

## Card and Board Games

Many children love playing board games and card games at home. They very rarely look upon this as Maths, or even work! However, games undoubtedly support children in their confidence and manipulation of number, and often consolidate a wider range of mathematical concepts.

Simple board games like Snakes and Ladders support counting skills (both forwards and backwards.) Pontoon is excellent for number bonds up to 20, and other card games, such as cribbage, have tremendous mathematical value.

How many children (or parents) stop to consider the essential concept of 'probability' when playing card games, or games such as Cluedo? And it is no co-incidence that darts players are usually experts at counting backwards!

If children have the opportunity to play lots of games at home this can have undoubted benefits in many areas of learning, both socially and academically.

## Cooking and Shopping

Many children love to help with cooking and shopping. These activities provide excellent opportunities to consolidate maths skills, including estimating, comparing weights and measures, and of course handling money!

It is of great benefit if children have regular experience at home of weighing ingredients out and estimating quantities, or of measuring up and helping to plan the decorating!

The most powerful learning in Maths is where learning can be purposefully applied to **real-life experiences**.

Can your child work out the change from a pound if purchasing a bar of chocolate, or a packet of crisps? (or even something healthy!) A good method for this is **COUNTING ON** from the price of the object up to the nearest pound.

Look at food labels to see how much products weigh, point out containers that hold a litre, or two litres.

What is the capacity of a can of drink? A sound knowledge of what a litre looks like, what a kilogram or half a kilogram feels like, or that there are 1000 millilitres in a litre and 1000 grams in a kilogram will really help your child when it comes to estimating more complex weights and measures.

## The importance of counting on...

As children develop their confidence with number they come to realise the importance of counting on. Skills of counting on inevitably support a much wider range of mental calculation strategies.

We often assume that 'counting' should start at 1 and go forwards. In developing a secure grasp of number, children should be encouraged to count from different starting points (both forwards and backwards) and, when counting back, why stop at zero?

A fundamental early skill is counting on to ten. How many more are needed when you are at seven? Pairs to ten are crucial and it really helps early on if your child knows that 3 and 7, 2 and 8, 5 and 5 etc... **ALL MAKE TEN!**

Counting to the next ten is the next step... How many from 14 to get to 20, or from 52 to get to 60. A firm grasp of pairs to ten helps children to develop a secure and efficient mastery of many mental calculation strategies.

Mental calculations to the nearest hundred take this a step further. If your child knows that (starting at 63) they can add 30 to get to 93 and then another 7 to get up to a hundred, this will help them with more complex mental calculations and strategies later on. Playing 'pairs to a hundred' is of great benefit to children. It also helps them considerably when it comes to calculations involving money, (eg counting on to work out how much change they'll get from a pound!)



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