

Early Level Number activities

Activity	Description
Answer is.....what is the question?	Child is given a number and must find calculations which fit it.
Band Aids	A "Show Me" activity using elastic band strips (a strip of card, graduated on one side and blank on the other, with an elastic band around it). Child shows where the number is on the blank side, e.g. If one end is zero and the other end is ten, where will five be? Next, turn the strip over to check how accurate their estimate is.
Behind the Wall	Adult slowly slides a number/ shape up behind a cardboard "wall" and stops when part of it is showing. Child shows/tells the adult what the number/shape might be and discuss alternatives. Adult reveals the next part of the number/shape and repeats "Show/Tell Me" activity. This continues until the whole number/shape is revealed.
Bingo	Child draws a square grid of a specified size then fill their grid with numbers as requested (numbers to 20, even numbers etc.) Adult calls out pairs of numbers. Child adds these numbers and crosses out any answers which they've written on their square. Alternatively, the adult can call out specific calculations (e.g. double 13...26 minus 10)
Chain Sums	Childs sit with their eyes closed. Adult gives a chain sum, e.g. $4 + 7 - 2$; $3 + 5 - 7$; $9 - 7 + 5$ etc Child opens eyes and shares the answer.
Cube Towers	Child follows instructions using language of position to build towers from coloured cubes.
Dead Stop	Child counts forwards or backwards within an appropriate number range and stop when they've counted a certain number of jumps, e.g. count back from 16 to 11 in ones, forwards in even numbers etc. Alternatively, give child starting and finishing numbers and size of jump. Independently, count within these numbers, then say how many jumps have been counted, e.g. Jump on from 0 to 70 in tens. How many jumps?
Find my Rule	Draw two boxes, each containing a list of around six numbers. Tell the child there is one rule for putting numbers in the box on the left and a different rule for putting numbers in the box on the right. Reveal the numbers in each box one row at a time. What could the rule(s) be?
Finger Flash	Child uses fingers to show numbers quickly, without counting. "Quick as a flash, show me..." Alternatively, show child a number of fingers up to 5 to show the complement.
Function Machines	Draw a simple function machine. Choose a function, e.g. +2 and write this on the machine. Play "Show Me" to match which number comes out, e.g. Show me which number will come out if I put in 6. Alternatively, tell child which number is going to come out of the machine and ask them to show which number went in.

Guess My Number	Adult thinks of a number but does not reveal it. She/he then gives one fact about the number, e.g. it is odd. Child tries to guess the number and writes down possible answers. Adult provides further facts about the number, one by one, with child's suggestions being shown after each fact until the number has been guessed.
Handfuls	Adult has 5 counting objects. He/she puts some objects in one hand and the rest in the other then opens one hand to show how many are there. Ask child how many are hidden in the closed hand.
Individual Numbers	Child places numbers 1-10 in order and find pairs which add to 10. Place 2 sets of numbers face down and take turns with the child to turn over pairs of cards, if the numbers add to 10, that player can keep them.
Number Lines	Use for: counting on and back in single numbers or multiples; estimating position of numbers; order, equivalence and value of whole numbers.
Pendulum Count	Counting on and back to match the swing of a pendulum.
Save the Cat!	Write down a number within a certain range, e.g. 0 - 20 but don't let the child see it. Next he/she must try to guess the number by asking no more than nine questions i.e. the child must save the cat before it runs out of lives!
Say It Quickly	Child says amounts shown on spot cards/die quickly, without any apparent counting.
Show Me	Child uses visual resources to show the answer simultaneously in response to a question.
Silent Counting	Child counts silently along to a regular rhythm (e.g. clapping) but only says out loud every 2 nd or 3 rd number.
Songs & Raps	Child sings or invents songs and raps (with or without actions) to help recall of number facts.
Target Ten	Challenge child to find as many different ways as possible to make the number ten.
Tell Me About	Give a number, shape name etc and ask each child to give a different fact about it.
Thigh Clap	Child claps thighs, hands then snap fingers (or other actions) while counting on or backwards by different amounts. Vary the pace by asking child to respond on the second snap only, on both snaps or on every action.
Too Big, Too Small	Adult writes a number range on a piece of paper, e.g. 0 – 100. Child thinks of a number within that range. The response from the first adult can only be "too big" or "too small". The child then thinks of the next number. After a few rounds ask child to think of a good strategy for working out the number with the fewest guesses.