot Dog Stand (Dramatic play)

Dramatic play promotes the development of higher level thinking skills, problem solving, language development and so much more! When your child engages in dramatic play they are developing critical skills across all learning domains such as language and literacy, science, cultural, social and emotional, fine and gross motor, and even math skills!

Set up a hot dog stand or cart for your child. Order items from your child in quantities to create counting opportunities. Discuss healthy food choices.

- Make sure to incorporate print into your child's play. Try using open and closed signs, seating signs, an hours of operation sign, order forms and name tags.
- Make a menu together using pictures and words. Cut pictures from flyers or draw your own.
- Cut pieces of food out of felt (or paper) to make different types of food. Consider using items like popsicle sticks for french fries or stuffed nylons for giant sausages.



- Re-use some of the props from your restaurant. Gather some recyclables and items from your kitchen. Consider an egg carton, muffin tray, an empty dish soap bottle, an apron, a hat, sunglasses, a wallet or purse, order forms/notepad and a pencil, empty ingredient packages, sealed containers with coloured rice and beans to use as pretend toppings.
- Make play money, labelled with numbers, and label your cash register to sort and match the numbers as customers pay. Attach or add a calculator.
- Whether it's on a kitchen scale or a floor scale, find things from around the house to weigh. It's a fun visual tool to learn about both numbers and measurement. For younger children, try using (or making) your own balancing scale. It's easy to make your own with only a clothes hanger, string and 2 paper cups.



Bean Bag Toss (Movement)

Materials needed: Paper, tape, markers, bean bags.

Make your own bean bags by filling a small ziplock bag with rice. Cover the entire bag with duct tape, sealing it shut in the process. Use a permanent marker to label each bean bag with a number (using numerals and dots to represent the number - ie: 5 ●●●●●).

Activity instructions:

1. Label each step with a number using paper markers and tape.
2. Start at the second or third step with #1 and move up the steps with each following number.
3. Invite your child to toss the bean bags and match the numbers. For example, toss the bean bag marked '1 ●' onto the step labelled with '1 ●'

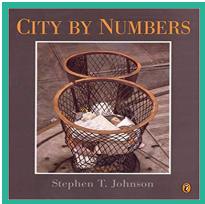
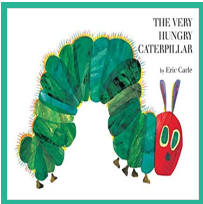


Book Recommendations: (click the titles below to follow the Amazon links)

[The Very Hungry Caterpillar - by: Eric Carle](#)

[City by Numbers – by: Stephen T. Johnson](#)

[My Granny Went to Market - by: Stella Blackstone](#)



Try reusing some of the activities from our ABC Pack and converting them into number activities!

- Stick number stickers in the bottom of a baking tray and cover with salt, rice or corn flour. Invite your child to uncover the numbers with a paintbrush, helping them to become familiar with the shape and form of the number. Or use your finger to make numbers and marks in the salt/flour/rice tray.
- Go on a number hunt! Search for numbers on a neighbourhood walk or around your home. Make your own simple number matching and counting games.
- Make an 'I Spy Numbers Bottle'. Add numbers to an empty water bottle and fill with rice. Invite your child to shift the rice around to unveil the numbers.
- Paint numbers on the sidewalk with water or use chalk to make the numbers and have your child trace them! Use playdough to form numbers, or make numbers using your blocks.
- Match numbers around your home or use your colour paddle to make a number detective game!



We hope you have enjoyed these activities!

Please let us know if you have any comments or suggestions and feel free to share your photos and stories about these activities!

Activity Pack created and produced by Mary Wolff
©Copyright ®All Rights Reserved



LEARNING THROUGH PLAY WITH
Smart Cookie Club
EVERY DAY!