

Diagnostic TASK

FOCUS

Understand Numbers

- Key Understanding 1

Counting Principles

Years/Grades K–2

Purpose

To assess children's understanding of the principles of counting.

Equipment

General classroom equipment.

Producing work samples

Counting Principles 1, 2 and 3: Show a child a scattered collection of 8 items.

Ask: *Can you tell me how many (e.g. animals) are here?*

- Observe if the child:**
- says the number names in the right order
 - moves the items or keeps track of their starting point?

Counting Principle 5: When the child has completed the count, notice whether they emphasise the last word. Even if they have emphasised the last number ask the next question.

Ask: *How many (animals) are there?*

- Observe if the child:**
- recounts from the start
 - repeats the last number word without recounting

Counting Principle 4: Place the items into a line

Ask: *How many (animals) are there?*

- Observe if the child:**
- recounts from the start
 - restates the number without counting

If the child finishes the count with a different number from the original count

Ask: *So are there (the first number they said) or are there (the second number they said)?*

Counting Principle 3: Take a new collection of items place in a line and ask the child to count the items starting in the middle. Point to an item in the middle.

Ask: *How many (blocks) do we have? When you count the (blocks), begin with this one (point to the middle item) make this number one.*

- Observe if the child:**
- counts from the middle item and includes all of the items
 - counts from the middle, omits the first few items in the row.