

Math for Preschoolers

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Mathematical concepts for preschoolers include counting/comparing quantities, shapes, and measurement/comparing sizes. Math can be added in a variety of ways throughout the day.

Have preschool children take their own attendance when they arrive in the morning, whether it's moving a photo of themselves to the side of the board that says *at school* or marking an x by their name.

When you begin circle time, start with attendance. "How many friends do we have today?" Count the photos with the children or the "X" next to each name. "We have 16 friends in class today." Count those children who are missing. "We have two friends missing."

As the children gain practice with this type of activity, change it up. We have 18 friends, but only 16 friends are here. How many are missing? This sets the foundation for addition and subtraction.

Preschool children love to compare how much they have with each other. Use that to your advantage. "I have four crackers and so does Ian. If I eat one cracker, then I only have three, Ian will have more than me. If he eats one, then he has three and we will have the same." Talk about comparing.

Timers are great to use but explain what they mean. "I'm setting the timer for two minutes. We cleaned up in two minutes. That was fast."

Counting children in line is a great math activity. Often teachers do a quick count. Let the children be a part of it, whether they count the whole group with you, or each child says the next number.

Math materials are only good if they are used. If little counting bears become dramatic play, then it is not math. Are the bears being counted, classified by size or color, compared in any way?

There are many ways to include math regularly in your schedule. Graphs and charts are an easy way to plan for math. Make sure charts and graphs have written numbers on them and signify what they represent on the graph. For example, a chart where each child adds a red, green, or yellow cut-out of an apple shows what each student likes, but without the numbers, does it show math? Twelve children like red apples best, six like yellow and two like green. Now one can count the number of children who like each color best and compare which has the most or least, more than, less than and number



of each. Graphs can easily be done each week based on theme, season, month, holidays, or anything else that comes to mind.

For more ideas, visit Learning is Everywhere, a resource that provides additional math activities based on Pennsylvania Learning Standards.

Resources:

<http://letstalkqualitypa.com/>

papromiseforchildren.com/learning-is-everywhere