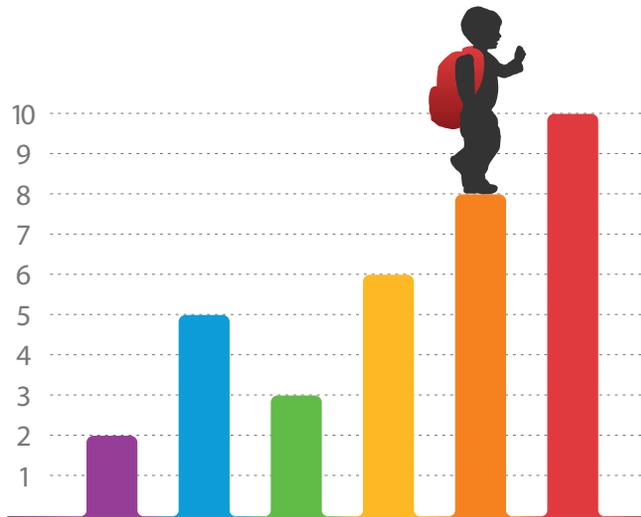


Fun Math For Young Learners



You are your child's first and most important teacher. Learn fun and easy ways to help your child gain comfort and ease with basic math concepts.

by Renee Abramovitz

Make math fun for your child

Gone are the days of teaching math to young children through rote memorization and boring drills. Today, children learn math concepts through games, engaging worksheets and fun activities. This e-book will review simple ways to help your young child learn important early math skills and includes 38 fun worksheets in a variety of math-related areas to help accelerate your child's learning.

In this e-book:

Number recognition is the place to start

Help your child learn the name and formation of each number, plus the amount that each number represents.

There's more to counting than just 1, 2, 3

Understanding the importance of skip counting and "counting on" allows children to count comfortably and confidently.

The importance of patterns

The ability to recognize and create patterns enhances problem-solving skills and helps children make predictions.

The role of sorting and classifying

Being able to identify and label a group based on a specific characteristic is a critical thinking skill.

Introducing graphs to young children

Help your child organize and interpret data using pictographs and bar graphs.

Free math worksheets

- *Number Tracing Worksheets.* Is it a 6 or a 9? Learn how to write each number.
- *Matching Numbers To Amounts Worksheets.* Once your child knows the amount each number represents, counting becomes fun.
- *"Counting On" Worksheets.* "Counting on" allows quick and accurate counting.
- *Pattern Identification and Creation Worksheets.* This fundamental early math concept helps children develop strong reasoning skills.
- *Sorting and Classifying Worksheets.* Strengthen your child's ability to organize his world.
- *Bar Graph and Pictograph Worksheets.* Graphs allow children to record information in a fun, easy-to-read way.

About School Sparks

www.schoolsparks.com is a free website with tips and resources to help your child start school prepared to succeed. There are hundreds of **kindergarten worksheets**, and new worksheets are added weekly. The website also offers information on the 8 developmental areas that are critical to success in school, including tips for helping your child develop necessary skills in each area. To assess your child's readiness to begin school, there is a **kindergarten readiness test**. At the conclusion of the assessment, you will receive customized feedback about your child's existing skills in each of the 8 developmental areas, plus activity suggestions to help your child accelerate skill development. Lastly, a weekly **blog** covers various topics related to early childhood education, like "Tips For Teaching Your Child The Proper Pencil Grip" and "Teaching Children To Count."

Renee Abramovitz retired from teaching in 2008 to become, as she likes to say, a "full-time grandma." Renee worked in preschool and kindergarten classrooms during her entire teaching career and is passionate about helping young children succeed in school. Although retired, she enjoys continuing to work with young children on school readiness activities and believes that when children start school with a solid foundation of skills, they are poised to begin a lasting cycle of academic success. Renee has three grown children and four young grandchildren. She and her husband recently celebrated 40 years of marriage and live in Columbus, Ohio.

Number recognition is the place to start

Initially, numbers are simply words that your child hears. He knows that he is three or four years old, for example, or that grandma is coming to visit in seven days. However, to work with numbers, a child must be able to recognize the numerical symbol for each number and understand the amount that each number represents.

Learn the name and formation of each number. Begin by asking your child to count from one to ten. As he counts aloud, write the numbers on a blank sheet of paper. When your child reaches ten, ask him to go back and count again, this time pointing to the corresponding number on your sheet of paper as he says its name aloud. Once your child is able to correctly identify every number, he is ready to learn how to properly write each one.

Correctly identifying each number allows children to feel
confident and **successful** with math.

The easiest way to teach your child how to correctly write each number is with number tracing worksheets, which are included as pages 16 - 25 of this e-book. These worksheets provide dashed-line models for your child to trace over as well as detailed depictions showing the proper formation of each number.

Learn the amount that each number represents. Once your child is familiar with the name and formation of the numbers one through ten, introduce him to the amount that each number represents.

Begin by writing each number on an index card and ask your child to put the cards in numerical order. Then, gather a small pile of items such as beans or buttons and, for each number card, ask him to count out the corresponding amount of items and place them in a small cup next to the appropriate number card. After he has correctly counted out items for each number card, consider scrambling the cups and challenging your child to put them back in order by recounting the number of items in each cup.

The worksheets on pages 26 - 29 of this e-book will further challenge your child's knowledge of the amount each number represents.

Understanding the **amount each number represents**
is a **cornerstone** of any
early childhood education math program.

There's more to counting than just 1, 2, 3

The ability to count comfortably is a basic math skill children should have when beginning school. But there is more to counting than simply beginning at one and reciting the numbers.

Counting on. Counting on is the ability to continue counting from any number, as opposed to restarting at one each time. Counting on is an important skill when adding groups of items. For example, if you give a child six blocks and then add two blocks, he can be more efficient by continuing to count on from six instead of starting again at one and recounting the first six blocks before counting the additional two blocks. As your child begins counting increasingly large numbers of items, counting on becomes critical for accuracy and efficiency.

The worksheets on pages 30 - 35 of this e-book will give your child valuable practice counting on.

The ability to count on is an **essential precursor** to more complex math lessons such as addition.

Skip counting. The first skip counting children learn is counting by 10s from 10 to 100. A printable 100s chart is a wonderful tool to teach counting by 10s and to introduce the general idea of skip counting.



Using this chart, show your child how the numbers in the right-hand column go from 10 to 100. Explain that counting by 10s means “skipping” the other numbers in the row and jumping to the next line. (A 100s chart is included as page 36 of this e-book.)

Once your child is comfortable counting by 10s to 100, introduce skip counting by 2s. Begin by asking your child to say aloud the number two and then to think the next number (three) in his head, before saying aloud the following number (four). If your child struggles with this activity, suggest that he mouth the skipped number or point to it on a number line without saying it aloud as he skips it. With time, he will become comfortable saying the skipped number silently in his head or skip counting from memory.

The importance of patterns

A pattern is any series that repeats at least twice. For example, a pattern of beads could be: red bead, blue bead, green bead, red bead, blue bead, green bead, and so on. Or an activity pattern might be: eat breakfast, get dressed, brush teeth, go to school, eat breakfast, get dressed, brush teeth, go to school. Pattern identification and creation is a critical part of all preschool or kindergarten math curricula.

Understanding patterns allows children to make predictions. For example, if a child knows that his coat must be hung up after coming indoors, he can accurately predict the expected behavior and will hang up his coat after walking into a friend's house. This understanding eliminates the need for children to continuously learn through trial and error, since they will be able to take knowledge from one situation and apply it to another situation.

Understanding patterns also helps children avoid being constantly surprised. With a familiar routine of brush teeth, put on pajamas, read a story, and go to bed, for example, a child will be able to anticipate what comes next and move seamlessly through the evening without being surprised when his parents announce that it is time to put on pajamas.

Begin with the AB pattern. The most basic pattern is the AB pattern. In this pattern, there are only two items and they repeat one after the other, such as red block, blue block, red block, blue block.

Ask your child, “What comes next?” When your child is able to identify a pattern, challenge him to continue the pattern by asking him, “What comes next?” When he can accurately extend the AB pattern by at least one repetition, introduce more complicated patterns such as AAB, ABB, ABC, and ABCD. Each time you set up a new pattern by creating two or more repetitions, ask your child to identify the pattern. Then, ask your child, “What comes next?” and encourage him to continue the pattern.

The ability to identify **complex patterns** allows children to successfully **make predictions** and **anticipate** what comes next.

The pattern worksheets on pages 37 - 42 of this e-book will challenge your child’s knowledge of patterns and help accelerate his understanding of this important math concept.

The role of sorting and classifying

Sorting and classifying require children to organize items into groups based on a common characteristic such as size, color, shape, texture, or flavor and also explain how the items are grouped. Sorting and classifying are skills that a child will use in all areas of his life at home and in school as he puts away art materials, organizes clothes, arranges a locker, or empties the dishwasher, for example.

One of these things is not like the others. Start by introducing a group of four items to your child in which all items but one share a common characteristic. For example, you could line up three of your shoes and one of your child's shoes and ask him which item does not belong with the others. Once your child has picked the one that does not belong, ask him to explain why the other three items go together.

Highlight one characteristic in a large group of items. Once your child is familiar with the basic concept of grouping items together based on a common characteristic, give your child a large group of two items that differ in only one key attribute. For example, you can use a bowl of two cereals that have different colors but the same shape (Kix and Cocoa Puffs or Fruit Loops and Apple Jacks) and direct him to sort the pieces according to the color.

Introduce more characteristics. When your child is comfortable sorting objects based on an obvious characteristic, challenge him to sort a more diverse group of items that differ in more than one way. With a larger group of items, your child will need to make a decision about which characteristic to use to define the groups.

Successful sorting requires **careful observation** of
small details and **precise organization**.

For instance, you could have a group of blocks in two different sizes and two different colors. Your child will need to decide whether color or size will be the determining factor when sorting the items into two groups. Buttons are great for this purpose since they have two or four holes, come in a variety of colors, can be made of wood, metal or plastic, and can be square, circular or oblong. Also, buttons are inexpensive and sold in bulk at most craft or fabric stores.

When your child has finished sorting all the items, consider asking him to re-sort the same group of items in a different way. For example, if he initially sorted the items by size, he could sort by color or texture when sorting the same items a second time.

Incorporate sorting into everyday activities. Everyday activities present wonderful opportunities for sorting. As you fold laundry, ask your child to sort his clean clothes into three piles: shirts, pants, and underwear. Or, when cleaning up at the end of the day, ask him to sort his toys into two bins based on a particular characteristic such as noisy toys in one bin and quiet toys in another or rolling toys (vehicles and balls) in one bin and non-rolling toys (stuffed animals and puzzles) in another.

The sorting worksheets on pages 43 - 48 of this e-book will challenge your child to sort based on a defined characteristic and to sort based on a classification system of his own choosing.

Introducing graphs to young children

Graphing is a skill that develops from a child's natural curiosity about how to compare the amounts in different groups. Once children are able to sort and categorize objects into groups, graphing provides a visual way to organize the sorted items, keep track of the number of items in each group, and make simple observations about which group has more or less items than the other groups.

Bar graphs are simple graphs that allow for a visual comparison of the number of items in two or more different groups. Bar graphs typically have one column for each group being tracked with numbers along the left side of the grid to indicate the amount. In each column, one marked square represents one counted item.

Begin with pictographs. Pictographs are a type of bar graph that use actual pictures to represent data. Pictographs are a nice introduction to graphing because your child can simply paste each picture in the correct column and then make observations and comparisons based on the height of the different columns on the page.



Bring out the bar graphs. Once your child is familiar with pictographs and understands how this type of graph can be helpful in organizing, counting, and comparing different groups of items, teach him how to create and read a traditional bar graph.

As your child reads a bar graph, ask questions that encourage him to compare the amounts in each group with the words “more than,” “less than,” and “equal to.” Although being able to count the number of items in each group is important, it is equally important that your child be able to discuss the groups relative to each other and understand how the graph shows, at a glance, which group has the most, which group has the least, and if any groups are equal.

The terms “more than,” “less than,” and “equal to”
allow children to **express themselves clearly**.

