

# TEN LITTLE



Ten to one  
counting fun

Maths Lessons

# TEN LITTLE CHARACTER CARDS

Cut out  
each card and use  
with the activities




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## NUMBER CARDS

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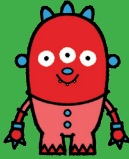
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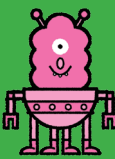
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## Activity One: HIDE AND COUNT

### Aim

To help children understand that there are numbers within numbers; for example, four isn't just four but can be made up of three and one, or two and two or four ones. This activity will also give children opportunities to rehearse their counting, help recognise how many objects are in a small group without counting and do simple calculations.

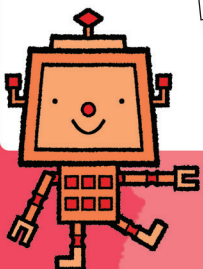
Pick a number to focus on between one and ten

### You will then need:

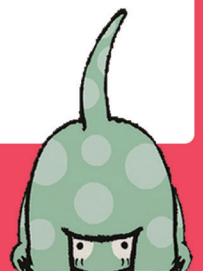
- The number of **Ten Little Character Cards** correlating to your chosen number
- The same number of counters for each child in the group
- One empty container, large enough to place over the Ten Little Character Cards

### Instructions

1. Working with a small group of children carefully count the Ten Little Characters and ask some of the children to check until you are all agreed that there are the correct number altogether
2. Ask all of the children to close their eyes while you hide some of the Ten Little Characters under the tub (for example two)
3. Next, ask them to open their eyes and invite one of the group to count how many they can still see
4. Remind children how many Ten Little Characters there was altogether and ask them if they can work out how many you have hidden under the tub
5. Respond equally to both correct and incorrect answers by asking the child to explain their thinking to the group, using their counters if necessary
6. Ask others in the group whether or not they agree and to explain their reasons
7. Invite one of the children to remove the container to count and check how many Ten Little Characters are under it. Count all of them again and reiterate that, for example, there were three that you could see and two that were hidden and that makes five altogether
8. Repeat the activity several times giving different children in the group the opportunity to be the one to hide the Ten Little Character Cards



Based on the Ten Little book series  
by Mike Brownlow and Simon Rickerty







# Activity Two: HANG THE NUMBERS UP

## Aim

To help children to recognise and name numerals and to understand what each one represents. To be able to order numbers starting with one to three, progressing up to ten, and develop their understanding of where numbers are in relation to each other on a number line.

### You will need:

- One set of **Ten Little Number Cards** from one to three, or one to ten, for each child in the group and one set for the adult
- One washing line or string across a table or classroom. If you haven't got a washing line the cards can be laid on the floor or on a table, but this is not as engaging.



## Instructions

1. Give each child one set of Ten Little Number Cards and ask them to talk about what they can see
2. They may begin by describing the character on the cards, accept this but gradually draw their attention to the dots at the top of the card and ask them to count them
3. Then ask them to tell you what the numeral at the bottom of the Ten Little Number Card represents
4. Ask the children which number comes first when they are counting and once they are agreed ask them all to hold up the number one
5. Invite one of them to peg the teacher's number one at the start of the washing line
6. Repeat with the number two, and then continue until all the cards have been placed
7. Keep the Ten Little Number Cards hung up and progress to activity three or four

## Variations

- Do not always give children a set of Ten Little Number Cards that start with one, for example they could be given three, four, five. Choose numbers that the children need to work on and gradually increase the size of the sets as children develop their confidence and understand what the activity requires
- Only use even or odd numbers
- Do not always start with the first number in the set. For example, if children have been given the numbers three, four, five asking them to place the four first helps them to develop their understanding of where numbers are in relation to each other. Eventually they should have a good idea of where to place each of the numbers from one to ten on an empty washing line.
- Instead of giving children a set of cards each give them a set between pairs of children and ask them to agree before holding up their chosen numbers. This helps to develop mathematical talk and reasoning as children explain their ideas to each other



