Wondermaths

Counting That Means Something

A visual guide to real amounts



For parents of children around ages 5–7.

Let Me Try · PWA3 · Book 1

Choose a small idea

Words and real amounts 3

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Make and finish an order 6

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Saying it. Making it.

100

“I can count to 100!”

Enjoy the number words.



“Please bring three.”

Now the words describe real spoons.



Three altogether

The last word names the whole group.



A long count and making an amount are different tasks.

One move. One number.



One sock

Move it aside. Say “one.”



Two socks

Move the next. Say “two.”



Three socks

Each sock gets one number.



Try today: count three socks into a finished pile.

The last word means all



One

Touch one counter.



Two

Touch the second counter.



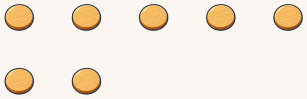
Three altogether

Circle the whole group with your hand.



Checking again is welcome. It is not a failure.

Let the child finish



Start with a supply

Ask for three. Leave the rest available.



Make the delivery

Your child chooses three and stops.

3

Check the order

“Did we make the amount Bear asked for?”



Use an open mat, so the child decides when to stop.

Longer row. Same six.



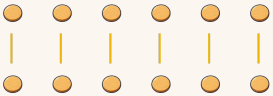
Count six

Keep every counter visible.



Spread them out

No counters arrived or left.



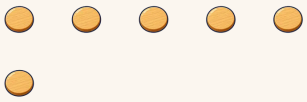
Check with partners

Each row still has six.



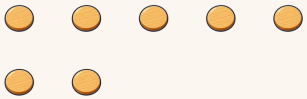
“Did we add any, or just make bigger spaces?”

Now the amount changes



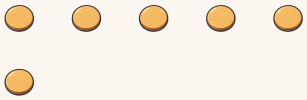
Start with six

Count or arrange them together.



Add one counter

Now there are seven.



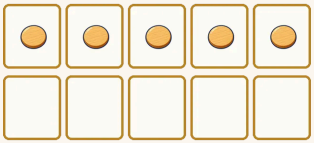
Take that one away

Six remain.



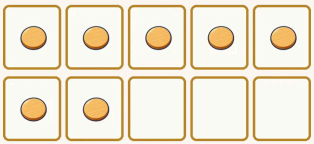
Moving changes the arrangement. Adding changes the amount.

Five, and two more



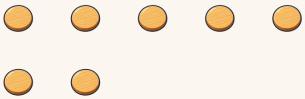
A full row of five

One counter in each space.



Two more join

Five and two make seven.



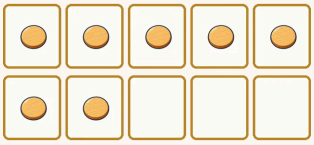
Seven without the frame

The same amount in a new arrangement.



Let your child count every counter if that helps.

Seven here. Three waiting.



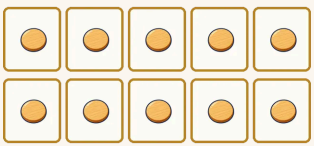
Seven filled

Three spaces are empty.



Bring three more

Match one to each empty space.



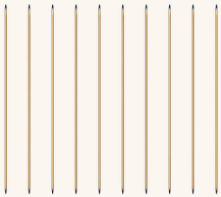
Ten altogether

The whole frame is full.



Use exactly ten spaces. Cover any extra carton cups.

One bundle. Ten straws.



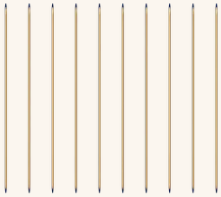
Ten loose straws

Count them before tying.



One bundle

The same ten are inside.



Open and check

Untying did not add or remove straws.



“One what?” One bundle, or ten individual straws.

Build fourteen



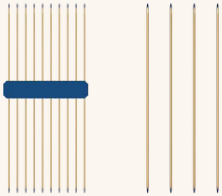
One ten

A checked bundle of ten.



Four ones

Four loose straws beside it.



Fourteen

10 + 4 = 14.



Put the label 14 beside what your child built.