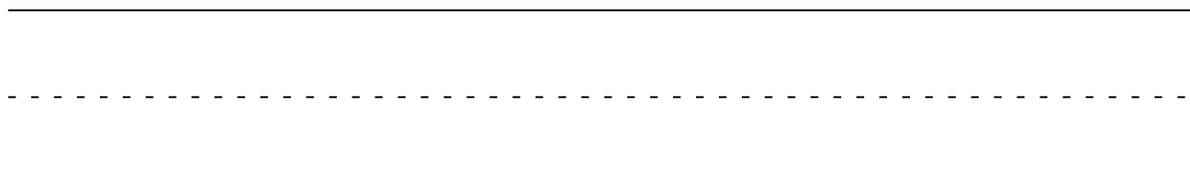
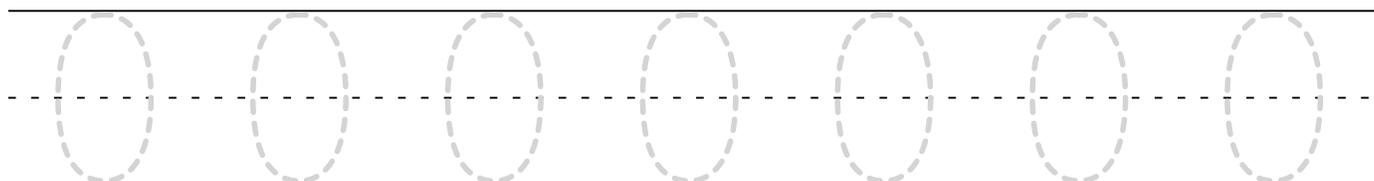
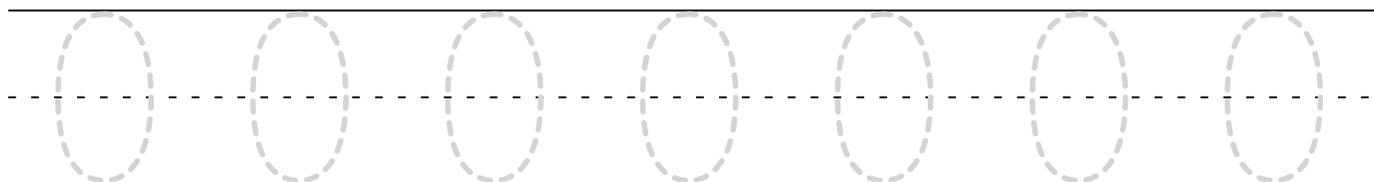
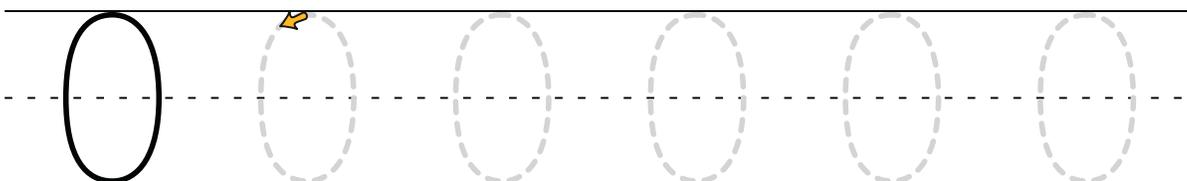
Encourage poll-taking. A fun way for your child to solidify his knowledge of graphs is by creating his own polls and tracking the answers he receives on a graph.

To help your child begin, consider suggesting a question that has a YES or NO response, such as “Do you like cold weather?” This will create the basic two-column graph. As your child becomes increasingly comfortable with creating and discussing graphs, encourage him to ask a poll question that has four, five or six possible answers.

Engaging pictograph and bar graph worksheets, including a blank bar graph template for poll-taking, are included as pages 49 - 53 of this e-book.

MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Tracing the number 0: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger. Arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the number.



SCHOOL SPARKS



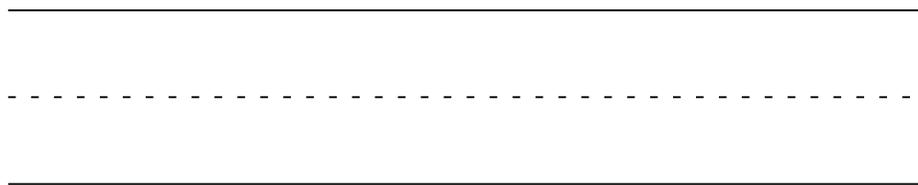
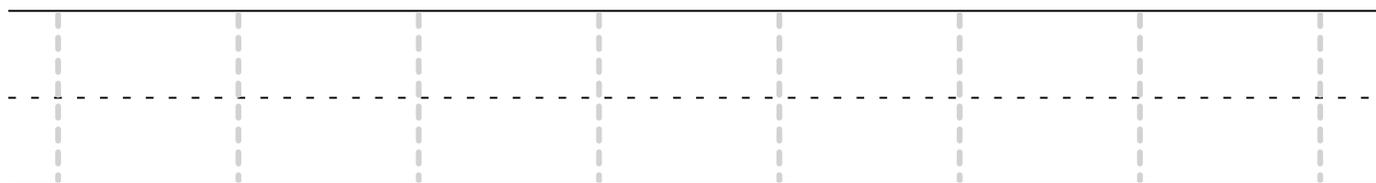
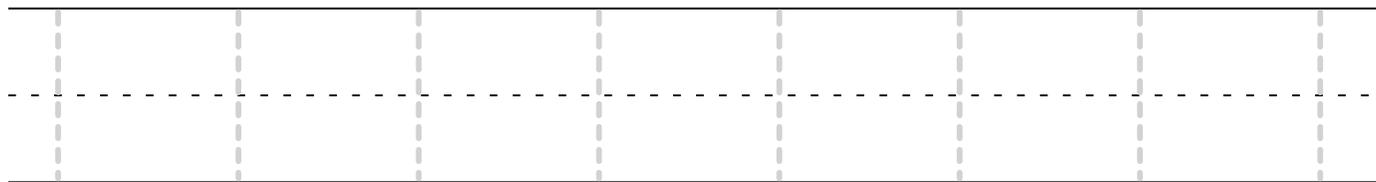
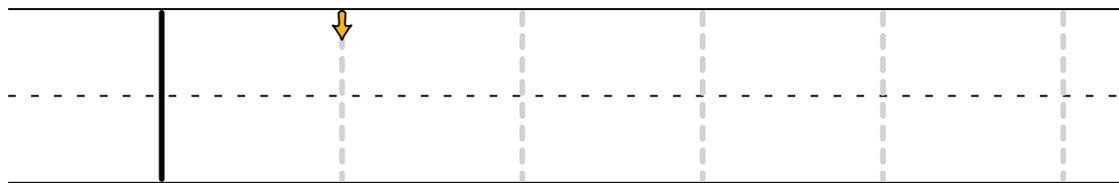
Tip for parents: A 0 is similar to an uppercase letter O except that it is an oval shape instead of a round circle. Encourage your child to draw a "skinny letter O" to get the perfect shape.

Why keep the fun all to yourself? Please feel free to share this worksheet with friends.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Tracing the number 1: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger. Arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the number.



SCHOOL SPARKS



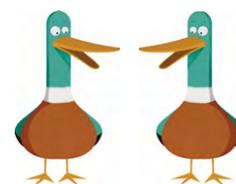
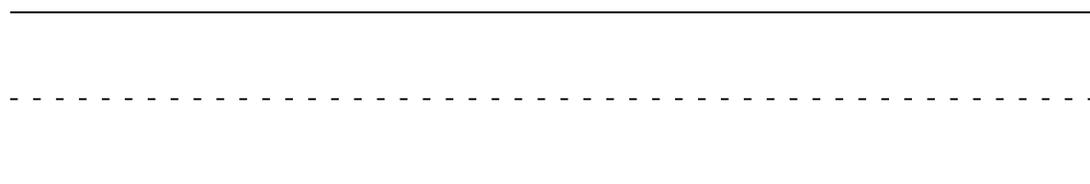
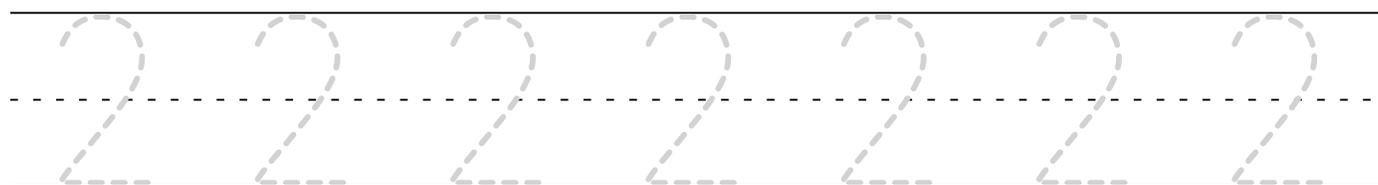
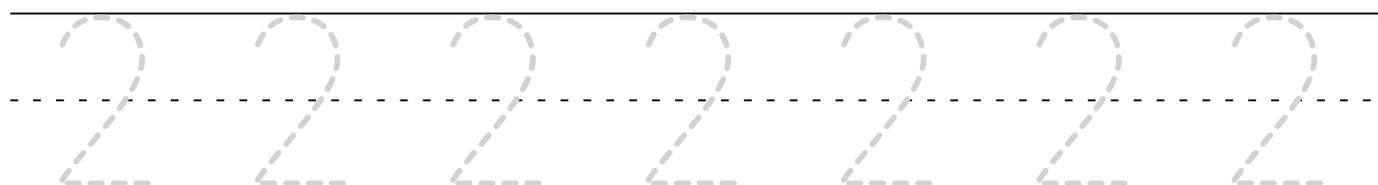
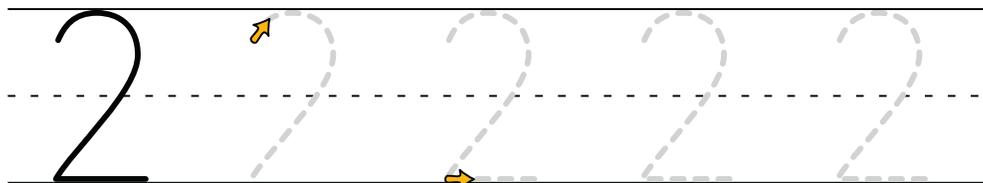
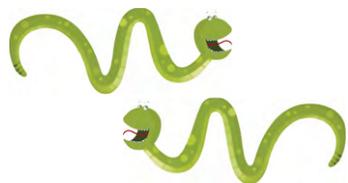
Tip for parents: Direct your child to simply draw a straight vertical line from the top writing guide line to the bottom. The challenge is in making the line as vertical as possible, so it does not slant to one side.

Why keep the fun all to yourself? Please feel free to share this worksheet with friends.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Tracing the number 2: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger. Arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the number.



SCHOOL SPARKS



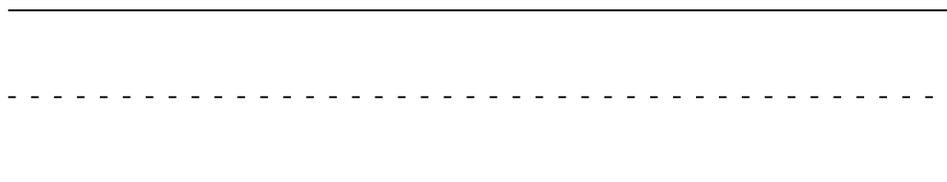
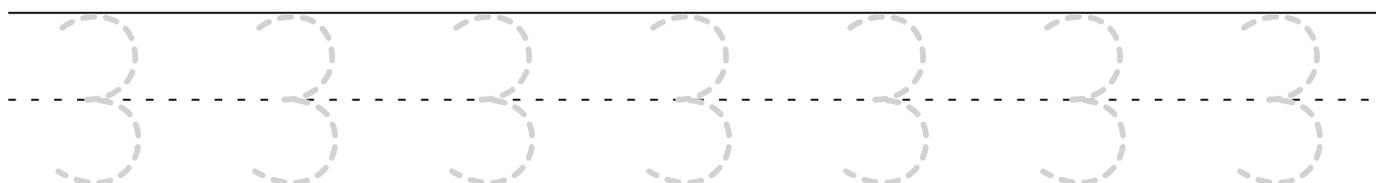
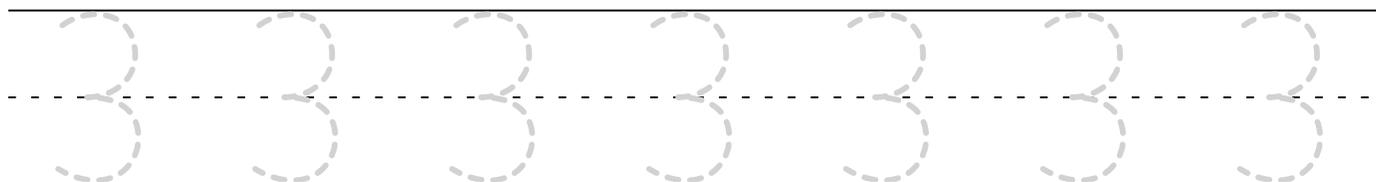
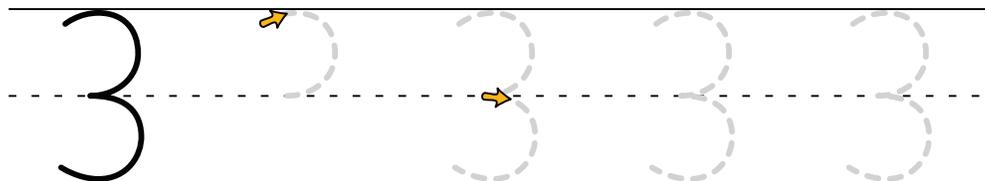
Tip for parents: Have your child begin writing just under the top line so he can create a full curve at the top. When he reaches the bottom line, have him pause before changing direction and adding the horizontal "foot."