## Activity Three: FIND THE MISSING NUMBER

### You will need:

- One set of **Ten Little Number Cards** for the group on the table
- One set of **Ten Little Number Cards** that have been placed in order upon a washing line/string (see activity two)

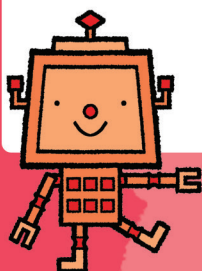


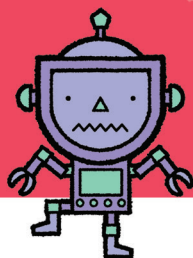
### Instructions

1. Working with a small group of children ask one child to move away from the group
2. While they are gone ask the rest of the children to decide upon a number to remove from the washing line.
3. Invite the child back into the group and ask them to work out which Ten Little Number Card is missing from the line.
4. Ask them to add the missing number from the second set of Ten Little Number Cards on the table and place it in position on the washing line. If they are finding this difficult invite other children to give them clues to help them work out which card is missing

### Variations

- Depending on the confidence of the child you may choose to make this activity more challenging by moving the other cards up to hide the space from where the card has been removed
- Initially place the set of Ten Little Number Cards on the table in order so that it is easier to work out which card is missing. As children gain confidence these can be arranged in a random order





## Activity Four: GUESS MY NUMBER

If you are working on numbers One to Ten you will need:

- Two sets of **Ten Little Number Cards**
- One washing line/string on which one of the sets of **Ten Little Number Cards** has been pegged in order
- One roll of sticky tape



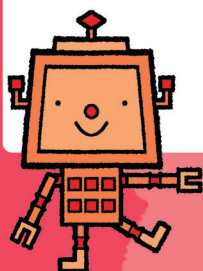
### Instructions

1. Place one set of Ten Little Number Cards on the washing line/string in order
2. Choose one child from the group and tape a random Ten Little Number Card from the second set onto their back so that all the other children can see it
3. The child will need to ask the group question to see if they can work out what the number is. The questions should have yes/no answers only

Example questions include:

- a. Is it bigger than five?
- b. Is it an odd number?
- c. Does it have any curves?

4. Once a number has been ruled out you might want to remove the eliminated Ten Little Number Card from the washing line so it is visually clear which numbers are left. For example, if they have been told that it is bigger than five encourage them to remove the cards that are less than five from the washing line
5. Once there is only one Ten Little Number Card left on the washing line or the child has got the correct answer, they can say which one it is and take the card from their back to check.
6. Over the course of the year children will gradually get better at asking their own questions and eliminating the numbers by themselves



Based on the Ten Little book series  
by Mike Brownlow and Simon Rickerty







## Activity Five: FIND ONE MORE

### Aim

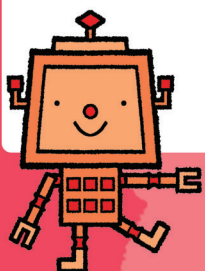
To help children to work out what is one more and which is one fewer of any number up to ten

#### You will need:

- One set of **Ten Little Character Cards** plus some spares (you may choose to use more than one set of characters for this activity).
- One box with a lid with a few spare characters inside
- One 'wand' or stick

### Instructions

1. Ask one child in the class to count out an agreed number of Ten Little Character Cards (say four)
2. Ask them to place the Ten Little Characters in the box, being careful not to let them see that there are already some in the box
3. Now agree with the class whether they want to find one more or one less in the box
4. If the children have decided on one more then ask the child to tap the box with the stick while the other children say emphatically 'find one more', or the same with 'find one less'
5. Agree with the children how many should now be in the box (in this example there would now be five). They may count together on your fingers and look on a number line to help them to do this
6. Write the original number on a board, and what number you are expecting to find when either one has been added or taken away is a good idea. This helps children to associate the correct numeral with the correct number
7. Now count out the original number of Ten Little Characters from the box plus one extra (or one less), do this quite slowly building the tension as you do as if you are not sure if there will be an extra one. Look relieved when you pull out the fifth and final character themselves





