

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 a game of 'Five little speckled frogs'. Encourage your child/children to choose items such as pillows and a table cloth, or a location in garden to represent the log and the pool. Invite your child/children to act out the song by crouching down as a frog and leaping into the pool, as you sing. Encourage them to join in the song and to work out how many frogs are left after each verse, 'There was three, then you jumped in Alexander. How many frogs are left on the log now?' Your child/children may like to use soft toys if there are not enough people to be five frogs.
- Invite your child/children to help make kebabs from healthy foods such as fruit, vegetables and cheese. Use the opportunity to draw your child/children's attention to mathematical concepts including counting, four, five, six. 'My skewer is full. How many pieces did you fit on yours Jake?', 'So you have six pieces on yours too – three grapes and three pieces of rockmelon.'
- Encourage your child/children to help fold and put away the clean washing. This provides a great opportunity to engage mathematical learning including:
 - Sorting – by purpose (things we wear, things we use around the house), by category (tee shirts, shorts, undies, pyjamas), by owner (mummy's, daddy's, mine), by colour or pattern
 - Counting – how many in each category, how many altogether
 - Matching – socks, pyjama tops and bottoms

Resources

'Five little speckled frogs' (action song)
Five little speckled frogs,
Sat on a speckled log,
Eating the most delicious bugs, yum, yum.
One jumped into the pool,
Where it was nice and cool.
Then there were four speckled frogs.
(continue until only one frog is left)
One little speckled frog,
Sat on a speckled log,
Eating the most delicious bugs, yum, yum.
He jumped into the pool
Where it was nice and cool.
Now there are no speckled frogs.

Video

One two cockatoo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l07acB0Bj10>

Text: Garson, S. 2009, *One Two Cockatoo!* Anderson Press, London.

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 are the seven cockatoos jumping in? (puddles)
2. What are the eight cockatoos doing here? (hanging upside down on a branch)
3. What do you think the cockatoos might do now there is a baby cockatoo?
4. Why are the six cockatoos huddled together? (it is raining)

Play ideas to try

- G Talk about going on a safari in your garden. Encourage your child/children to choose or make items they may need, for example binoculars, camera, map, hat, pencils and paper. When 'on safari', notice the birds and other small creatures in your garden such as lizards, insects and spiders. Encourage your child/children to draw what they see or take photos. Look for opportunities for your child/children to count, for example the number of birds they have seen or the number of different creatures, 'A cockatoo, a magpie, a lizard and a ladybug – that's four. How many butterflies did you see?'
- Taking inspiration from the water colour illustrations in the story, explore wax resist painting with your child/children. You will need paper, crayons or a candle, paint brushes and water-based paint (e.g. paint disc palettes, food colour). In this process, you draw with a crayon or candle then paint over it with water colour. The wax in the crayon or candle resists the paint, allowing the picture to stand out, and creating interesting colours and textures. White candle is especially fun as it goes on clear and only shows up when the paint is added. Show and talk to your child/children about the process and why it happens. Invite them to create their own wax resist paintings.
- Together with your child/children, create an obstacle course using ideas from on the story. Share creative ways to represent what the cockatoos did in the story, for example climbing up and over a child's portable step (tree), flapping arms and flying crawling under a table (huddling out of the rain), jumping in a shallow tub of water (puddles). Encourage your child/children to explore different ways to move their bodies to represent the story, or create new adventures for the cockatoos on the obstacle course.