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Tracing the number 3: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger. Arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the number.



SCHOOL SPARKS



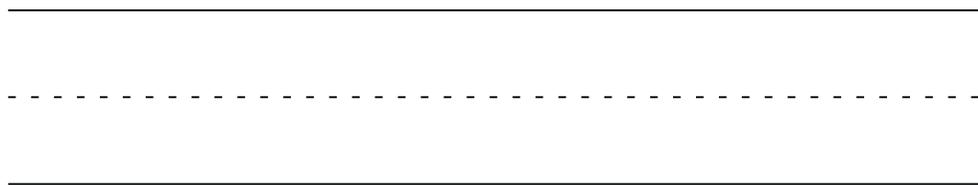
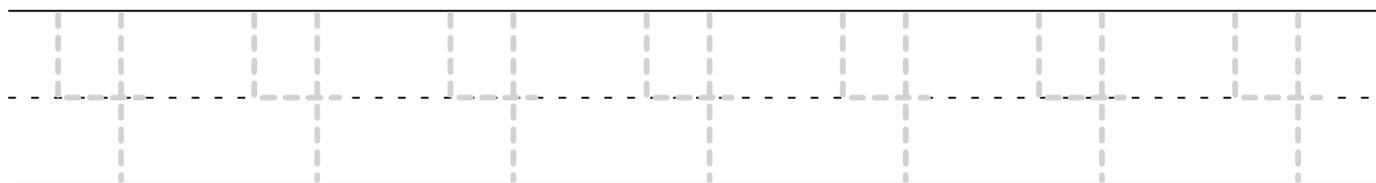
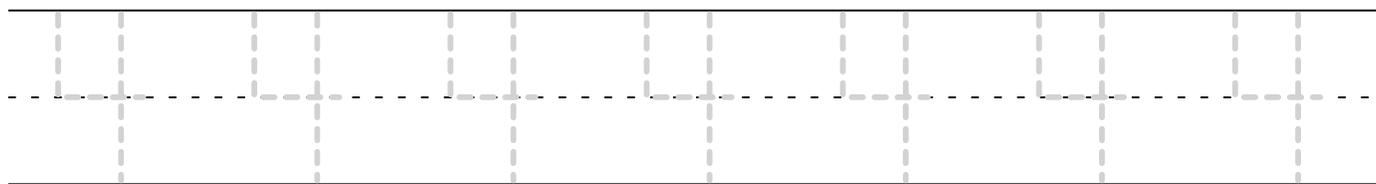
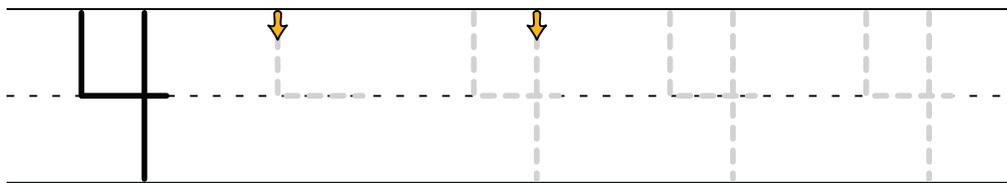
Tip for parents: After drawing the top curve, remind your child to pause briefly before changing direction. Then, challenge your child to draw a second curve that is identical to the first one he already drew.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Tracing the number 4: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger. Arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the number.



SCHOOL SPARKS



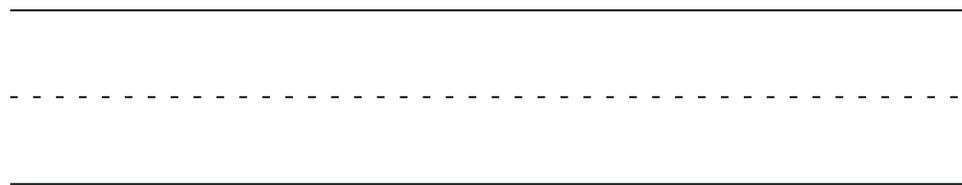
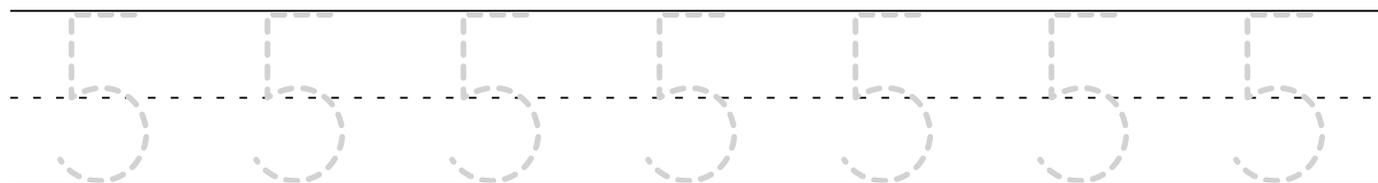
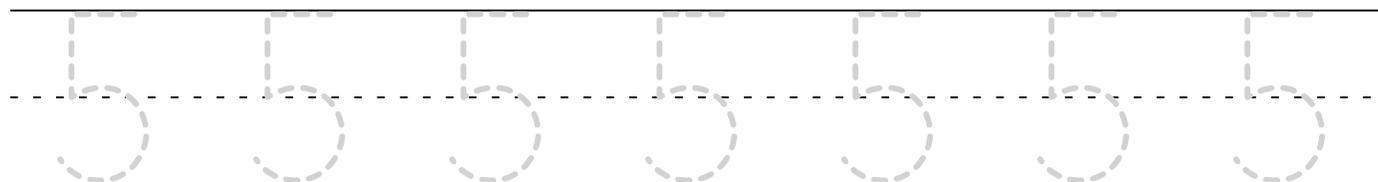
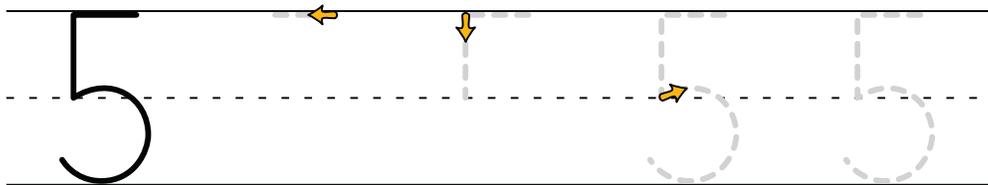
Tip for parents: Writing this number will require your child to lift his pencil midway through. Remind your child that the second stroke should cut through the first leaving a little tail on the horizontal line.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Tracing the number 5: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger. Arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the number.



SCHOOL SPARKS



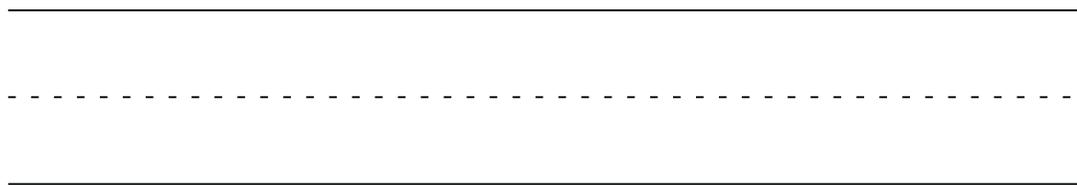
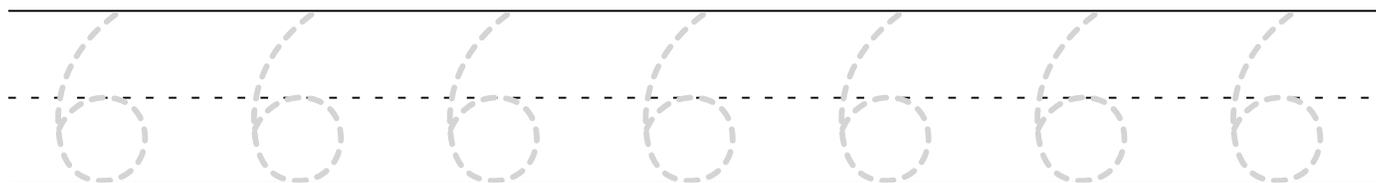
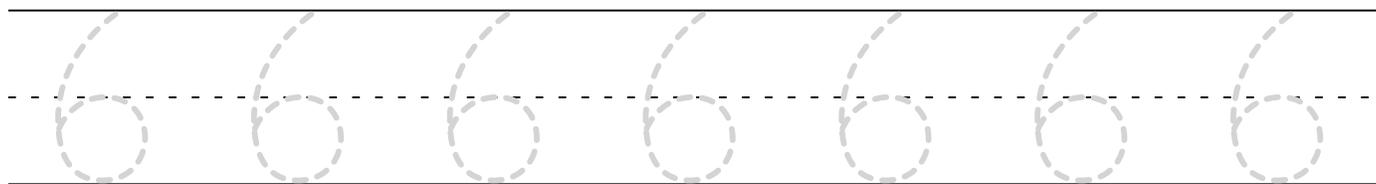
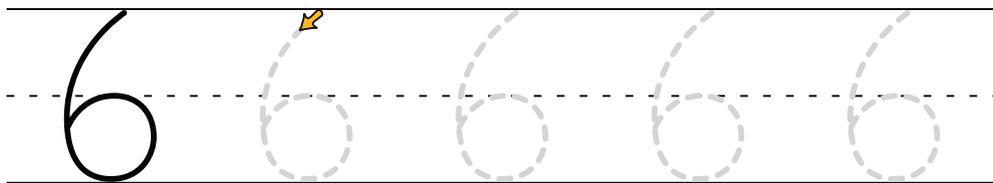
Tip for parents: Direct your child to “make a hat, then a neck, then a fat, round belly” to make the perfect 5. Repeat those directions as he writes to help him stay on track.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Tracing the number 6: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger. Arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the number.



SCHOOL SPARKS



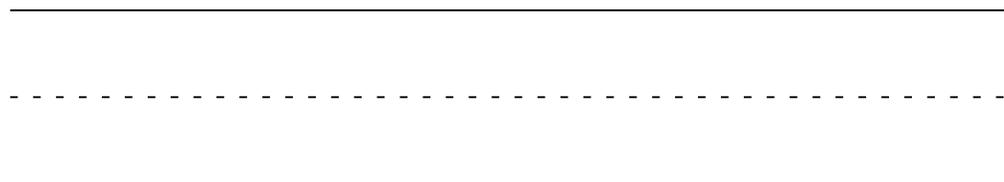
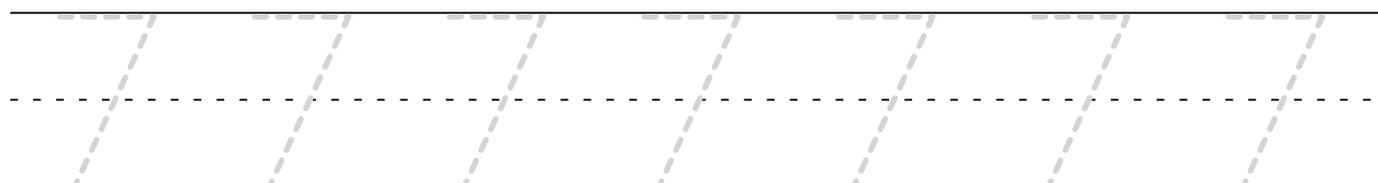
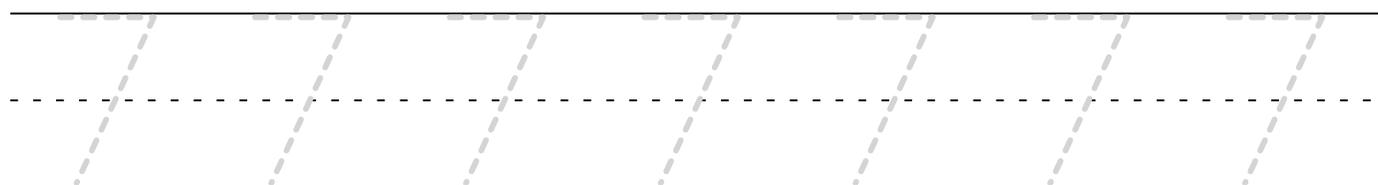
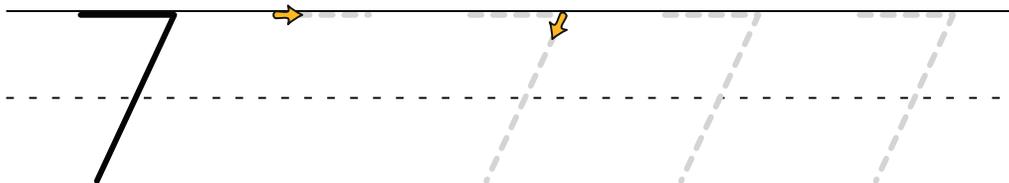
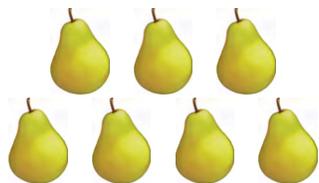
Tip for parents: Remind your child that the “belly” of the 6 is at the bottom. So have him begin at the top of the page and then curve around to the right as he nears the bottom to create the proper shape.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Tracing the number 7: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger. Arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the number.



