

Making Counting Accessible During Routines and Transitions

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- Building learning into existing routines and transitions is an effective way to engage children through repetition and predictability (Jenning, Hanline, & Woods, 2012). By incorporating **Counting** into everyday routines and transitions, the learner is offered multiple opportunities to practice these skills throughout authentic and diverse environments.

Embedding Counting into Routines

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| Centers/Free Play | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up multiple opportunities for children to engage with Counting during free play or classroom centers. Model and encourage children to count how many blocks are in their tower in the Blocks Center or how many pieces of pizza there are in the Dramatic Play Center. Put small toys in a sensory bin and say, “I hid 11 dinosaurs in the rice. Can you find them all?” If children are allowed to move freely between centers, limit how many can be at each center at a time. For example, you may say no more than four per center. Have the children count and maintain the correct group sizes themselves. |
| Snack and Shared Mealtimes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage children to engage with the trajectory during mealtimes. Include a balance of teacher-led questions and peer-led discussion. If you are serving children food, count how many scoops you give them. If they are serving themselves, encourage them to do the same. Encourage children to count their food at snack time. Expand to include questions, estimation, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “How many goldfish do you have now that you ate one?” “How many grapes do you think I have in my bag? Why? Let’s see!” “You have five carrots! How many will there be if you eat two?” |
| Outdoor Time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight counting outside of the classroom. Challenge children to see how many rungs on the monkey bars they can swing or how many hops it takes to get across the basketball court. Dependent upon the student’s level, encourage them to use skip counting. Gather children in a circle and pass the ball. Count as you pass and see how many you can get in a row without the ball dropping. |
| Story Time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate Counting into class read-alouds. Any book can be used, even if it does not explicitly describe Counting. Pause frequently to discuss Counting with the students and hold space at the end to summarize the reading as a group. Books about counting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My Granny Went to Market by Stella Blackstone Doggies by Sandra Boyton On the Launch Pad by Michael Dahl Fish Eyes by Lois Ehlert Ask math questions about any book: |

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- “How many animals are on this page? Can you help me count them?”
- “Please pick three books off the shelf for us to read.”
- “My goal is to read thirty pages today. It’s easier for me to think about it in smaller chunks though. How many tens of pages do I have to read to get to thirty? Ten, twenty... What’s your goal?”

Embedding Counting into Transitions

- Incorporate songs that focus on counting into transitions. For example, sing *One, Two Buckle My Shoe* as children line up for recess. Encourage them to join you.
- If you are leaving to go somewhere else, have children count off by each saying an assigned number in order. This will help practice counting skills and make sure you have your whole group. You can also count backward, or skip count this way.
- At cleanup time, have children count how many toys they can put away before the cleanup song is over.
- If you need to fill time while waiting, play counting “I Spy.” For example, “I spy with my little eye something with three wheels and one seat.” To which the children might say, “Tricycle!”
- Provide different ways for children to move their bodies during a transition time (i.e., walk, hop, skip, knee-high walk, etc.) and have them count how many times they had to complete that movement to get to their destination. Increase the challenge by having children count with different units (2s, 5s, 10s).
- Give children different objects to count as they walk down the hall, like windows, doors, or people they pass. Ask how many they counter when you reach the destination.