## Activity Six: COUNT AND CLAP

### Aim

To help children to recognise numbers and understand what each one represents, to help children count sounds or actions

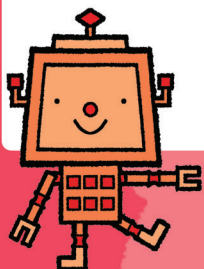
### You will need:

- One set of **Ten Little Number Cards** (with any extras as needed)
- One feely bag or box



### Instructions

1. Place all of the Ten Little Number Cards in the bag or box
2. Invite a child to come and take a card from the bag, show it to the class and tell you what it says. If they find this hard encourage them to count the dots on the card to help them
3. Ask another child to choose an action such as clapping, jumping, stamping or nodding
4. Tell the children that you are going to perform the number of actions which matches the number on the card. For instance, if the first child pulled out a number seven and the second child chose clapping you are all going to clap seven times
5. Count each clap carefully and slowly making sure that everyone is clapping at the same speed. When you get to number seven use the tone of your voice to remind children that this is the final number in the count
6. Let other children take turns to choose a number and choose an action
7. If you want the class to focus on certain numerals you may decide to put extra cards with the focus numbers on in the bag
8. Once children are familiar with this activity it can be adapted by asking children to do one more or one fewer of the actions than the numeral on the card





## Activity Seven: MEMORY PAIRS

### Aim

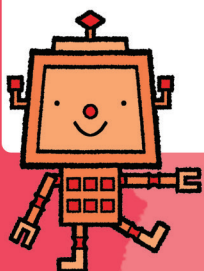
To help children to recognise and name numerals and support the development of their short-term memory

### You will need:

- Two sets of **Ten Little Number Cards**. Keep the numbers of cards used small at first as this game can quickly become boring when played with too many cards and unskilled players

### Instructions

1. This game is best done with a small group so that children do not need to wait too long for their turn
2. Shuffle the two sets of Ten Little Number Cards together and then lay them out in a grid face down
3. The first child turns over two cards. If they both have the same numeral on them they can keep them. In this case they have another turn
4. If they don't match they are left turned over for a couple of seconds so that everyone can try and remember the position of the cards before they are turned back over
5. As play passes around the circle encourage children to try and remember where they have seen previous numbers and think aloud
6. The winner is the player who has collected most matching pairs by the end of the game







## Additional Memory Games

### You will need:

- One set of mixed **Ten Little Character Cards**



### Instructions

1. Arrange several Ten Little Character Cards on a tray and encourage the children to count how many there are and to talk about what Ten Little characters they can see
2. Cover the tray with a cloth and then ask one of the children to remove one of the Ten Little Character Cards while the others aren't looking
3. Let the other children look at the tray again and invite them to count the Ten Little Characters to see if they are all still there
4. Now challenge them to see if they can remember which one is missing. Give them clues if necessary

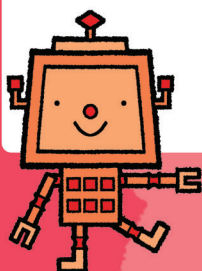
### Variations

As the children become more confident the game can be made more challenging:

- Sometimes remove more than one Ten Little Character, sometimes don't remove any and sometimes add one. Encourage children to count to see if they can work out how many have been added or taken away before they try and remember which ones are missing or which have been added.
- Encourage children to make marks to help them remember if that is appropriate, but do not force them to do this if they do not find it helpful. However, you might model doing this yourself when you take a turn

Some children may find this activity very challenging and could be supported by:

- Using a smaller numbers of Ten Little Character Cards
- Giving children a photograph of the Ten Little Characters being used that they can check against
- Keeping the sessions short and frequent rather than spending too long on it at any one time



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