SCHOOL SPARKS



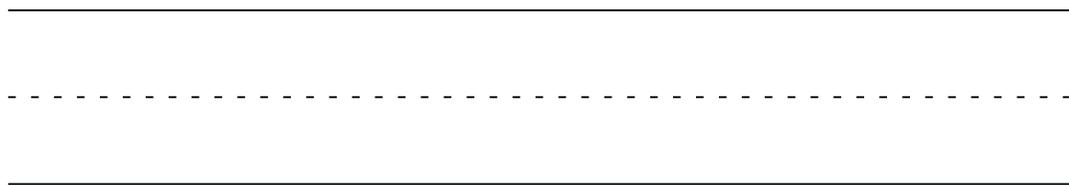
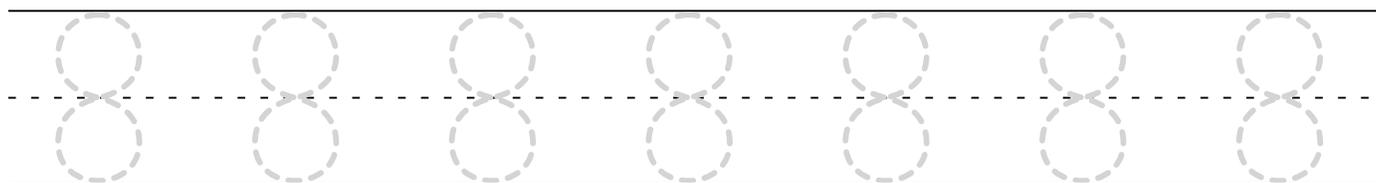
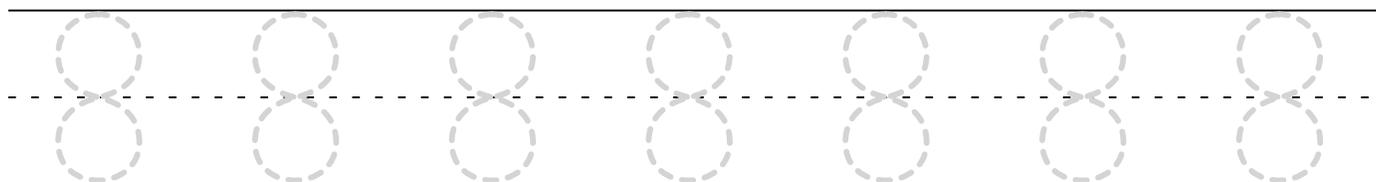
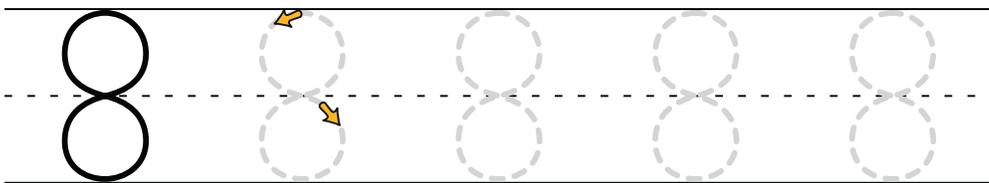
Tip for parents: A 7 is two straight lines connected by a sharp point. Remind your child to pause briefly after drawing the horizontal line and then quickly change direction to make the vertical, slanted line.

Why keep the fun all to yourself? Please feel free to share this worksheet with friends.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Tracing the number 8: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger. Arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the number.



SCHOOL SPARKS



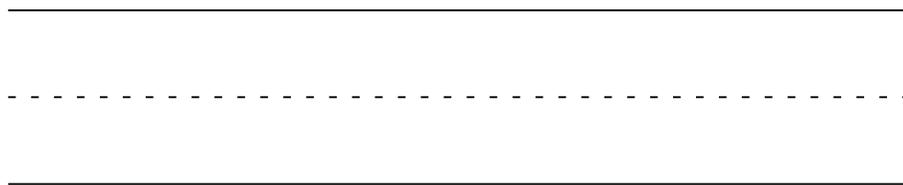
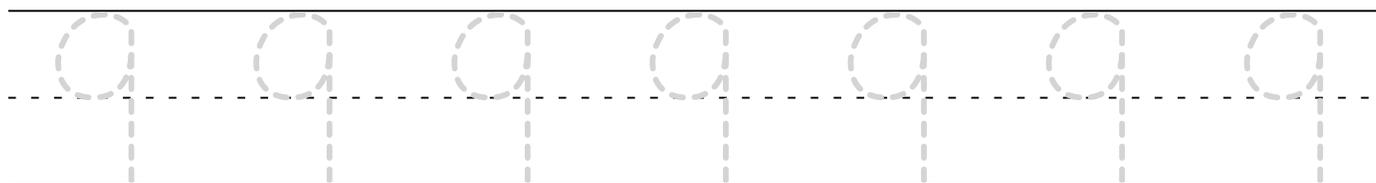
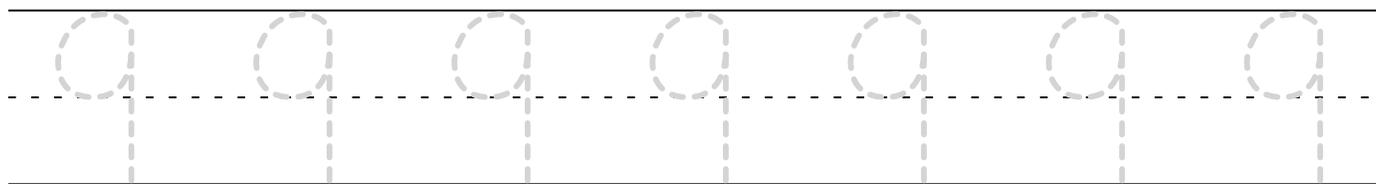
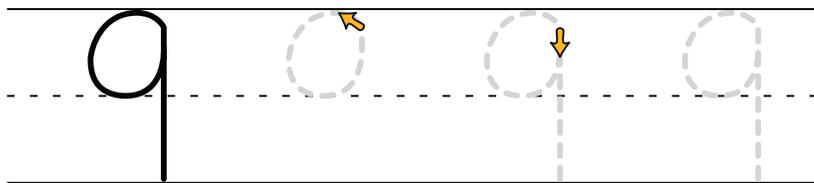
Tip for parents: Ensure your child can write the letter S before introducing this number. Then show him how to write an S, then without lifting his pencil, complete both small circles.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Tracing the number 9: Direct your child to hold the pencil firmly between his thumb and index finger, resting it on his middle finger. Arrows indicate the proper and easiest construction of the number.



SCHOOL SPARKS



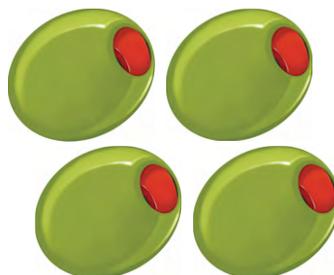
Tip for parents: Children like to think of this letter as a bat hitting a ball. Remind your child to begin with his pencil just under the top line to get a nice round circle before adding the straight line.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Identifying matching numbers and amounts: Circle each number or group of pictures that corresponds to the number already circled.



SCHOOL SPARKS



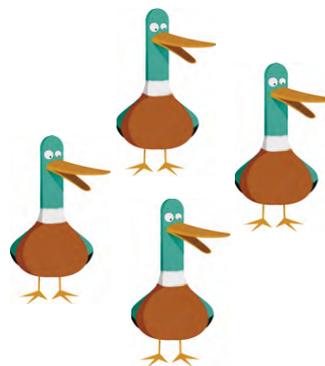
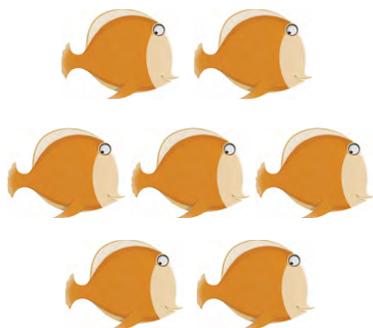
Tip for parents: Invest in some inexpensive large bins to make it easier for children to take responsibility for cleaning up after playtime. When they can easily put items away, they will be more inclined to help clean up.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Identifying matching numbers and amounts: Circle each number or group of pictures that corresponds to the number already circled.



SCHOOL SPARKS



Tip for parents: Ask your child specific questions about his day, such as: "What book did the teacher read?" or "What did you play on the playground today?" Unspecific questions usually get unspecific answers.

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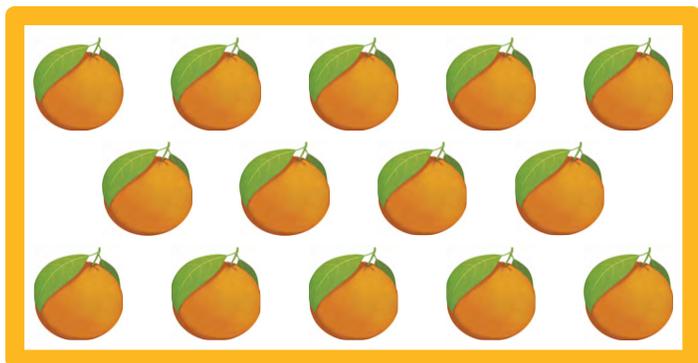
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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Counting and matching to numbers: Count the items on each row and circle the corresponding number. Ask your child to use one-to-one correspondence, touching each picture while counting.



11 12 13



12 13 14



13 14 15

SCHOOL SPARKS



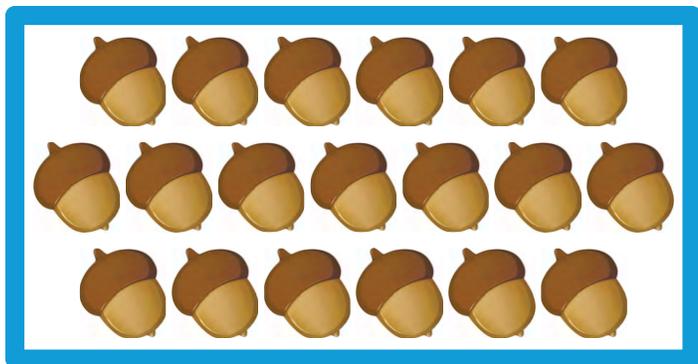
Tip for parents: A computer keyboard is a great way for your child to practice numbers. Encourage your child to type his favorite numbers, saying aloud the number as he types.

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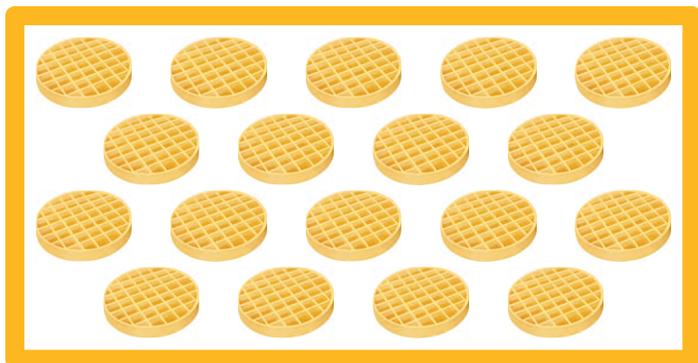
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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

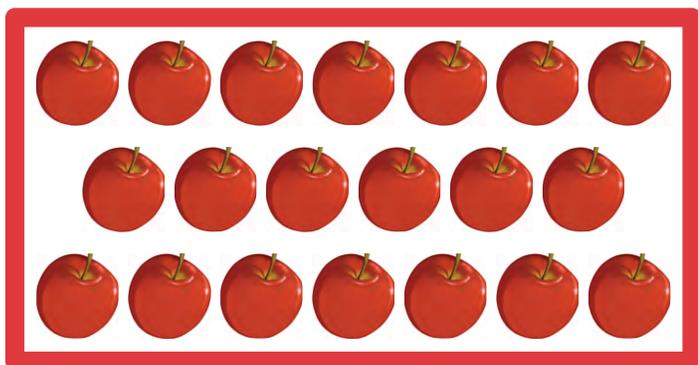
Counting and matching to numbers: Count the items on each row and circle the corresponding number. Ask your child to use one-to-one correspondence, touching each picture while counting.



