

Understand Counting

Dear Family,

This week your child is exploring counting.

In class, your child will discuss reasons that people **count** and why counting is an important part of everyday life. For example, a teacher might count the books on a shelf to make sure there are enough for each child. Or a child might count the number of days until his or her birthday.

By counting objects in groups of 1 to 4, your child will also develop the understanding that when counting a group of objects, each **number** is associated with one object and the last number counted tells the total amount in the group. For example, when counting a group of 4 crayons, you might touch each crayon while saying a number: **1, 2, 3, 4**. *There are 4 crayons.* Or you might move each crayon to the side as it is counted.



There are 4 crayons.

Through learning what it means to count and developing strategies for keeping track of objects being counted, your child will start to build a strong foundation for success in math.

Invite your child to share what he or she knows about counting by doing the following activity together.



Activity Counting

Do this activity with your child to explore counting strategies.

Materials 3 cups, 9 pennies (or other small objects such as buttons or dried beans)

- Fill each of the cups with 2, 3, or 4 pennies (a different number in each cup).
- Have your child pour the pennies out of one cup and onto the table. Ask how many pennies are on the table.
- If your child has trouble counting the pennies, prompt him or her to use a strategy such as touching each penny as it is counted, moving each penny to the side as it is counted, or putting each penny in the cup as it is counted.
- Have your child put the pennies back in the cup and repeat with the other two cups. Then change the order of the three cups and do the activity again.
- If your child needs an extra challenge, here is a way to take the activity further. Have your child close his or her eyes and listen while you drop 1 to 4 pennies into a cup one at a time. Ask your child how many pennies are in the cup. Repeat several times.



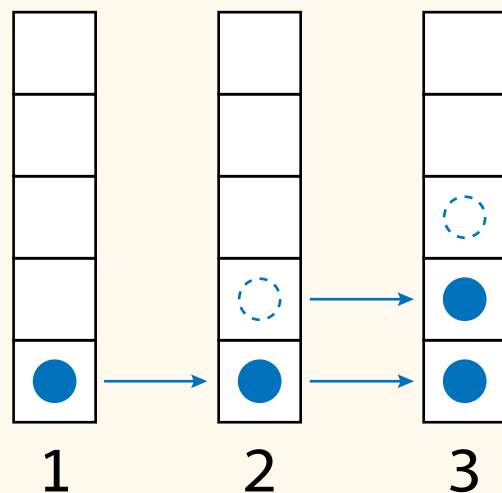
Numbers 0 to 5

Dear Family,

This week your child is building counting skills with the number 0.

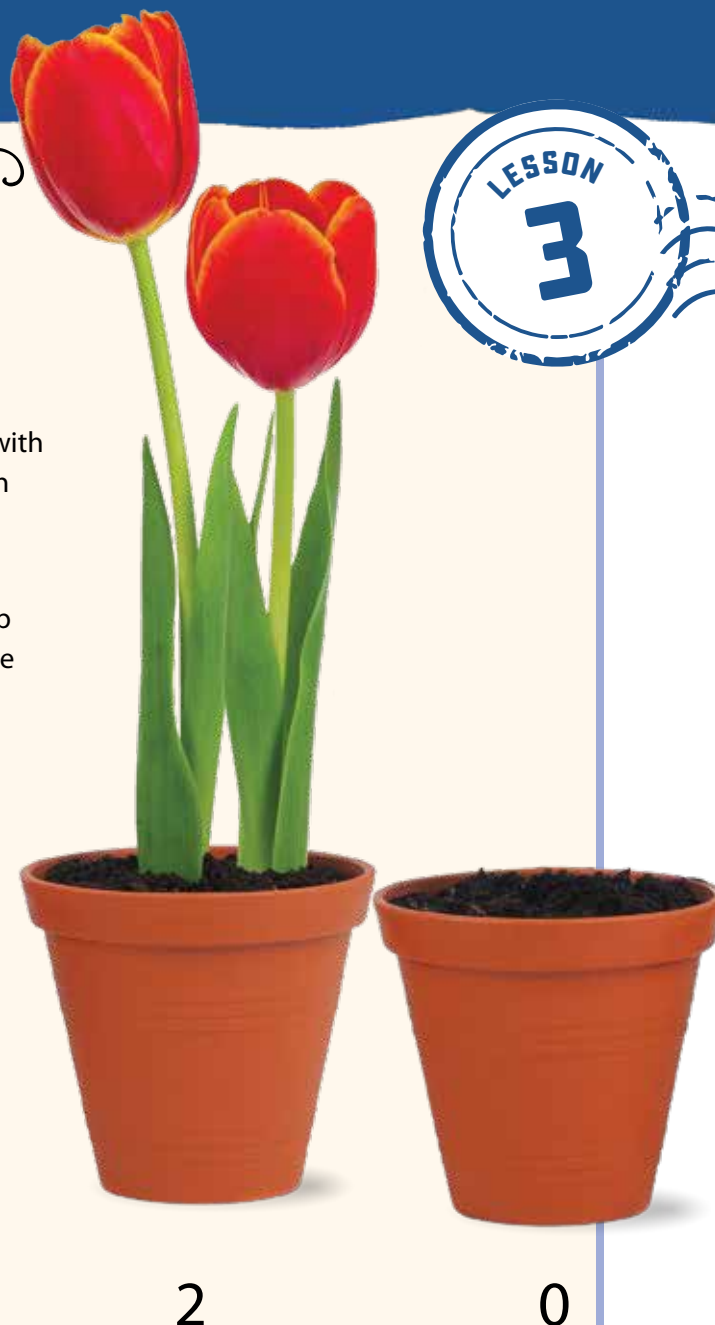
This skill involves learning to recognize and write the numeral 0 and understand that **zero** represents a group of no objects. For example, when shown a flowerpot with 2 flowers and a flowerpot with no flowers, your child will identify the flowerpot with no flowers as showing 0 flowers.

Your child will also explore how counting numbers represent one **more than** the previous number. He or she will count groups, draw one **more**, and count the group again to find how many are in the group. Your child will see how each number in the counting sequence increases by one.



This lesson also includes practice at recognizing groups of 1 through 5.

Invite your child to share what he or she knows about counting and 0 by doing the following activity together.



Activity Counting 0 to 5

Do this activity with your child to recognize 0 and count.

Materials 6 plastic cups, small sticky notes or labels, and at least 16 objects, such as pencils, crayons, markers, or craft sticks

Tell your child that you are going to work together to organize the objects to show the numbers 0 to 5.

- Have your child write the numbers 0 to 5 on the sticky notes or labels and then place one on each cup.
- Have your child say the numbers to check that they are in the correct order.
- Lay the objects in front of your child. Starting with 0 and then 1, have him or her place the matching number of objects in each cup.
- For numbers 3 to 5, stop your child when he or she has the same amount as the previous number, and ask how many more are needed.
- Starting with 0, have your child count each group of objects to check that each cup holds the correct number.

