



Using Your Hands and Fingers in Math

Count with me!

Beginner: Using fingers or a tool, count small objects one at a time as you put them into an empty container with a hole cut into the lid, or a bowl.

[Tip]: Encourage the child to pick up items using only their pointer finger and thumb.

Intermediate: Have your child draw groups of items, varying in number, on small pieces of paper. Have the child say the number of items on each piece as they drop them into an empty container.

[Tip]: For an extra challenge, get your child to put the pieces of paper in order from one to ten before dropping them into the box/container/bowl. Your child can also write the number (ex. 1) and word corresponding with the number (ex. one) on the back of each piece of paper after you are done with the activity.

Experienced: Have your child write numbers onto paper, then cut each one out. Have the child say each number as they drop the paper into a container or bowl one at a time.

[Tip]: After putting the numbers into the box/container/bowl, mix them up and put them in order after taking them out.

Why is this important? Strength in using your fine motor skills is linked to better learning outcomes in math.

References: Cameron, C. E., Cottone, E. A., Murrah, W. M., & Grissmer, D. W. (2016). How are motor skills linked to children's school performance and academic achievement? *Child Development Perspectives*, 10(2), 93–98.

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