17 18 19



16 17 18

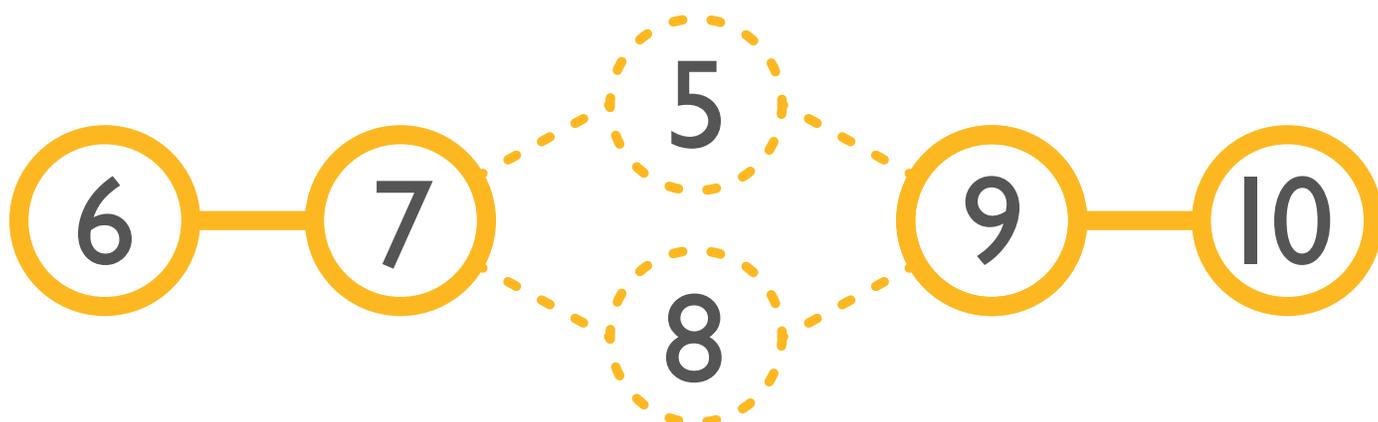
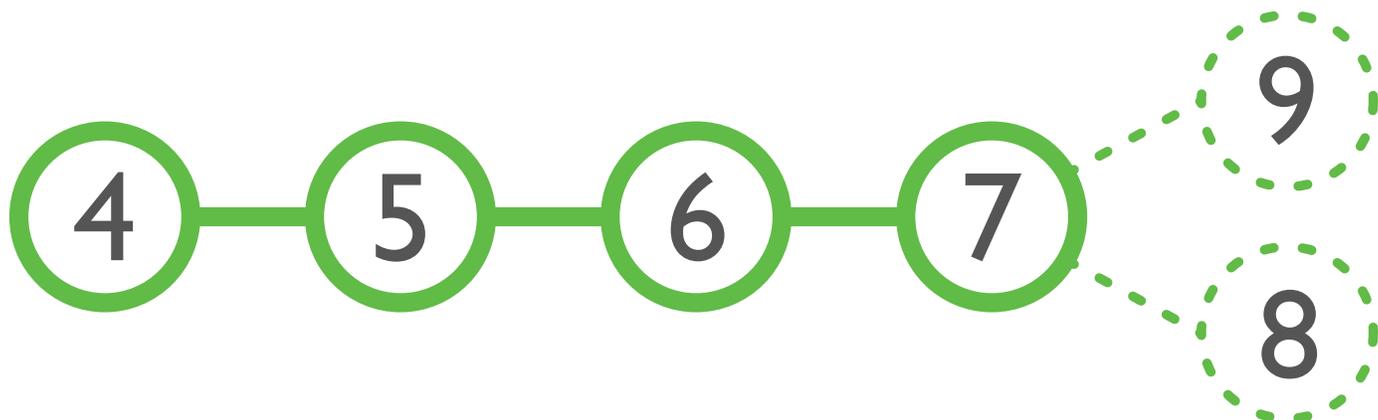
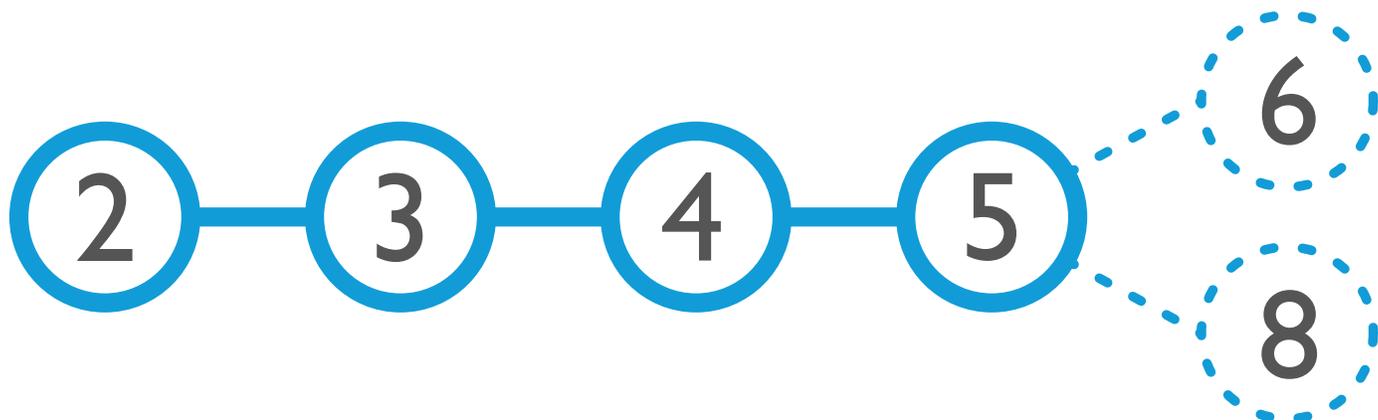


18 19 20



MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Counting one to ten: Ask your child to begin counting by starting with the first number in each row. Have him circle the correct number and connect it with the other numbers in the row.



SCHOOL SPARKS



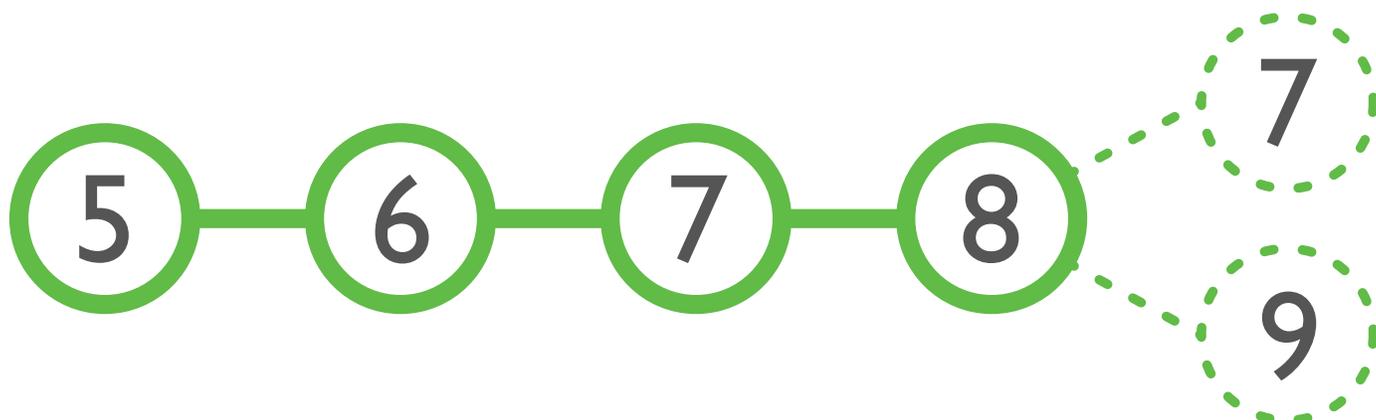
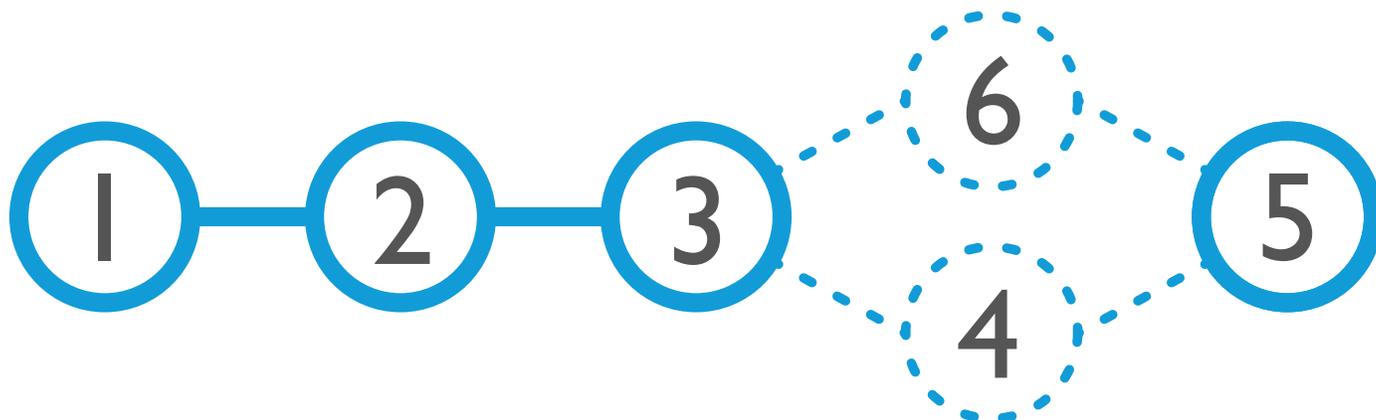
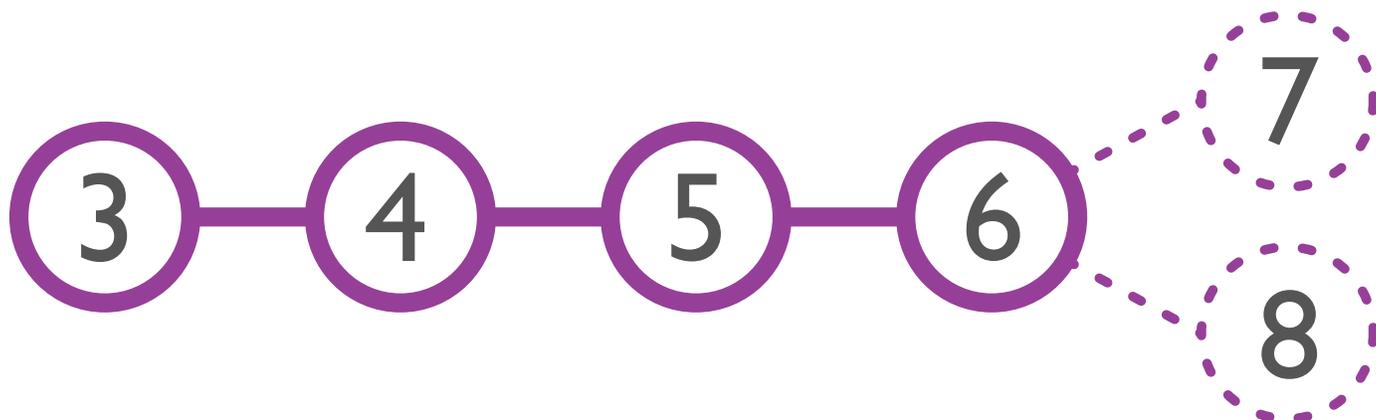
Tip for parents: When giving your child bite-sized snacks, let your child grab a handful and ask him to count each one to see how many he grabbed.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Counting one to ten: Ask your child to begin counting by starting with the first number in each row. Have him circle the correct number and connect it with the other numbers in the row.



SCHOOL SPARKS



Tip for parents: Count out loud to 20 while your child brushes his teeth. He'll be listening because he will want to know when he can stop brushing!

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Filling in the missing numbers: Ask your child to begin counting with the first number in each row. When he reaches an empty box, ask him to write in the missing number.

1	2		4	5	6	7	
---	---	--	---	---	---	---	--

3	4	5	6		8	9	
---	---	---	---	--	---	---	--

5	6		8	9		11	12
---	---	--	---	---	--	----	----

6	7			10	11	12	
---	---	--	--	----	----	----	--

SCHOOL SPARKS



Tip for parents: Write the numbers 1 through 20 on small index cards and shuffle the cards. Ask your child to place them in the correct order from left to right.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Filling in the missing numbers: Ask your child to begin counting with the first number in each row. When he reaches an empty box, ask him to write in the missing number.

5	6	7	8	9			12
---	---	---	---	---	--	--	----

10	11		13		15	16	17
----	----	--	----	--	----	----	----

8	9		11		13	14	
---	---	--	----	--	----	----	--

13	14			17	18	19	
----	----	--	--	----	----	----	--

SCHOOL SPARKS



Tip for parents: Help your child practice counting down from 20 to 0. Say the numbers with him and clap once for each number you say.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Counting to 50: Ask your child to begin counting with the first number in the grid. When he reaches a blank line, ask him to write in the missing number and then continue counting.

1	—	3	—	5
—	7	8	9	—
11	12	—	—	15
—	—	18	19	20
21	22	—	24	—
26	—	28	—	30
—	32	—	34	35
36	—	38	39	—
—	42	43	—	45
46	47	—	49	—

SCHOOL SPARKS



Tip for parents: Give your child two bowls of beans, cereal puffs or another small food. Have him guess which bowl has more and then count the contents of both bowls to see if he was correct.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Counting to 100: Ask your child to begin counting with the first number in the grid. When he reaches a blank line, ask him to write in the missing number and then continue counting.

