

FAMILY MATH

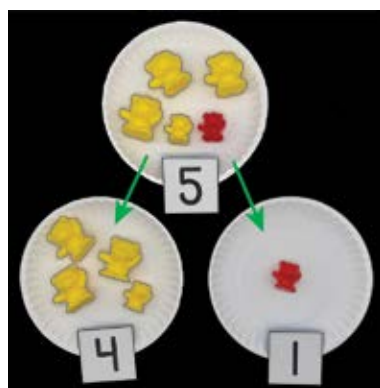
Decompose Numbers

Dear Family,

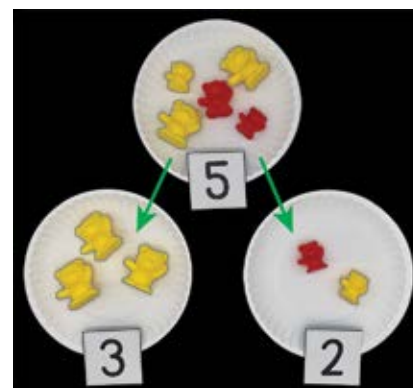
Your child is learning about the relationship between numbers by sorting objects in more than one way. You might be thinking, Why are we still sorting? Sorting is a way to see how numbers can be broken into parts. For example, 5 bears can be sorted into 4 yellow bears and 1 red bear. The number sentence *5 is 4 and 1* represents this situation. 5 bears can also be sorted into 3 big bears and 2 small bears. Your child might say, “5 is 3 and 2” to represent this sort.

Invite your child to show you counting the math way—a new way they are learning to count on their fingers.

**Words We
Are Learning**
number sentence



Sorting by color—5 is 4 and 1.



Sorting by size—5 is 3 and 2.

At-Home Activities

Activity Idea 1 Sorting Different Ways

Give your child a group of 4 or 5 items, such as toys, markers, or coins, that they can sort into different categories by color, shape, or size. Let your child decide how to sort. Then ask the following questions to help your child think about the total number of objects and the number in each group.

- How many _____ are there?
- How many groups did you make?
- How many are in this group?

Put the objects back into a pile. Ask your child to sort in a different way, and then ask the same questions. Did this sort result in the same number of groups?

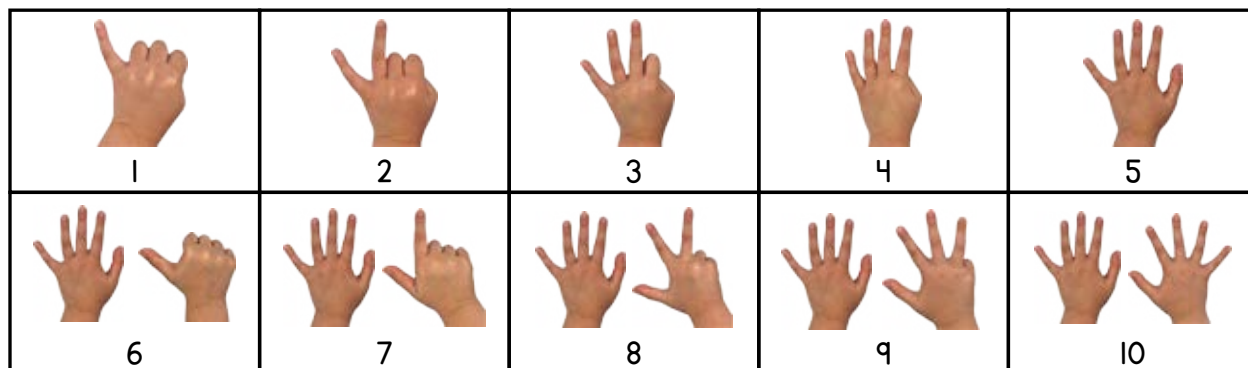
Activity Idea 2 Nature Hunt

Ask your child to find ways to sort or count objects while taking a walk or driving. For example, “I see 4 trees. 3 are big, and 1 is small.” If possible, collect objects like leaves, pine cones, or rocks for sorting and re-sorting later.

Counting the Math Way

Using fingers for math is not babyish. In fact, young children who are able to represent numbers or problems on their fingers do better with counting, comparing numbers, and estimating in later years. Early work with fingers builds a part of the brain that is used for arithmetic. Students learn to “see” a representation of fingers in their brains even when they don’t use their fingers to solve problems.

Your child is learning to count from 1 to 5 the math way, starting with their left pinkie finger and lifting one finger at a time until they reach their thumb.



In counting the math way, students can see and feel the number of fingers increase as they count from 1 to 10, moving from the left pinkie to the right pinkie without interruption. This left-to-right movement will be familiar when children begin to use tools such as the number path and, in later grades, the number line. Think of this work as push-ups for the brain!