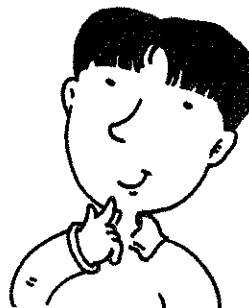


Guess and Check

Targeted skill

Young children are expected to reason and support their thinking while using mathematical language. They are also expected to use a problem-solving model that incorporates understanding the problem, making a plan to solve it, carrying out the plan, and evaluating the solution for reasonableness.



Materials

- ◆ small objects such as blocks or buttons
- ◆ small cloth to cover the blocks (wash cloth or small towel works well)

What to do

In Guess and Check, your child makes a reasonable prediction about an answer and then checks to confirm the prediction. This process helps young children who are used to making guesses without any reasoning behind them begin to assess the reasonableness of their guesses.

Place the objects in the center of the playing area. Ask your child to combine a given number of objects. For example, say, "Put two blue blocks and one red block in the center of the table." Cover the blocks with a small cloth. Ask, "How many blocks are in the center?" Ask your child to support his or her answer: "Why do you think that three is the answer?" Expect your child to give a logical explanation such as, "I think there are three because I had two and then got one more. Three is one more than two." Then remove the cloth and ask your child to "check" by counting the blocks. Ask, "Was your prediction reasonable?" to help your child assess his or her original prediction.

Solving Problems

Guess and Check (continued)

Extending the activity

- ❖ As your child's ability increases, make the math problems more and more difficult.
- ❖ Use a variety of objects to play this game. Using sticks, marbles, pinecones, and other items adds variety to the same activity.

More questions to ask

Asking "Is it reasonable?" is appropriate in many situations. As mathematical language becomes an everyday part of your child's vocabulary, he or she will have a better understanding of various mathematical terms.

What your child is practicing

Learning to make reasonable estimates is hard for young children. They are not used to taking several variables into account before they make a decision.

Learning to do so carries over from math situations into the realm of language arts as well.

(predict, infer
what will happen in a story)