

Counting with pipe cleaners and beads:



Using colourful pipe cleaners and beads it is a fun counting maths activity for children. This is also great for fine motor development. Counting beads on pipe cleaners might seem simple enough, but it is the perfect activity for children who are at the early stages of developing their numeracy skills.

Alternatively, you can use straws and pieces of pasta to thread and count.

Ordering numbers

Children can place the pipe cleaners in numerical order. It is a good idea to encourage children to take the time to think about the order of the numbered pipe cleaners and encourage them to adopt good counting strategies, such as counting on and checking what they had already done.

Making numbers

Encourage children to try threading on the beads independently, to represent the number attached to the end of the pipe cleaner. To ensure that children do not become too overwhelmed, only allow them to have 2 or 3 numbered pipe cleaners at a time.

Fine motor development

This maths activity of counting beads onto pipe cleaners is also a fabulous way of developing children fine motor skills. The process of threading the bead onto the pipe cleaner requires a steady hand and also great hand and eye coordination. This activity really does give all those things a great work out.

Double-checking my answers

Encourage children to practise double-checking their answers. I believe this is a skill that needs to be encouraged and taught early on. Help your child to double-check how many beads they have placed on the pipe cleaner.

Patterns and Colours

Encourage children to use patterns, taking the opportunity to integrate lots of talking about colours and showing them how to make a repeated pattern using two different colours.

Benefits of counting with beads and pipe cleaners:

- Counting forwards
- Practising counting 1 to 1 correspondence
- Ordering numbers
- Double-checking their answers
- Promotes fine motor
- Promotes concentration