1	2	___	4	5	6	___	8	9	10
11	___	13	14	15	16	17	___	19	20
21	22	23	___	25	___	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	___	36	37	38	39	___
___	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	___	50
51	52	___	54	55	56	___	58	59	60
61	___	63	64	65	66	67	___	69	70
71	72	73	___	75	76	77	78	79	___
___	82	83	84	___	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	___	97	98	___	100

SCHOOL SPARKS



Tip for parents: Write 10 random, non-sequential numbers on note cards. Ask your child to arrange the cards in order from the smallest number to the largest number.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

100s chart: Use this chart to introduce your child to the numbers 1 through 100. Encourage your child to point to each number as he counts aloud.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100

SCHOOL SPARKS



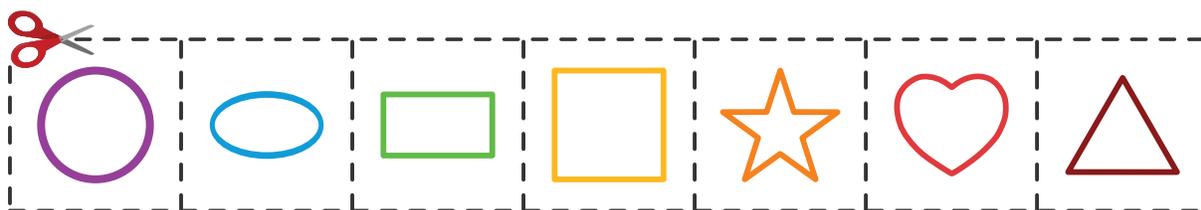
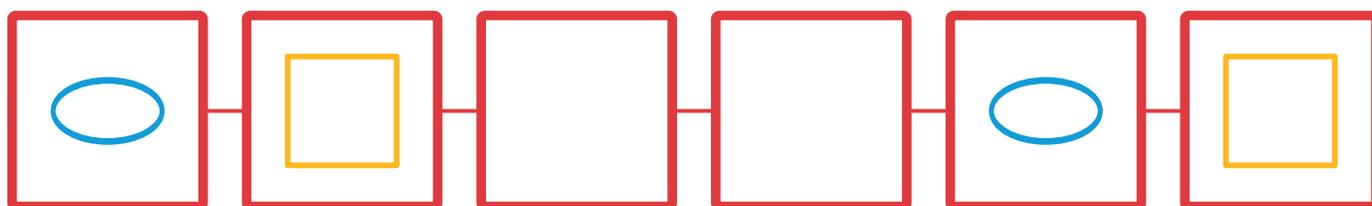
Tip for parents: Use a 100s chart for more than counting to 100. Use the right-hand column to count by 10s, circle every 5th number to count by 5s, or point to a random number and ask your child to say the next three numbers.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Completing basic patterns: Cut out the shapes at the bottom of the page. Then direct your child to complete each pattern by pasting the correct shape in each blank space.



SCHOOL SPARKS



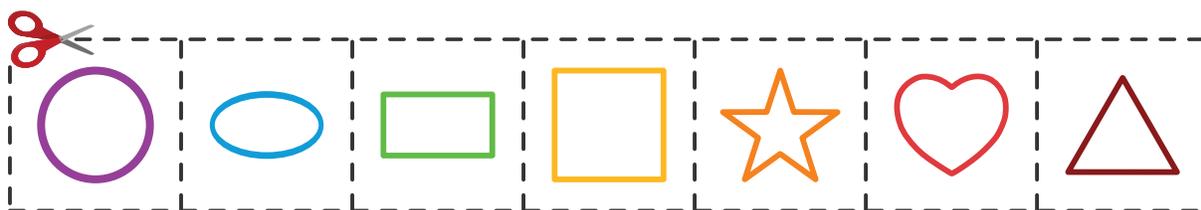
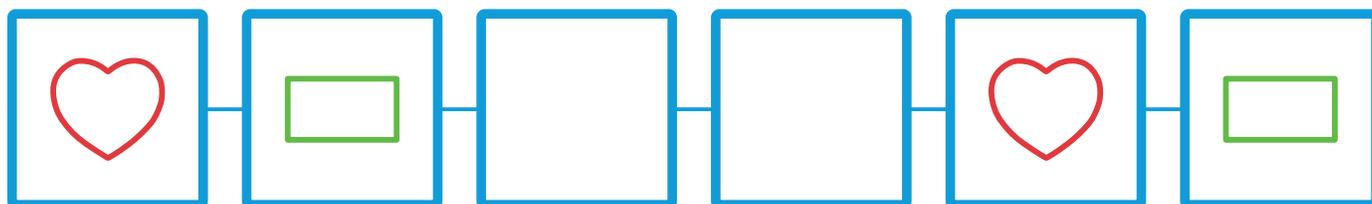
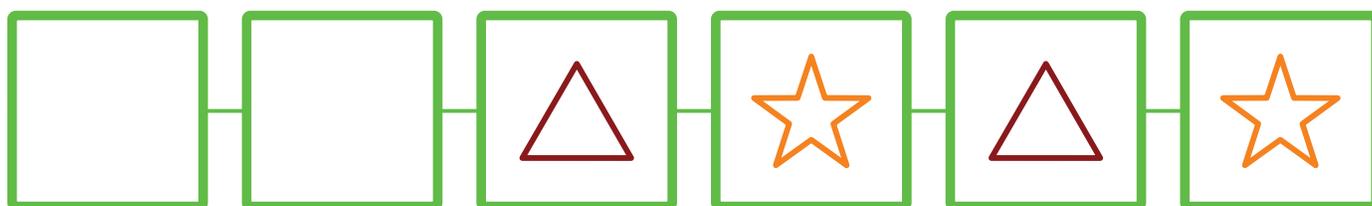
Tip for parents: Create a pattern when you are taking a walk with your child, such as "Step, step, hop, step, step, hop." Say the pattern aloud as you move.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

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SCHOOL SPARKS



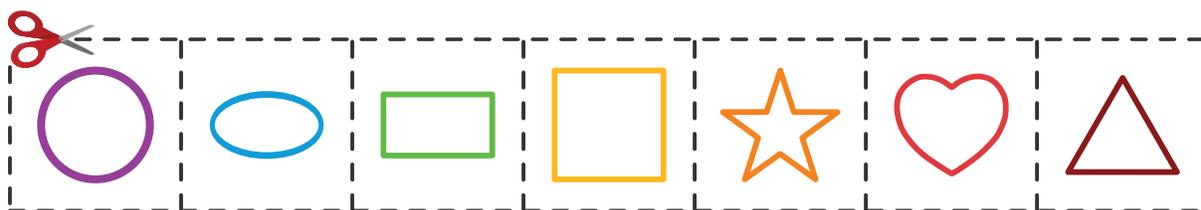
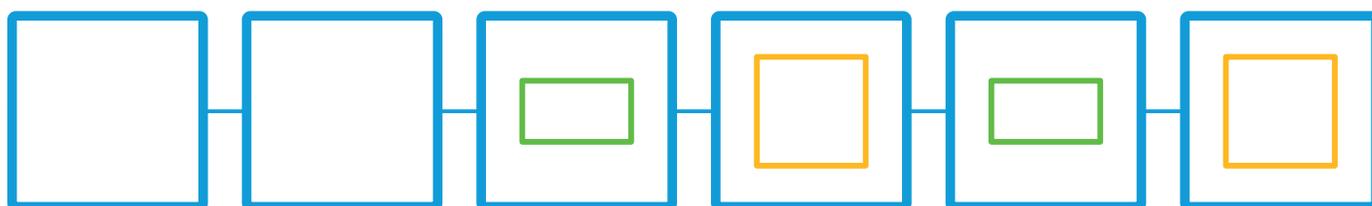
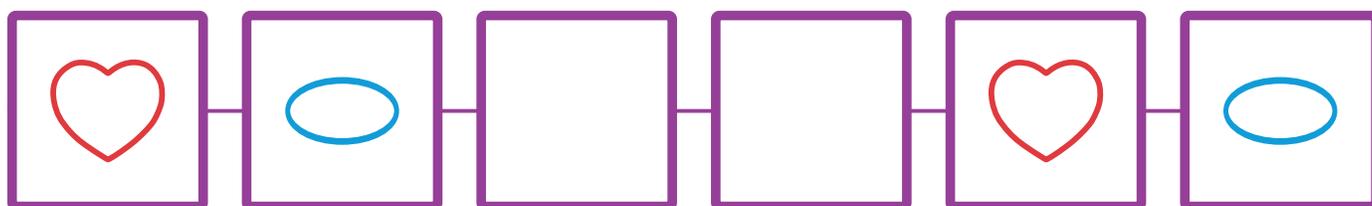
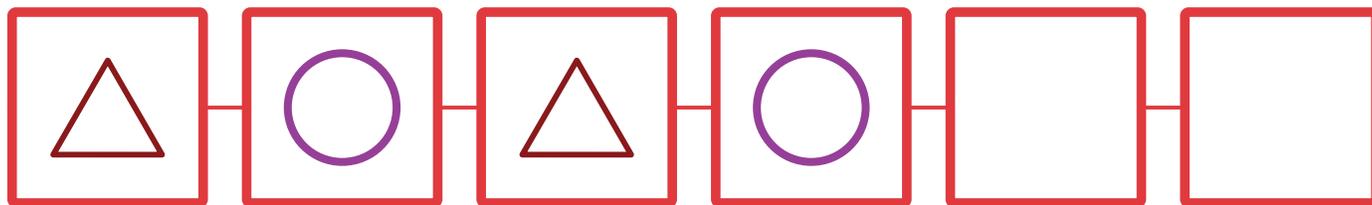
Tip for parents: When eating dinner, eat your food in a specific order and challenge your child to identify the pattern. For example, carrot, carrot, noodle, carrot, carrot, noodle.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Completing basic patterns: Cut out the shapes at the bottom of the page. Then direct your child to complete each pattern by pasting the correct shape in each blank space.



MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Identifying patterns: Look at the pattern in each row and fill in the missing shape. Older children can draw the missing shape while younger ones can say aloud what shape or color comes next.



SCHOOL SPARKS



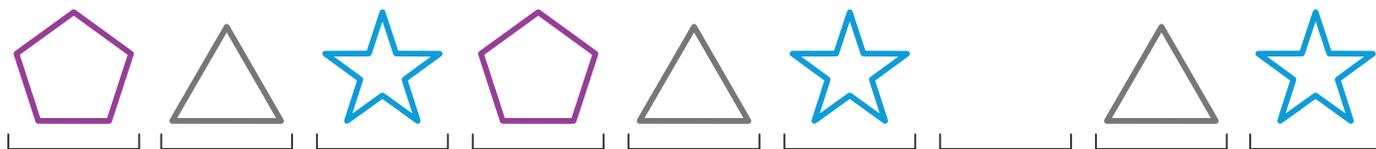
Tip for parents: Practice creating patterns with small pieces of snack food such as cereal, raisins, and grapes. Knowing they get to eat the snack at the end always helps to engage children in an activity.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Identifying patterns: Look at the pattern in each row and fill in the missing shape. Older children can draw the missing shape while younger ones can say aloud what shape or color comes next.



SCHOOL SPARKS



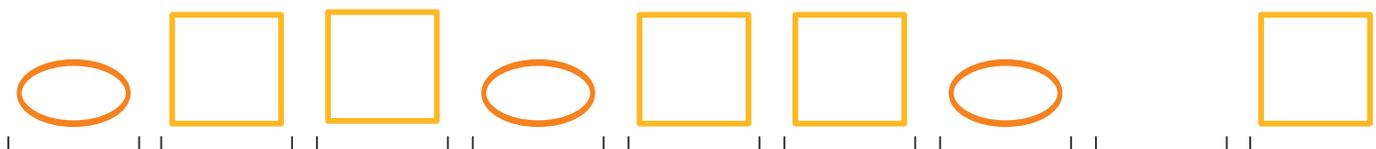
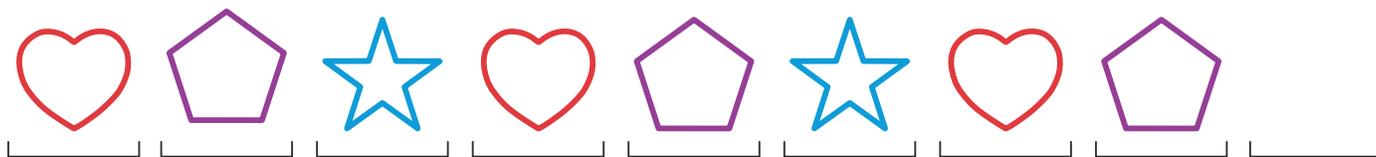
Tip for parents: If your child selects answers from across different rows instead of working on one row at a time, fold the bottom of the page up so it covers all but the row you are working on.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Identifying patterns: Look at the pattern in each row and fill in the missing shape. Older children can draw the missing shape while younger ones can say aloud what shape or color comes next.



