

Counting activities



1 Teacher counts — students join in

Count aloud from zero to ten, slowly and clearly. Students join in at any point they feel confident. Run it several times, landing on ten each time.

"Listen first. Join in wherever you feel ready — when you know what comes next."

"Where did most of you join in? What are the new numbers — the ones that felt less familiar?"

"Ten is the last number in this count for now — listen to how it sounds. Ten."

2 Echo counting — the new numbers in chunks

Say small chunks of the count and have students echo them back. Overlap the chunks so each new number comes up more than once — "five, six, seven", then "six, seven, eight", then "seven, eight, nine, ten". Finish by saying the whole count together.

"Say it back exactly. Ready — five, six, seven."

"Which chunk had the numbers that felt newest to you?"

"Now let us say the whole thing from zero to ten."

3 Flexible starts — stop and continue

Count from zero and stop at different points — at six, at eight, at nine. Students carry on from where you stopped. Then start from the middle: "Seven..." and students continue. Then go rapid-fire: "After six? After eight?" — answers straight away, without counting from zero.

"I will start — you continue when I stop. Zero, one, two, three, four, five, six... What comes next?"

"Start from seven. Ready — seven... what comes next?"

Watch for students who go back to zero before they can answer — they still have a chained count, not flexible access.

"Did you have to go back to zero first — or did you just know?"

4 Non-example: the count with a gap

Count aloud and leave one number out: "zero, one, two, three, four, five, six, eight, nine, ten." Students listen and catch what is missing.

"I was counting from zero to ten. Did I get all the numbers? What was missing?"

"Where did I skip? What should I have said after six?"

"Why is it important not to skip numbers when we count?"