

Getting started.

Prepare a set of number cards covering a range just beyond that which the children are comfortable with. Include some blank cards and a wipe off pen. Shape the cards according to the children's interests.

Leave the basket of numbered flowers, leaves, clothes or other items next to a washing line with sufficient pegs or an open space if connections such as beanstalk, road or pathway provided.

Possible Context.

Jack and the Beanstalk - numbered beanstalk leaves.

Transport - numbered vehicles.

Ourselves - numbered feet.

Let the children take the lead in this activity. Allow plenty of time for exploration.

To make this activity less adult led, simply leave the children to do as they wish with the numbers. You could observe from a distance. If you want to ask the children any questions, try to wait until they choose to move away from the activity.

Watch the QCDA video The numberline to see what might happen.

<http://www.qcda.gov.uk/vid>

Ordering numbers.

If a child who is struggling to identify what comes next, start singing a familiar counting song with them but let the child decide how to respond to the song. Look out for children who confuse particular numerals or peg them upside down.

Some of the possible routes they might take.

Ordering numbers

Comparing numbers

Identifying missing numbers

Odd and even

Odd and even.

Numbered feet are ideal for this. After children have arranged the feet in order so that they can step on them to count, challenge them to collect all the feet they step on with one foot, then the other. Encourage the children to talk about what is the same and different about each collection.

Identifying missing numbers.

Look out for any gaps left. Ask children why they have left a gap and how they are going to fill it. Remove a number from the collection to cause a gap if necessary. Give enough time for children to do something about the missing number before you get involved.

In addition to these Mathematical observations you will have opportunities to observe other aspects of the EYFS Themes and Commitments. You may like to print off this sheet as an aide, on which you can not down what individual children say and do as they engage with the activity.

Please do send us photo, further suggestions and comments.

Comparing numbers.

TextLook out for children who move higher numbers along the line for later or sort numbers into groups ready for setting out or pegging on the line.