SCHOOL SPARKS



Tip for parents: Get your child's permission before sharing his completed work with others. Most children love to show others what they have done, but you emphasize the fact that it is his work by asking first.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Classifying pictures: Each row has a common theme. Ask your child to discuss his observations about the pictures in each row and circle the one that does not belong with the other two.



SCHOOL SPARKS



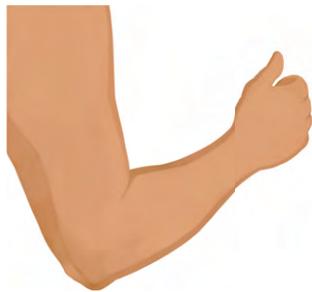
Tip for parents: When your child builds with blocks, write labels such as door, floor, and garage on post-it notes and encourage him to label his building.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Classifying pictures: Each row has a common theme. Ask your child to discuss his observations about the pictures in each row and circle the one that does not belong with the other two.



SCHOOL SPARKS



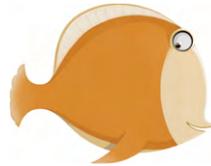
Tip for parents: Make a personalized "Match Game" by printing doubles of family pictures. Put 3 or 4 sets of matching cards face-down on the table and begin playing.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Classifying pictures: Each row has a common theme. Ask your child to discuss his observations about the pictures in each row and circle the one that does not belong with the other two.



SCHOOL SPARKS



Tip for parents: After getting dressed, encourage your child to touch all the clothing on his body that have a certain color in them.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Classifying pictures: Each row has a common theme. Ask your child to discuss his observations about the pictures in each row and circle the one that does not belong with the other two.



MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Sorting into 2 groups: Ask your child to sort the pictures into 2 groups based on the characteristic at the top of each column. Encourage him to discuss how he is classifying each picture.

Outdoors

Playground



SCHOOL SPARKS



Tip for parents: Give your child a stack of 10 books and ask him to sort them. He can sort by paperback or hardback, gender of the main character, presence of animals in the story, or any other classification scheme he wants.

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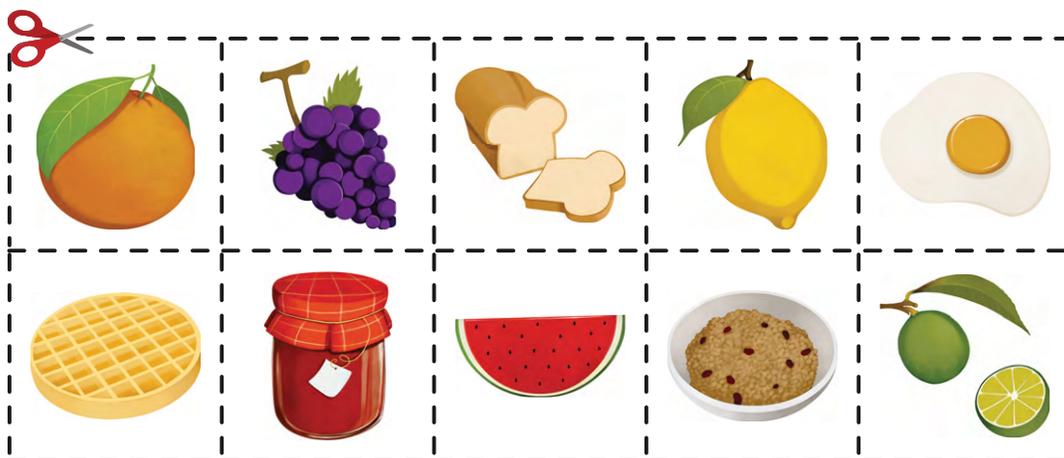
MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Sorting into groups and classifying: Ask your child to sort the pictures into two groups and classify each group. He may sort by color, shape, or other theme and need not use all pictures.



All of these pictures _____.

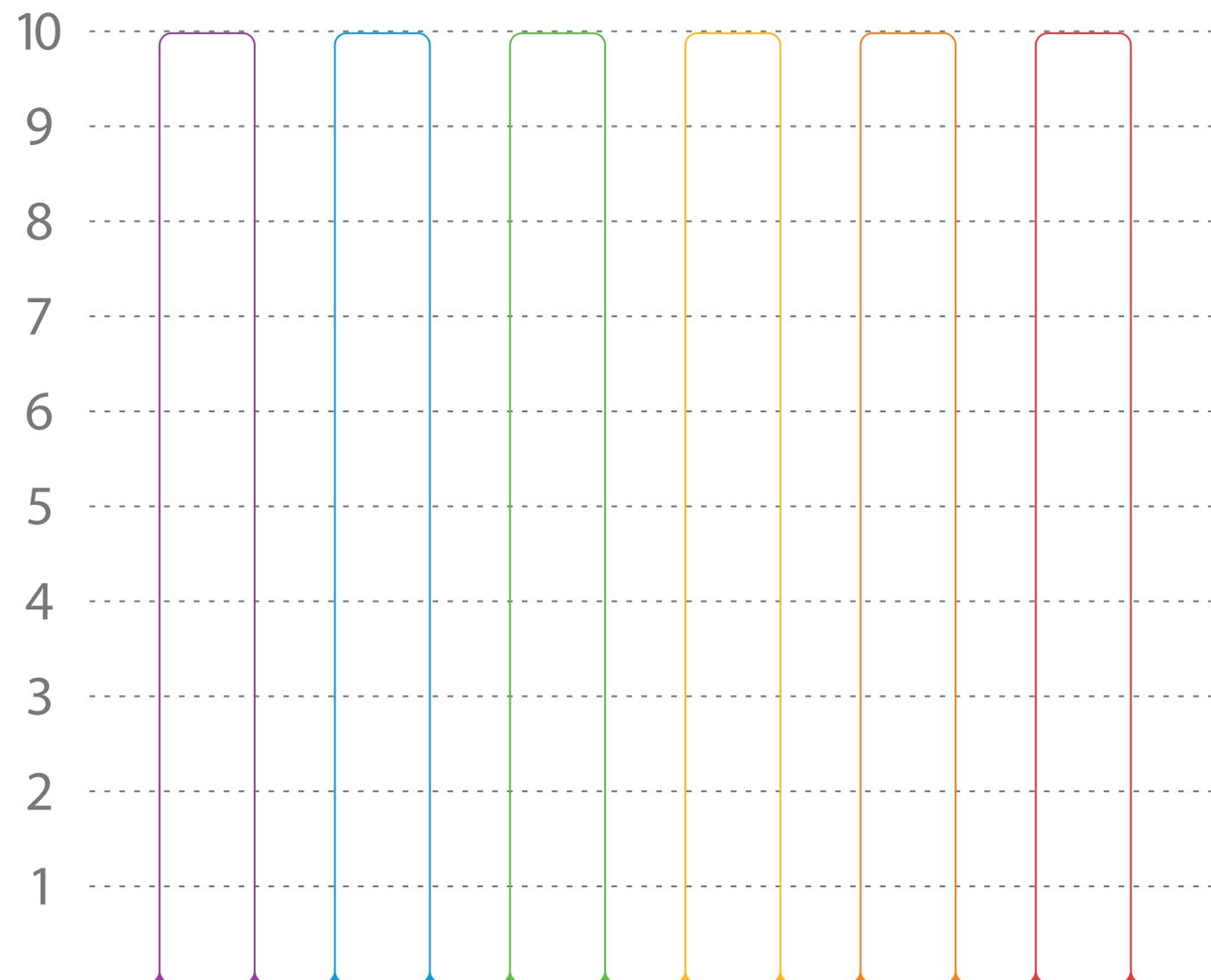
All of these pictures _____.



MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Blank bar graph template: Encourage your child to create a bar graph by taking a poll or by counting items found around the home. Direct him to think of a question and possible answers.

Today's question: _____



SCHOOL SPARKS



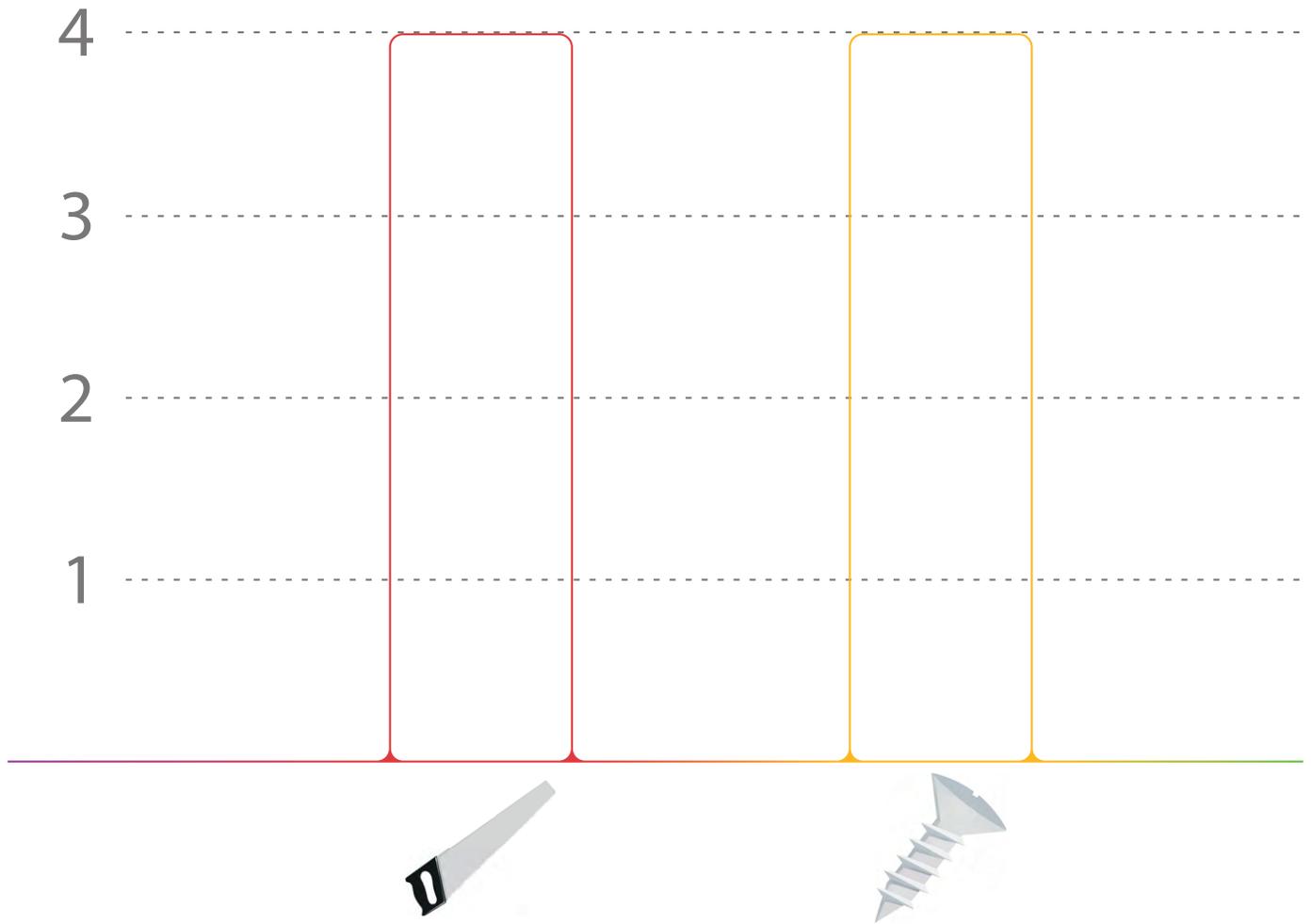
Tip for parents: If your child struggles to think of a survey question, suggest one based on what he likes. For example, if your child loves cereal, encourage him to ask others what their favorite breakfast food is.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Creating pictographs: Cut the pictures below and ask your child to paste each in the right place on the grid to create a pictograph. Encourage him to use the words "more" and "less" to compare.



There are _____ screws than saws.
There are _____ saws than screws.



