

Diagnostic TASK

FOCUS

Understand Numbers

- Key Understanding 1

Skip Counting

Years/Grades 1–4

Purpose

To find out if the child knows that counting in groups gives the same result as counting by ones.

Equipment

15 small things, e.g. 15 nuts.

Producing work samples

Give a child 15 small things, e.g. 15 nuts.

Ask: *How many nuts have I given you? How did you decide that?*

Observe if the child:

- counts the 15 nuts accurately, by twos, to 14 then adds the one, stop the interview here.
- counts by ones

If the child counts by ones

Ask: *Will you get the same answer if you count by twos? Count by twos to find out.*

Observe if the child:

- keeps track of the 'twos' and what they do when they reach the remaining single nut.
- at the end of the count, notice if they call the single nut the next number in the 'twos' sequence regardless of whether there are two there or one. For example: Does the child point and say: *12, 14, 16, or 12, 14, 15.* (arriving at 15 for the answer).

If by now you are sure the student knows that counting by twos gives the same result as counting by ones, stop the task. If you are still unsure then continue with the next part.

Tip out a collection of more than 50 objects, e.g. pop sticks.

Ask: *How many pop-sticks do you think are there? How could you know exactly how many are there?*

If the child: begins to count the whole collection by ones.

Ask: *How many pop sticks will there be if you count by fives?*