Two ideas for today



1. A spoon delivery

Ask for six. Your child chooses when the delivery is finished.



2. A finished pile

Move three socks aside, one for each number.



Easier: ask for three spoons and count together.

A match for each one



3. Words with steps

Say one number per ordinary step. Keep a safe pace.



4. One for each

Offer four counters and four drawn spots. Match, then count.



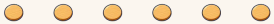
Pointing or moving a toy can replace walking.

Order, then rearrange



5. Bear's order

Make a delivery of five. Next, let your child order.



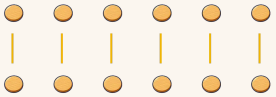
6. A stretching row

Spread the same six counters. Check the amount.



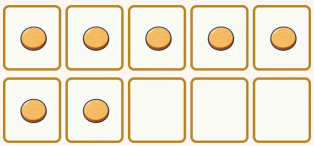
"How could we check?" Leave the objects available.

Partners and empty places



7. Find partners

Match six counters to six others. Does every one have a partner?



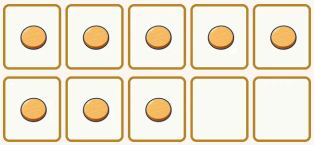
8. Waiting places

Find the three empty spaces. Fill them if your child wishes.



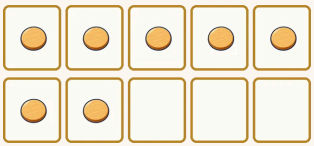
Easier: use three partners or one empty place.

Look inside ten



9. Two spaces waiting

Eight filled spaces leave two empty.



10. Five and some more

Five above and two below make seven.



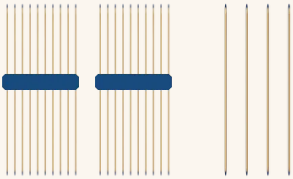
Try today: build eight, then find what completes ten.

Pack it, then check it



11. Open the bundle

Untie ten straws, count them, and tie the same ten again.



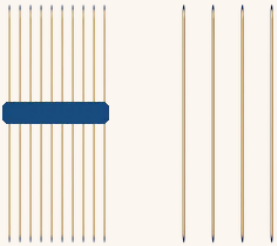
12. A packing station

Two full tens and four ones make twenty-four.



Open a bundle whenever checking would help.

Show a way to check



13. Make a drawing

Build fourteen. Draw its ten and four ones.



14. Choose a method

Make a row, move a counted pile, or count together.



The child can point, speak, or direct your movements.

Help in small steps



Wait

“Take your time. I’m here.”



Show one move

“I’ll move one. Would you like the next turn?”



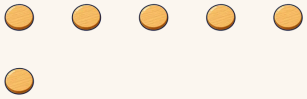
Do it together

Share the moving and counting.



Use only the help needed. Hand the turn back.

Smaller, together, or stop



This feels hard

“Would a smaller group help?”



Make it smaller

Try three instead of six.



Stop if wanted

“We can leave it here.”



A correct answer is not the price of being finished.

Three useful replies



“Can I count again?”

“Yes. Let’s check.”



“Can we open it?”

“Yes. We can see what’s inside.”



“I’m done.”

“Okay. We can stop.”



Checking and asking for help can be useful choices.

Notice what helped



A useful arrangement

“Moved every counted sock aside.”



A chosen check

“Opened a bundle to check ten.”



A smaller hint

“Made three after one demonstration.”



Describe the task and help. One moment is not a diagnosis.

A sentence for the teacher



What happened

“Making six spoons needed a little help.”



What helped

“Moving each spoon onto a mat helped.”



“What helps in class? What small thing could we try together?”

Sources, briefly

Teaching Math to Young Children

Frye and colleagues, 2013. Official IES guidance on early number learning.

Read the source

These home examples are practical adaptations, not individually tested programs. Choose what fits your child.

Keep useful tools nearby

Place value develops in parts

Mix and colleagues, 2022. Different number skills can develop unevenly.

Read the source



Book 2 explores tens, ones, zero, and distance. Return to small amounts whenever they help.