

One-to-one counting activities



1 Touch and say — count a small group

Give students a small group of 3 to 5 objects. They count, touching each object once and saying one number word per touch.

“Touch each one as you say its number — one word for each.”

“Did every object get a word, and every word an object?”

2 The moving finger — counted and uncounted

Using the counting mat, start the counters on the uncounted side. As each one is counted, the student touches it, says its number, and moves it across to the counted side (see resource).

“Start them all on this side. As you count each one — touch it, say its number, move it across.”

“Any left on the uncounted side? Then we have counted them all.”

3 Count and stop — keep the sequence going

Count alongside the student and stop part-way — “one, two, three...” The student says the next number and continues, still touching each object.

“I will start — you keep going when I stop. One, two... what comes next?”

“Keep touching as you say the words — one word, one touch.”

4 Non-example: saying numbers without counting

Point vaguely at a group without touching each object and rattle off the words — “one-two-three-four.” Ask whether that was counting.

“Did I count them? What was missing?”

“Counting needs two things to happen at the same time — what are they?”

Counting mat

Print on A4 landscape. Laminate for repeated use. Place 4 or 5 counters on the uncounted side. As each one is touched and named, move it across to the counted side.



Counted

they have been touched and named

Uncounted

start them here

