Counting on is a strategy to help young children understand how to solve addition problems.

Story Description

Jack has the best blocks ever. They come in all shapes (square, rectangle, cylinders, cones) and colors. In Jack's imagination, an arrangement of just two blocks is a robot. Add one more block and presto! It's a hot dog stand at the circus. Add two more blocks for a total of five for a ferryboat. And so it goes, counting on more and more blocks, all the way to the super-duper, ready-for-lift-off rocket ship. Blast off! All the blocks fall down and it's time for Jack to start over again. Counting on is a strategy to help young children understand how to solve addition problems.

Illustrated by Michael Rex.

DC Standard 4.1, Number Concepts: Children will demonstrate a beginning understanding of number and operations and how they relate to one another. **4.1.3**: Using numbers to tell how many. **4.1.4**: Using numbers and counting as a means to solve problems.

Activities

☑ Create your own *Jack the Builder* fun as you play together with your child (or students). Start with three blocks. What does it look like? Ask one of the children to add on two more blocks to make a new shape. What does it look like? Count on together as a group: "3 blocks, plus 1 block, plus 1 block = 5 blocks." Now add three new blocks for a total of 8 blocks. Continue until the blocks fall down!

☑ Draw a number line from 1 to 20 on the board so everyone can see. Say a number and have one of the children put his finger on that number. For example, "5." Then count on 2 more together and have him put his finger on "7." Continue up to 20, adding 2, 3, 4 or 5 by counting on. You can also say the number and point to it yourself on the number line, then have the kids count on together out loud.

☑ Start with 25 small objects, such as pennies or buttons. Put 1 object in a jar or small plastic container. Roll a die. Add on whatever number comes up, 1 through 6, until all the objects are in the jar. If, on your last roll, you do not have enough objects, note how many more you would need (for example, if you roll a "5" but only have 3 objects, you would need 2 more). Also, after each round, note the sum (4 buttons + 1 button + 1 button+ 1 button = 7 buttons). As a variation, put a piece of yarn or string on a table to create two columns. Put one object on one side and all the rest on the other. Roll the die and play the game by having the children count on and move objects from one column to the other.