

W15327 - Toss 'N Learn About Numbers Ball

Activity Suggestions

Introduction – This ball can be used in many ways and hopefully get kids moving and learning. Lots of suggestions for activities are included below that can be used for kids of different ages. Before using the ball for any activities, you may want to note to the group that the numbers are randomly oriented. Numbers 6 and 9 look similar and are underlined to properly orient and identify the intended number. For those that can read, the number is also spelled out next to each number.

Number Recognition – An instructor hands or tosses the ball to a child. The child then says the number that is closest to the position of their right thumb on the ball. The child then hands or tosses the ball to another child who identifies the number closest to their right thumb. Repeat.

Addition – An instructor hands or tosses the ball to a child. The child then states the numbers that are closest to the position of both their thumbs on the ball and then announces them in an equation with the answer. For example, their thumbs end up on the 6 and the 3 so the child would say “six plus three equals nine”. The child then hands or tosses the ball to another child who repeats the same process.

Subtraction - An instructor hands or tosses the ball to a child. The child then states the numbers that are closest to the position of both their thumbs on the ball, stating the larger of the two numbers first and then announces them in an equation with the answer. For example, their thumbs end up on the 2 and the 9 so the child would say “nine minus two equals seven”. The child then hands or tosses the ball to another child who repeats the same process.

Multiplication - An instructor hands or tosses the ball to a child. The child then states the numbers that are closest to the position of both their thumbs on the ball and then announces them in an equation with the answer. For example, their thumbs end up on the 5 and the 4 so the child would say “five times four equals twenty”. The child then hands or tosses the ball to another child who repeats the same process.

Division - An instructor hands or tosses the ball to a child. The child then states the numbers that are closest to the position of both their thumbs on the ball, stating the larger of the two numbers first and then announces them in an equation with the answer. For example, their thumbs end up on the 3 and the 8 so the child would say “eight divided by three equals two with a remainder of two”. The child then hands or tosses the ball to another child who repeats the same process.

Number Spelling - An instructor hands or tosses the ball to a child. The child then says the number that is closest to the position of their right thumb on the ball and then spells out that number. For example, if their thumb is closest to the 7 the child would say “Seven, then spell is out as S-E-V-E-N”. The child then hands or tosses the ball to another child who identifies the number closest to their right thumb. Repeat.

GAMES – Can be played with one ball and a timer or for more fun, 1 ball per team. Divide the group into 2 or more teams with about the same number of players on each team and with about the same math skills. Spread the players out in a circle a few feet apart from one another. The older the players, the more they should be spread out. In all games the player that just received the ball tosses the ball to another player on their team that has yet to receive the ball. The ball moves from player to player until each player has received it once, then it can be tossed to any player on the team until all players have received the ball twice, etc.

Right Answers – Pick a value for the number of right answers a team must get to win, for example 7. Next pick a skill appropriate for the group (addition, subtraction, multiplication or division). One player starts with the ball to another person on their team, if that player catches the ball without it hitting the ground they perform the appropriate mathematical function and state their answer in an equation. If they get it right, they earn a point for their team, and the team should announce how many answers they have got correct in total. If they drop the ball or get the answer wrong, no points are earned. The player that just received the ball tosses the ball to another player on their team that has yet to receive the ball. If using just one ball, record the amount of time it takes a team to get the required number of correct answers. The team that gets the required number of correct answers fastest wins. If there is one ball per team the team that gets the right number of answers first, announces that number and sits down wins the game.

Total Addition – Pick a number to total to or exceed, like 101. One player starts with the ball to another person on their team, if that player catches the ball without it hitting the ground they state the number that is closest to their right thumb. That becomes the team's total, and they announce their total. The player that just received the ball tosses the ball to another player on their team that has yet to receive the ball. The team then adds the value of the number closest to that player's right thumb and adds it to their previous total. If a team gets the addition wrong, they go back to their previous total. The fastest team to equal or exceed the total wins.

Exact Total All Functions – This one might get a bit tricky. Pick a total value that needs to be equaled exactly, like 301. One player starts with the ball to another person on their team, if that player catches the ball without it hitting the ground they state the numbers closest to their two thumbs, then they state how they want to use those numbers in an equation and the value of their equation is their total (or added to their previous total). For example, the first player gets a 6 and 5 that player would want to state, "6 times 5 equals 30" and the team would announce 30 together. The player that just received the ball tosses the ball to another player on their team that has yet to receive the ball, that player states the two numbers closest to their thumbs and announces the function they want to use, and the team announces their new total. The tricky part here is that teams must total exactly to value selected before the start of the game. In our example, if a team were at 295, they would need to somehow get 6 points exactly to win. The next player on the team that receives the ball could add, subtract, multiply or divide the two numbers nearest their thumbs to try to come up with an equation that equals six. For division if there is a remainder, they are not allowed to use that function. If the team cannot get exactly to 301, they must remain at their previous total. They continue to toss the ball to a new teammate until they get the exact total needed.