Everyday Math

Finding Math

Using STEM Language in Everyday Activities

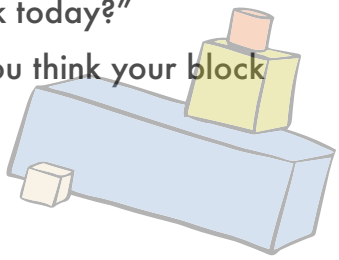
We all use math so often in our everyday lives that it becomes a habit – we don't always realize we are using it! This guide will introduce you to common early math concepts and help you learn to incorporate STEM language into everyday interactions with children.

1 Estimating

Estimating is a helpful skill that helps us answer everyday questions quickly. You might estimate how much time it takes to heat up leftovers, how many groceries will fit in your basket, or how long it will take to bike to work. An estimate is an educated guess!

To practice estimating, try this!

- "How long do you think it will take to walk to school?"
- "How many dogs do you think we will see at the park today?"
- "How tall do you think your block tower is?"



2 Sorting

Think about the last time you sorted something. Did you sort groceries into items for the fridge and items for the cupboard? Your laundry into items for the closet and items for the dresser? Sorting helps us organize information and make sense of our world.

To practice sorting, try this!

- "Can you help me put the groceries away? What goes in the fridge?"
- "Let's put your clean clothes in your dresser! Where do your socks go? Your shirts?"
- "Look at all the colorful fruit in our fruit bowl! Can we sort them by color?"

3 Telling Time

Look at the time! Our sports matches, cook times, and schedules depend on our understanding of time. Young children learn to tell time by relating it to their experiences. Larger concepts of time, like "5 hours" or "12 days" are harder to grasp, so start small!

To practice telling time, try this!

- "In 5 minutes, we will clean up and have a snack."
- "1...2...3...your slide took 3 seconds!"
- "When the big hand and the little hand point to the 12, it's lunch time!"

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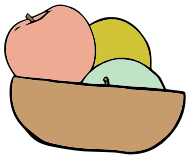
Spatial Awareness

Spatial awareness is all about understanding how your body interacts with the world! Children learn spatial awareness through experience, while building, playing movement games, or learning relational language. Relational language are words that describe where things are, like "above/below," "front/back," or "next to."



To practice spatial awareness, try this!

- "Let's see how many apples we can fit in this bowl."
- "Step to your left! Now step to your right!"
- "Can you move next to the bookshelf?"

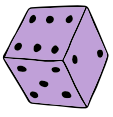
One-to-One Correspondence

When we understand that numbers correspond to specific quantities, we have mastered one-to-one correspondence. For example, if a recipe calls for 2 eggs, we know exactly how many eggs we need. Children practicing one-to-one correspondence usually point at or touch the objects as they count.

To practice one-to-one correspondence, try this!

- "Let's count our toys as we put them away."
- "Let's count and tap the board on each space as we move our game pieces."
- "How many eggs are left in the carton? Let's count!"

Subitizing



When you roll a die, do you have to count the dots, or do you just know? This "just knowing" is subitizing! Sometimes, subitizing is recognizing a pattern, like the dots on the die. We subitize anytime we look at a small group of items and know how many there are without counting them.

To practice subitizing, try this!

- "How many bananas do we have in the fruit bowl?"
- "How many fingers am I holding up?"
- "How many buttons are on your shirt?"