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# