

LESSON 1: SUBITIZING 1 TO 3

OBJECTIVES:

1. To learn the term *left*
2. To learn finger sets and tally marks for quantities 1 to 3
3. To recognize quantities 1 to 3 without counting

MATERIALS:

1. Music for “Yellow is the Sun” (Appendix p. 1)
2. *Yellow is the Sun* book
3. Colored 1” × 1” tiles
4. Tally sticks (craft sticks)

ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHING:

Left hand. Ask the child to raise her *left* hand. Ask her to point to her left foot, left eye, and other left body parts.

The *Yellow is the Sun* song and book. Teach the following song with motions. Use only the left hand for numbers 1 to 5.

Yellow is the Sun

Yellow is the sun.

This is only one. (Raise one finger.)

Why is the sky so blue?

Let me show you two. (Raise two fingers.)

Salty is the sea.

One more and it’s three. (Raise three fingers.)

Hear the thunder roar.

Here’s the mighty four. (Raise four fingers.)

Ducks will swim and dive.

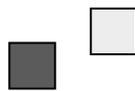
My whole hand makes five. (Raise five fingers.)

Read the book *Yellow is the Sun* to the child.

Quantity of 2. Show two fingers with your left hand and ask the child to show two with her left hand. Place 2 tiles in front of the child. Ask her how many she sees. [2]



Two fingers.



Two tiles.

Place the tally sticks within reach of the child. Tell her to take 2 tally sticks (without counting). Next ask her to lay them out as shown. Also clap 2 times and ask them how many claps they heard. [2]



Two tally sticks.

EXPLANATIONS:

To learn which is their left hand, some children benefit by wearing a bracelet on their left hand.

Subitizing (SOO bih tighz ing) is perceiving at a glance the number of items without counting. Five-month-old babies can subitize up to three objects and many 12-month-old babies up to four objects. It is easier for children (and adults) to subitize quantities than to count them.

Subitizing allows the child simultaneously to see the whole and the individual items. In counting the child focus on one item at a time. To foster their natural subitizing skills, children should be discouraged from counting small collections.

The left hand is used for numbers less than five to correlate with reading from left to right. It does not matter which fingers of the left hand are used.

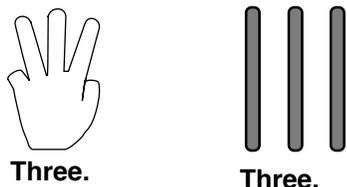
For demonstrating fingers 1–5, use your left hand if you are sitting next to a child and your right hand if you are facing the child.

Finger sets, or the use of fingers, to show a quantity gives the child a tactile feel and a visual image of quantity. Many parents use finger sets when they teach their children to show their ages with fingers. We will continue this pattern to 10.

Research shows children who can represent quantities with their fingers score better in upper elementary math.

ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHING CONTINUED:

Quantity of 3. Ask the child to show 3 fingers. If she is not sure, show her, but do not count. Ask her to show 3 with the tally sticks.



Place 3 tiles in front of the child. Ask: How many do you see? [3]



Rearrange the tiles and ask: Now how many tiles do you see? [3]

Quantity of 1. Place one tile where the child can see it. Ask: How many? [1] Have her show it with her fingers and with the tally sticks.

Finding given quantities. Ask the child to look around the room and name one of something. [for example, one table]

Repeat for finding two and three objects. [three chairs]

Disagreeing. Place 3 tiles to one side of the child and 2 tiles on the other side. Ask the child if she agrees there are 3 tiles on both sides. [no]

After a short discussion about the number of tiles, add one more tile to the side with 2, and ask her if she agrees now that they both have 3. [yes]

Changing quantities. Start with 3 tiles; ask the child to show the number with her fingers. Now ask her to watch. Remove a tile and ask her to say the new number. [2]

Repeat adding or removing tiles, but do not exceed 3.

In conclusion. Ask the child to show on her fingers: 2, 3, and 1.

EXPLANATIONS CONTINUED:

It is very important that the child feels comfortable disagreeing with you during math time. The primary role of the teacher is to foster thinking in the child, not merely give information.

For this lesson there is no worksheet. Worksheets are used only when needed in the course of the lesson or when independent work will benefit the child.