MATHS FIELD GUIDE · GRADE 1

Counting tells us how many

OPENING PROBLEM

Count from the left. What if you start at the right?

A 

02 How many are really there?
03 Rules and worked cases
04 Packing a picnic
05 Compare the models
06 Organise a count so you can check it
07 Check your reasoning

ILLUSTRATED PROBLEM SHEET

How many are really there?

Touch each object once. The final number names the whole collection.

1



Count from the left. What if you start at the right?

Five either way. Each counter gets one number.

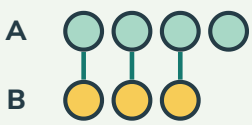
2



How can you see five without starting at one again?

See three, then count on: four, five.

3



Which counter cannot find a partner?

One in A. Four needs one more partner than three.

4



Which row has zero?

A is empty. One counter in B is enough to make its count one.

One item counted twice
the count is one too large.

One item skipped
the count is one too small.

CHAPTER PROBLEM

You count four blocks. You move them into a line. How many now?

Four. Moving the blocks does not add or remove any.

MATHS REFERENCE · GRADE 1

Counting tells us how many

Counting finds how many things there are.

Give each object one number word. The last number tells the total.

Cases to recognise

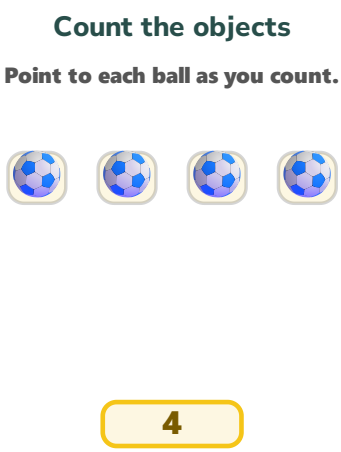
Situation	What to do and why
Empty bowl	No objects to touch. Write 0.
A row of seven coins	Slide a finger from end to end. The seventh touch ends the count.

Read the model

Touch once, say once

Touch each ball once. Say one number word each time.

Count: one, two, three, four. There are four balls.



Keep track

Start at one end of a row.

For a mixed-up group, move each object as you count it. This stops you counting it twice.

count One number word for each object.
total How many there are altogether.
numeral A written number sign.

A ○○○○○
B ○

What is the whole?

Start at five and count one more. Six.

WORKED INVESTIGATION

Packing a picnic

Noor needs a spoon for each lunch box. She puts one spoon beside each of four boxes. Every box has a spoon, so she can stop at four.

Look at this part	What it tells you
First box	say 1 and move a spoon
Next two boxes	say 2, then 3
Last box	say 4; four is the whole count

Work it through

Five spoons are in a jumble. Make an empty space. Slide each spoon into it as you say a number. When the old space is empty, the last word tells how many.

Catch the mistake

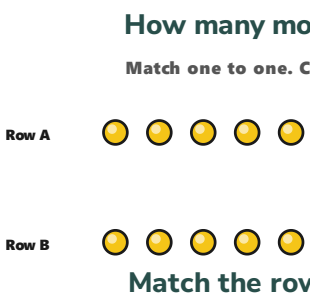
Mia says six but touched one spoon twice. Pair the spoons with five boxes. Five pairs and no spare spoon show where the extra count came from.

Compare the cases

Move them, keep the amount

These rows each have five counters.

The wider spaces do not make more counters. Nothing was added or taken away.



A number can be written

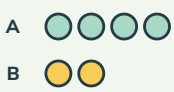
Count three counters. Write 3 beside them.

The sign 3 is a numeral. It stands for the amount three.



Change one condition

Push the five spoons into a tight bunch. There are still five. Spacing changes what your eyes see, but no spoon has left or joined.



What changed from five and one?

One moved to the second row. There are still six.

COUNTING TELLS US HOW MANY

Compare the models

An empty group

If a plate has no counters, its amount is zero.

We write 0. We do not say “one” for an empty plate.

Plate

Catch a counting mistake

A child touches one block twice and says five.

That count is not fair. Count again, touching every block only once.

Try away from the screen

Put out six large blocks. Count them.

Move them into a circle. Count again. Explain why the total stays six.

Explain your reasoning

How many counters are in row A? Touch each once.



Seven. Each counter gets one number word. The last word is seven.

Two more worked cases

Situation	Reasoning
Coins in a ring	Mark the first coin. Stop just before touching it again.
Four taps but only three blocks	One block was touched twice. Move each counted block aside to check.



Can both parts match?

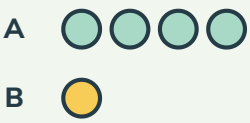
Yes. Three and three make six.

ILLUSTRATED PROBLEM SHEET

Organise a count so you can check it

The arrangement can help you count without changing how many objects there are.

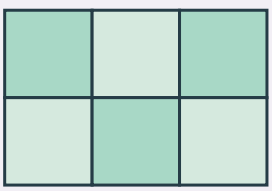
1



Can you see five without counting from one?

See four together and one more. Five.

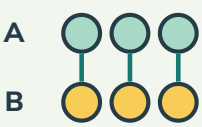
2



How many dots would fit if you put one in each cell?

Two rows of three give six. Counting three pairs gives the same six.

3



Pair the rows. How many pairs and how many counters?

Three pairs. Each pair uses two counters, so there are six counters.

4



Which is easier to count, all the shapes or just the squares?

There are three squares and three circles. Use those groups to check the total of six.

Four pairs
eight counters.

Four singles
four counters.

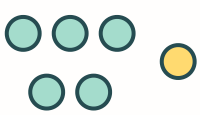
CHAPTER PROBLEM

A plate has no counters. Which numeral shows that?

0 shows zero counters.

QUESTION BANK · FOLD OR COVER THE RIGHT COLUMN

Check your reasoning

Try the problem	Solution and reasoning
01 Four buttons slide farther apart. How many now?	Four. None joined or left.
02 A friend counts “one, two, four” while touching three buttons. Which part needs fixing?	Use the counting words in order. The last word should be three.
03 Six boxes and five spoons are on the mat. How could you find what is missing without saying the number words?	Match each spoon to a box. One box has no spoon, so one more spoon is needed.
04 Six stones form a circle. How do you know where to stop?	Put a leaf at the first stone. Touch each stone once and stop before touching the leaf stone again.
05 Four beans are covered with a cloth. One is slipped underneath. How many now?	One more than four is five. The cloth only hides the beans.
06 Count these counters without missing the one on its own. 	There are six: three across the top, two below and the single yellow counter.

A 

B

Does an empty part change the total?

Six and zero still make six.

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