

How many are in your Set?

Math skills for ages 4 & 5



Purpose: To help the child or children learn to recognize sets of 0 to 5 objects; eventually, without counting them.

Materials: Six sheets of light colored construction paper. On each sheet of paper, lay a set of 0 to 5 objects beside each corresponding number symbol represented. Objects may include crayons, erasers, buttons, money, keys, cookies, nuts, cereal, etc. Things like “marbles” could roll out of place and confuse the concept we are attempting to teach, so don’t use things that can roll. Also, lay out six 3 x 5 cards with the numerals ‘0’ through ‘5’ printed on them, as well. One number for each card.

Procedure: Either on the floor or a table, sat the child/children in a circle around the objects you’ve placed there. Select different children to count the number of objects on the papers and place the correct number symbol (index card) next to it. If it’s only you and one child, you can take a turn showing the child how it’s done. Do this several times, talking about the differences in the sizes of the Sets and eventually, urging the child/children to make their “best guess” as to how many objects are on each paper without taking the time to count each one.

Evaluation: Take away a counter and choose a child (or your child) to tell you how many...as you point. Take away all counters and as you point to different ones, ask “how many?” Don’t forget to include the word “zero” and the symbol “0” in your exercise of ‘Sets’.