SCHOOL SPARKS



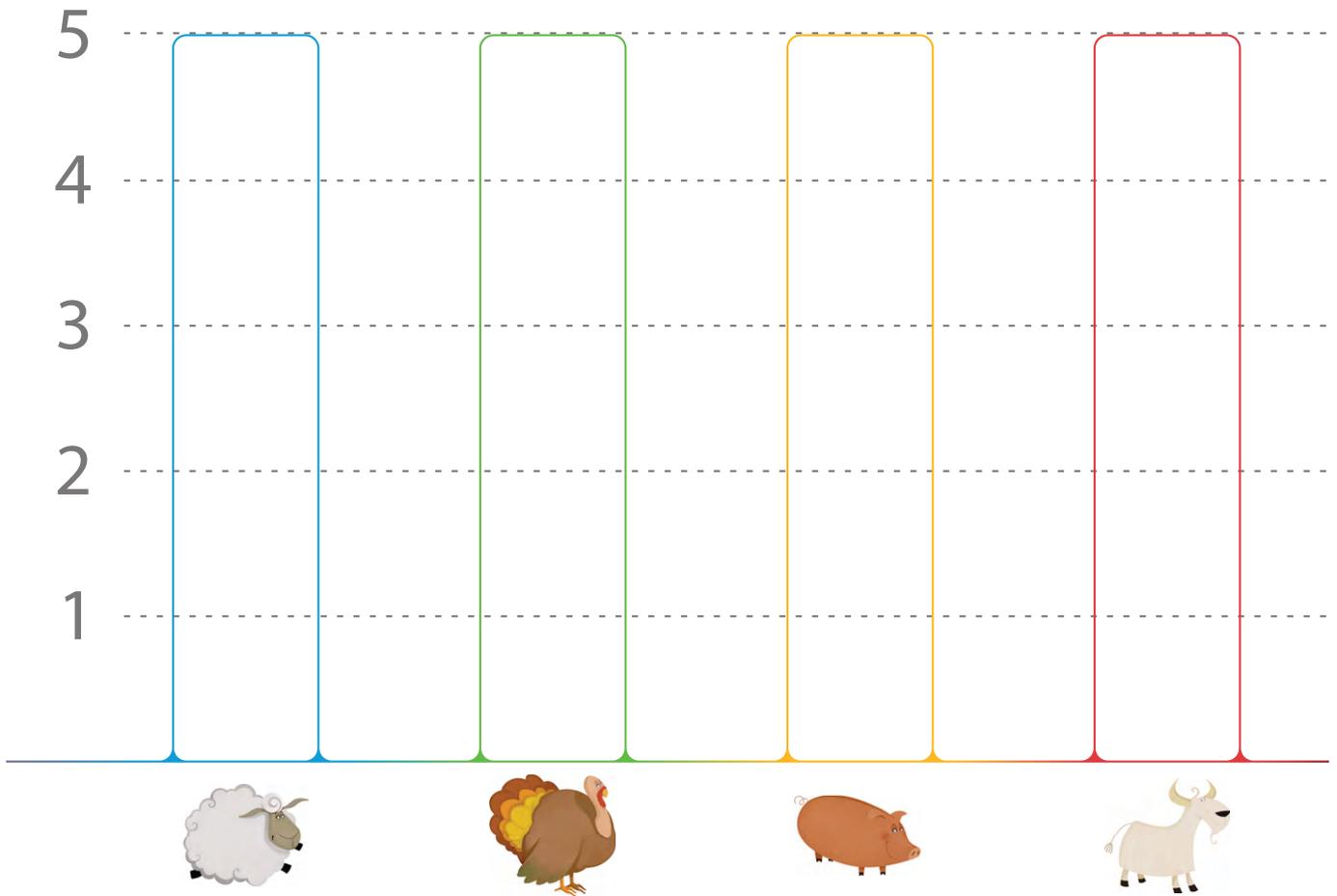
Tip for parents: When putting away your child's laundry, encourage him to make observations about his clothing. For example, ask him to compare how many blue shirts and red shirts he has using the words "more" or "less."

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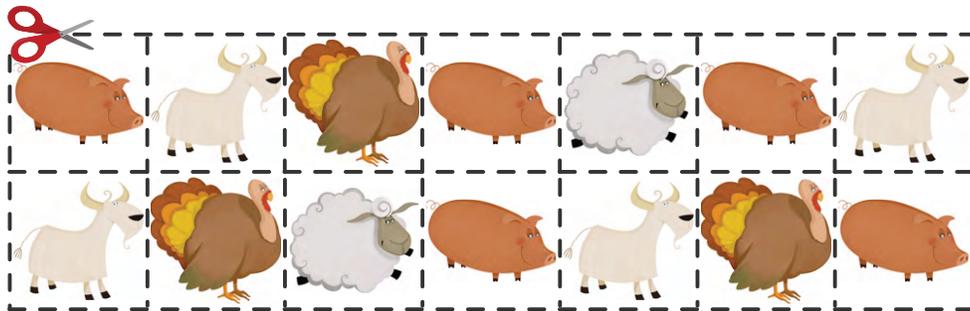
MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Creating pictographs: Cut the pictures below and ask your child to paste each in the right place on the grid to create a pictograph. Encourage him to use the words "more" and "less" to compare.



There are _____ pigs than sheep.

There are _____ turkeys than goat.



SCHOOL SPARKS



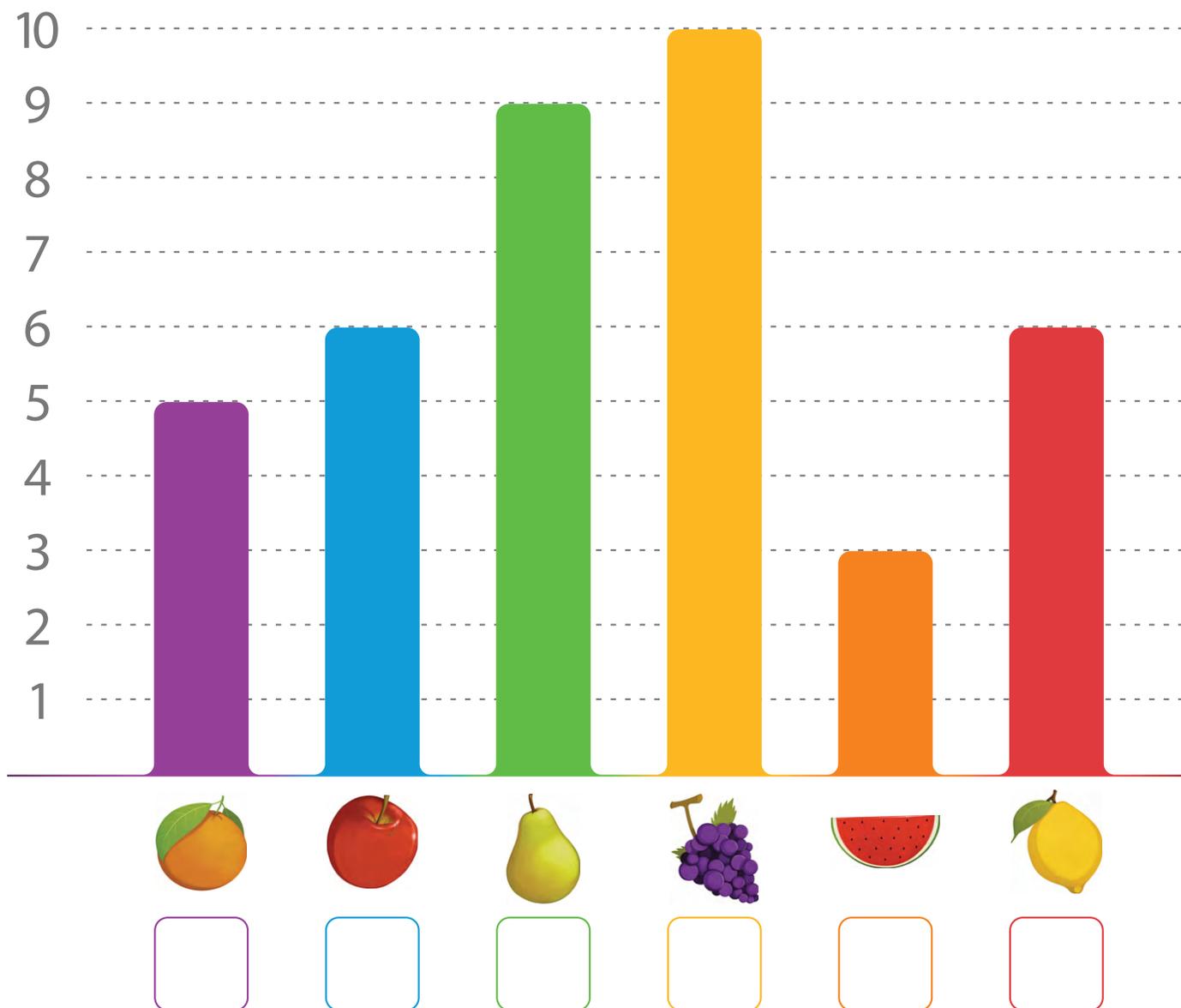
Tip for parents: Transform your shopping list into a pictograph and then let your child hold the graph at the store and remind you how many of each item to buy. For example, you could buy 2 juices, 6 bananas, and 3 yogurts.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Reading bar graphs: Direct your child to read the bar graph by counting how many of each item there are. Then ask him to write that number in the box below the picture.



There are _____ oranges than apples.

There are _____ pears than grapes.

There are _____ watermelons than lemons.

The number of lemons is _____ the number of apples.

SCHOOL SPARKS



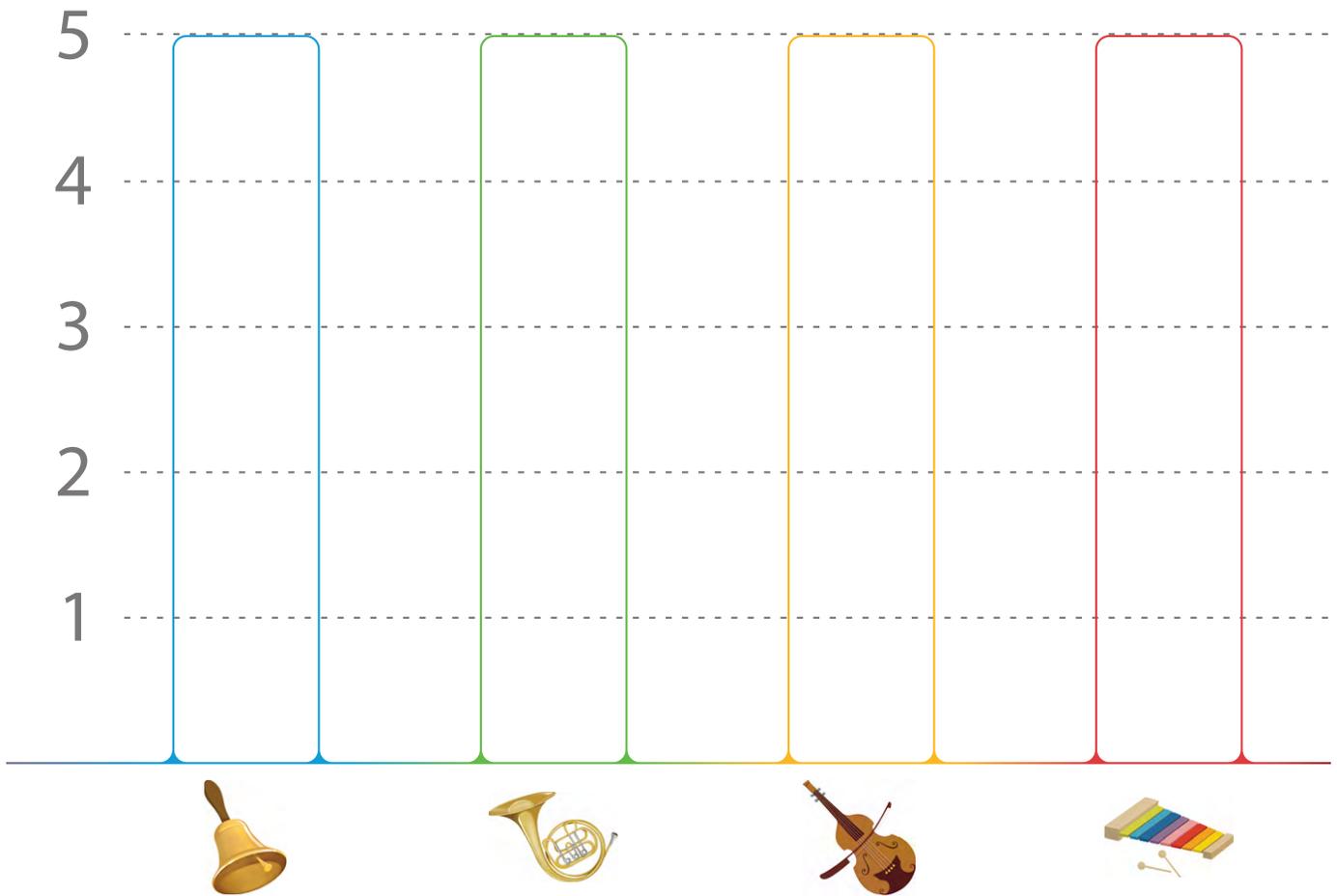
Tip for parents: Point out speed limit signs as you drive with your child. Explain how a 20 MPH limit means you need to go slower than a 65 MPH limit, for example, since 20 is less than 65.

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MATH/NUMBER AWARENESS

Creating bar graphs: Have your child count each set of items in the box and complete the bar graph by coloring in that number of squares. Ask him to use the words "more" and "less" to compare.



There are _____ bells than violins.

There are _____ xylophones than horns.

The number of bells is _____ the number of horns.

SCHOOL SPARKS



Tip for parents: Put different amounts of the same snack in two different cups and ask your child which cup he wants. He will need to count the pieces in each cup to determine which has more.

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