

Fun with Math: Data Analysis

Math is all around us, and your toddler has been developing math ideas and skills from the moment of birth.

We use math language—early math talk—every day around our young ones, often without noticing. Research has shown that this matters. Laying a strong foundation in math concepts makes it easier for your child to grasp more difficult concepts later.



Math Talk

Math Talk is “simply talking to your child about the math that they experience” (naec.org). For example, when you take a walk and count the trees on your block (“Let’s count the trees! I see one, oh, here is another, that’s two, and another one, that’s three”) or when you sort clothes (“This t-shirt is little, that’s yours, this one is bigger, it’s mine”) you are using math language. We know that children learn best through joyful, playful activities in the context of a loving relationship, so you can help them build a foundation for learning math skills and concepts.

Let’s Explore Data Analysis

While this sounds like a concept too complex for little ones, all **data analysis** really means is that we are “compiling information and describing it in a quantitative way: how many?” (Early Math Collaborative/Erikson Institute). One everyday example of data analysis is a shopping list, where we note not just what we need to buy, but also how much: milk (2 gallons), eggs (1 carton), cookies (2 bags).










Activities

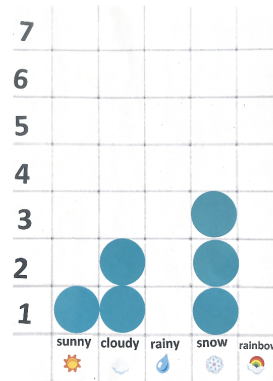
If you signed up for an activity bag from the library, in your bag you'll find some blank calendar pages, weather stickers, a blank weather graph, and dot stickers. If you are doing this activity at home with your own supplies, gather calendar pages, stickers, and chart paper.

Start by filling out the calendar for the current month. Now look outside with your child. Is it sunny, cloudy, rainy, snowy, do you see a rainbow? Put the appropriate sticker on today's date.

Look at your stickered calendar after one week and count together. How many days were there of each type of weather?

Create a simple bar graph by placing 1 dot in the matching column for each day we had certain weather:

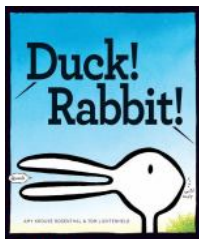
February						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 	2 	3 	4 	5 	6 
7 	8	9	10	11	12	13



Math Language

Here are some math words to get you started: more than, fewer than, probably, never, graph, compare, today, calendar, month, tomorrow, yesterday

Let's Read



Duck! Rabbit! by Amy Krouse Rosenthal

Is it a duck or a rabbit? Depends on how you look at it! Use the visual clues in the pictures—data—to analyze and guess which animal you see.