



20 Creative Number Frames Activities

Here are a selection of fun activities which can be done with any type of number frames.

Most will work very well with small groups, giving teachers immediate knowledge of where children are and what they can do to move them on. Children will be developing a concrete and kinaesthetic understanding of early number and a love of maths too!



1 Counting the Pennies

- Put pennies in the holes of the number frames to decide how much each is worth.
- Give out a number of pennies, e.g. 10.
- How many number frames can you buy with 10 pence?
- Add price tags to the frames.

2 Odds and evens

- Label two containers 'odd' and 'even' and place them a little way apart.
- A child draws a number frame from a bag. If it is even, they must walk, or skip, to place it in the even container. If it is an odd shape they must do a silly walk to place it in the container. Retrieve the containers. What numbers are in each? Can children order the odd and even numbers separately? What do they notice?

4 Washing Line

- Hang the number frames in sequence from 1-10 on a 'washing line'.

Without letting the children know, take one or more frames and hide them. Which numbers are missing? Why do you think somebody would want to take those numbers? Is there anything special about them? (They may give answers such as: "They like the colour, it's a special number because I am 5, it's my favourite number, it was the 3 little pigs etc.")

Get the children to search for the missing number frames, playing the 'hot and cold game', to give them clues when they are close or far away.

Swap the number frames on the washing line around for children to re-sequence.

3 Musical guessing game

- Give each child a number frame and get them to stand in a circle. They must hide their frame as best they can. Choose a volunteer to be 'it'. As the group sing 'In and out the Dusty Bluebells', the volunteer weaves in and out of the circle. When he or she gets to the 'Tippy-tippy tap-tap' part, they stand behind whoever they have reached and tap on their shoulders as they sing. They then get to ask 3 questions to try and guess the number frame that person is holding. Whether it is guessed correctly or not, the children swap places and the second child becomes the guesser.

"In and out the dusty bluebells
In and out the dusty bluebells
In and out the dusty bluebells
Who will guess my number?
Tippy-tippy tap-tap
On my shoulder
Tippy-tippy tap-tap
On my shoulder
Tippy-tippy tap-tap
On my shoulder
You will guess my number."

20 Creative Number Frames Activities



5 Touch, but don't look!

- Without looking, a child selects a number card from 1-10.
- They must then feel inside a bag to try and find and pull out the matching number frame by touch alone. If they pull out the correct frame, they keep it; if not it goes back in the bag for the next person to take a turn.

10 Number balance

- Use a balancing scale to compare number frames. Place a number frame on one side, e.g. a six and get the children to use different values to balance it. "How many ways are there to equal the six?"
- Use the large number frames and ask a child be a human balancing scale! Ask the volunteer to put their arms out to the side. What will happen if they hold a 9 on one side and a 3 on the other? Get them to tip their arms accordingly.

6 Get creative on a large scale!

- Put out a large expanse of paper (rolls are good, including old wallpaper), flat trays with paint and number frames. Allow the children to use the number frames to create pictures or patterns by printing with them. (The frames will easily wash clean.)

11 Bingo!

- Ask each child to choose 4 number frames and place them on a board.
- Pull either number cards or number frames out of a bag.
- If a child has the matching number on their board, they may remove it.
- When someone has removed all 4 frames, they shout "Bingo!"

7 Symmetry

- On a large piece of paper or perhaps in chalk on the playground, draw a line and place a few number frames on one side. Encourage children to mirror what you have done using more frames on the other side. Ask, "Does it look exactly the same as the other side?"
- A good activity for prompting conversations involving positional vocabulary.

12 Tweezers

- Encourage number awareness along with practise for fine motor skills by providing a tray containing number frames, tweezers and suitably-sized small objects that may be picked up and placed in the holes.

8 Paint with water

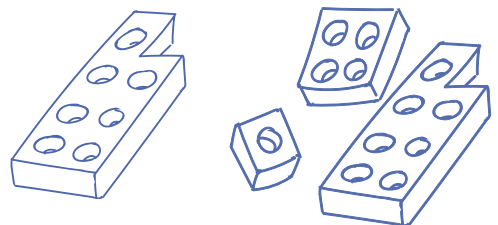
- Use large paint brushes and water to paint in and around number frames on the playground.

13 Seeing double

- Get children to match identical number frames in order to talk about the concept of doubling. Put the odd numbers together and they will clearly see how doubling will always make an even number.

9 One more/one less

- Provide a group with a selection of number frames.
- Hold up an example and ask the children to choose and hold up a number frame that is one more or one less than the one you are showing.





20 Creative Number Frames Activities

Here are a selection of fun activities which can be done with any type of number frames.

14 Picture frames

- Ask children to use the number frames to create a picture and work out the value of their picture by counting all of the holes.
- Ask children to create pictures that total a specific number, e.g. 15.

17 Friendly bonds

- Work in pairs. On a signal from the teacher, one child runs to a number frame of their choice. On a second signal their partner runs to the number frame of the bond to make 10 (or whichever number you would like). Each pair then call out their numbers.

15 Halving

- How many ways can the children find to cover half of their ten frame using the other pieces? Encourage children to discuss and recognise the generalisation that each time they are covering five pieces, so five is half of ten. The visual reference to half of the shape will help them.
- Children can go on to investigate covering half of other even numbers (they may be made from two frames, e.g. 16 made from a ten frame and a six frame placed side by side).
- Provide children with a frame for an odd number, e.g. 15 made from a ten frame and a five frame placed side by side. Can they cover half? Why is it not possible to cover half using the frames they have? Are there any other numbers where this is the case? What do these numbers have in common?

18 Nature collection

- Go outdoors and ask children to find some interesting objects to place in the number frame holes. They might have to be the same object for each frame, e.g. 7 acorns for the 7 frame, 9 little stones, 6 leaves etc.

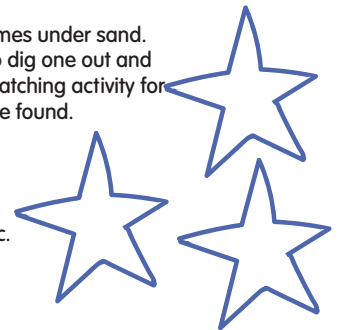
19 Buried treasure

- Hide the number frames under sand. Children take turns to dig one out and then complete the matching activity for the number they have found.

E.g. 2 - draw 2 cats,

3 - draw 3 stars

4 - draw 4 aliens etc.



16 Run to it!

- Spread the larger number frames around an outdoor area.
- Get a volunteer to call out a number between 1 and 9. Children must run to the correct frame.
- Or, give children cards numbered from 1-9. They must run and place each card under the correct corresponding number frame.

20 First to 20

- Put down two ten number frames to use as a base board.
- Children take it in turns to play a number frame onto the base. The aim of the game is to play the last piece to total 20 and cover the blue board. After playing the game a few times, ask the children if they can identify a strategy that will mean they win every time. Does it work when they are the first to play? What about if they are second?

