

Add and remove activities



1 Add some, remove the same

Start with a collection students have counted. Add some objects and count. Then remove the same number and count again. Repeat with different starting amounts.

"We started with three. I added two — how many? I removed the same two — how many now?"

"Did we end up back where we started? Why?"

2 Predict before removing

Start with four objects, add two, and count — six. Tell students you are going to remove two, and before you do, ask how many will be left.

"Before I remove them — how many will be left? How did you know?"

"Did you count, or did you reason it out?"

3 Teacher adds, you remove — get back to the start

Add some objects to a counted collection without saying how many. Students work out how many to remove to get back to the original quantity.

"I added some — I will not say how many. Take away just enough to get back to where we started."

"Did we get back? How many did you remove? How many did I add?"

4 Non-example: remove a different number

Start with a collection, add two, then remove a different number — three, or one. Ask whether we are back where we started.

"I added two but took three away. Are we back where we started? Why not?"

"What would we need to do to get back?"

Add and remove — sequence cards

Print on A4. Laminate and cut. Students act each sequence out with counters and decide whether they end up back where they started.



Card A

Start with 3.

Add 2.

Take away 2.

How many now? Are we back at the start?

Card B

Start with 4.

Add 1.

Take away 1.

How many now? Are we back at the start?

Card C

Start with 2.

Add 3.

Take away 3.

How many now? Are we back at the start?

Card D

Start with 3.

Add 2.

Take away 3.

How many now? Are we back at the start?

Card E

Start with 5.

Take away 2.

Add 2.

How many now? Are we back at the start?

Card F

Start with 4.

Add 2.

Take away 1.

How many now? Are we back at the start?

Act each card out with counters. **Cards A, B, C and E** add and remove the same number, so they return to the start. **Card D** removes one more than it added, and **Card F** removes one fewer — these do not return to the start. Use D and F to talk about what would bring the collection back.