

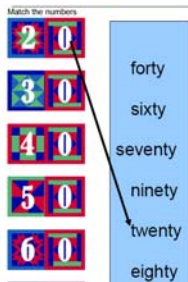
## Topic: Numbers

By Sue Clarke

On the LearnEnglish Kids website you will find materials for practising numbers with all levels of young learners. Activities range from simple matching and spelling exercises to stories and worksheets to practise really big numbers. The topic also includes lots of fun games including a mind reading number game, a song to practise forming numbers and lots of maths activities. You can find the materials at <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-topics-numbers.htm>.

### Easy activities for Very Young Learners

With learners who are just beginning to learn English numbers are an essential part of the curriculum. For initial teaching you will find the Balloon Burst game useful. This practises the spellings of numbers 1 – 8. Go to <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-balloon-numbers.htm>.



There are also a number of useful worksheets to teach the numbers. These include Numbers 1 – 10 (very simple matching and How many? exercise); a crossword on the Numbers 11 – 20 worksheet and matching and sequencing activities i.e. what's the next number? on the worksheet for 20 -100. These are invaluable for very young learners and are good reference tools to keep in children's files to check spellings of numbers. You can find them at <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-print-numbers1.pdf>.

### Number practice and maths

Most children enjoy doing simple maths sums and doing them in a foreign language seems to be more fun! Practise some simple maths on the board and familiarise the students with the terminology of doing maths in English e.g. plus, minus, equals. For easy practice you could use the number wordsearch with maths clues. Go to <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-wordsearch-numbers.htm>. For practice with harder sums you could try the gap-fill game 'Some simple sums', which practises numbers up to 100. Go to <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-gapfill-numbers.htm>.

|                                     |        |         |       |        |       |
|-------------------------------------|--------|---------|-------|--------|-------|
| forty                               | twenty | seventy | fifty | ninety | sixty |
| ★ ten plus [ ] = thirty             |        |         |       |        |       |
| ★ [ ] minus ten = twenty            |        |         |       |        |       |
| ★ forty plus twenty five = [ ] five |        |         |       |        |       |

### Developing reading skills

There are two stories which practise numbers at different levels of learner. For lower levels you could use the story 'I couldn't believe my eyes', a very simple story about the Russian circus arriving in town, and ending with a 'trick question' for the children to type in their answer as a number. Go to <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-stories-numbers.htm>. You could use the simple



follow-up worksheet to accompany this. The worksheet also has a 'Magic number trick'. Read the instructions with the class and ask them to think of their own number. Work through the instructions to see if the trick works. After you have done this as a class activities ask the students to try it in pairs. This also links in very nicely with the 'Magic Monkey' game where the monkey can read your mind and tell you what magic number you have thought of! A fun and motivating game! Go to <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-magic-monkey.htm>

The second story 'Record Breakers' is for learners at a higher level. Very large numbers are practised in the story as the girl tries to break lots of fun world records. You will need to practise very large numbers before children read the story. Play the story at least twice. During the first listening ask them to remember what the world records are. During the second listening and reading you could ask them to do the matching

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exercise from the worksheet. The second part of this provides practice in reading and recognising very large numbers. Extend this if you like with further pair work on numbers. Ask each child to write down five very large numbers and then dictate them to his/her partner. This activity is quite fun and children enjoy testing out their partners with the biggest number possible. This story also contains many superlative structures for describing the world records. You could extend work on world records by using the Guinness World records site at <http://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/>.



### Using the Song

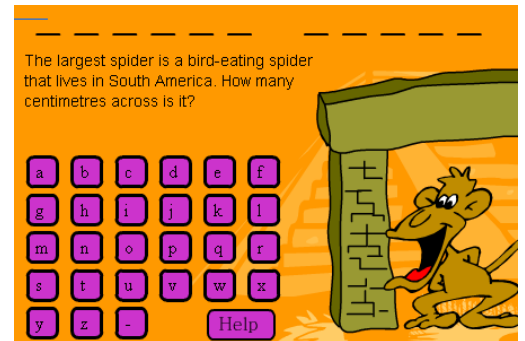


The topic also contains a song 'In My Plane', which shows children how to form the numbers. This is a very useful activity for very young learners who are just learning to write and form letters and learn pencil control. The song contains vocabulary such as down, across, straight line, round, circle. All of these items are quite useful for teacher dictation activities. You could consolidate numbers by asking the children to form the numbers from the instructions – use the worksheet for this. You can find the song at <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-songs-numbers.htm>

### A challenge with numbers

At a more difficult level you could use the game 'Amazing animal facts', which is basically a hangman game on the numbers with clues to read about incredible information on animals. Go to <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-hangman-numbers.htm>.

This game could be exploited with further incredible facts about animals. The Guinness World Records site (see above) has a really fun section on animals where you could get information, or if students have access to computers they could write their own quiz questions for the class or other students. This would make an excellent end of term quiz activity.



### Activate the numbers

Finally, if your class needs livening up you could try using the Number quiz worksheet with them. You can find it at <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-print-numberquiz.pdf>. You could do the questions as a class survey or you could ask students to work in pairs to complete the questions (the answers are all numbers). As the worksheet progresses questions become more 'active', until they meet questions such as 'How many times can you jump up and down in a minute?'. Students could try these activities out and time each other. You will need to make some space in the classroom and perhaps move the furniture. A good fun way to get rid of all the kids surplus energy!

### More number fun!

Have fun in your classes with number games. Apart from the traditional bingo games there are many others which practise numbers. Try this simple game. Draw a circle on the board and write numbers randomly inside it. Ask two students to come to the board. Give each one a piece of chalk or a pen. Shout out a number. The first student to cross out the number gets a point. This is an age-old game which still provides lots of fun and motivation – with no preparation for the teacher!



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