

WORLD WITHOUT NUMBER

Purpose

- To focus on how numbers are used and applied in everyday life, eg labelling, counting, ordering
- To help develop problem-solving skills towards asking and responding to the question "What would happen if ...?"
- Looking for alternatives to overcome difficulties
- Carrying out tasks which allow opportunities for choice

Introducing the Topic

- Who can see any numbers in this classroom? Where? What do we need those numbers for? Could we manage without them? What could we use instead?
- Has anyone said a number today? When? What for? Could you have said something else instead of using a number?
- Did any of you use any numbers before you came to school today? Why? What for?

Questions During Activities

- What could you try using instead?
- What might you need?
- Do you think it will work?
- Can you make the task more challenging?
- Could you make it easier to start with?
- How might you find out?
- Can you find some more?
- Who could you ask?

Things To Think About

- If numbers were called a b c ... instead of 1 2 3 ... how old would you be?
- Do you use any numbers when you go swimming, shopping, on the bus? What for?
- In a World Without Numbers: How would you know when it was your birthday? How could you use a telephone?

Experiences to build on

- Independence
- Children making own decisions
- Uses of number in their lives

Organizational Points

- Pairs of children may need to move around the class, school or go outside.

Assessment Observations

- Are the children contributing to discussions about where numbers are to be found around them and at home?
- Are the children curious? Do some ask, "What would happen in their everyday lives without numbers?"
- Are the children able to offer some suggestions for alternatives to numbers where appropriate?
- Are the children able to try out their own ideas within an 'open' task? (It is not important if their ideas actually work.)

Before showing the video clip

- Look around you
- What numbers do you see?

What you may need

- Chalk for hopscotch grid
- Paper
- Pencil
- Crayon

Things to do

- Try playing hopscotch without numbers
- Make a Number Day Book – draw pictures of all the numbers you use in one day
- Try playing hide and seek without numbers. What do we use numbers for? What else could we use instead?
- Try not saying any numbers for the rest of the day
- Find something in your class/school that uses numbers as labelling, eg pegs, classes. Invent a different way of labelling it. Try it out.
- Go on a Number Hunt. Choose a number. How many examples of it can you find in the school? Record where you find them all. What are they used for?

More Activities

- Can you find out how many objects of a particular type there are WITHOUT counting?
- Go "number spotting" at home. Record all the numbers you find. What are they used for?
- Find a number line. Make a number disappear. Ask a friend which number has gone.

Ideas for the whole class

- **No Numbers Day**
 - 'Numbers are not allowed today. We mustn't see them, say them or write them!' Children could find all the numbers the day before and cover them up where possible, eg clocks, number lines. Finish the day with 'What was difficult without numbers?' 'What do we use numbers for?'
- **A Number Walk**
 - Go on a class walk around the school grounds or along nearby streets. What numbers can children spot? What are they used for?
- **A Number Assembly**
 - Numbers are used in as many ways as possible eg seating positions for classes, teachers, hymns, stories, or one number is used in many different ways.
- **A Class Book of Numbers**
 - Make a book where you record the numbers for dinners/sandwiches, grouping of children, sports and games, sizes of paintbrushes, anything!
- **Changing Numbers**
 - Sing 6 Little Ducks went out one day, 20 Green Bottles (sometimes 3 bottles accidentally fall), 8 Buns in a baker shop (sometimes 2 buns are bought)! Alternatively, make up stories about Goldilocks and the 4 Bears or the 5 Little Pigs.

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