

Perry the Puppet Learns to Count

Perry the Puppet is learning to count, but he sometimes makes mistakes. In this activity, the children listen to Perry as he tries to say the number names in order and connect number names to counting objects. The children will help Perry learn to count by identifying his errors such as skipping or repeating a number name and skipping or double counting objects.

Connecting to the CCSSM: K.CC.1, K.CC.2, K.CC.4, K.CC.5, MP.2, MP.6, MP.7, MP.8

Materials and Preparation

- Create a sock or paper bag puppet
- Objects for counting—counters, blocks, children, books, etc.

Activity

- Introduce Perry the Puppet to the class. Let the children know that Perry has asked to visit their classroom so he can learn how to count. Watch and listen while he is counting. Help him when he makes a mistake and congratulate him when he counts correctly.
- Perry the Puppet can make regular appearances throughout the year as the children's counting skills improve. Ask children to say "stop" as soon as they hear an error. Ask someone to politely explain to Perry the error he made. The whole class and Perry can count correctly. Be sure that Perry counts correctly on occasion. The following are types of errors that Perry might make:
 - Number names without counting objects: Including counting forward from 1 or any other given number, skip counting by tens and counting backward. Skipping numbers (1, 2, 3, 5 ... or 5, 4, 2, 1)



Repeating number names (1, 2, 3, 3, 4 ... or 10, 9, 8, 8, 7 ...)

Saying number names in the wrong order (5, 6, 9, 7, 8, ... or 10, 8, 9, 7 ...)

Incorrect names for teen numbers (“thirteen, fourteen, fiveteen”; “eighteen, nineteen, tenteen”; “twenty-nine, twenty-ten”)

- Number names and cardinality with objects: Place objects in a line, in a circle or randomly arranged. Double count an object using the correct word sequence or, when arranged in a circle, continue counting the whole set again. Skip an object using the correct word sequence.

Combine number name errors and one-to-one correspondence errors.

Supporting Their Thinking

- Children can often notice counting errors made by other children more easily than their own. This activity helps them spot errors immediately and then repeat the counting correctly with support from the whole class. Having Perry (rather than the teacher) make the mistakes provides a context where children have to politely explain the error to someone (or rather something) that is still learning.

Variations

- Later in the year, Perry may also want to learn to join and separate small sets. Using the same process, children can help Perry learn to move from counting all objects starting from 1 to counting on from a known set size.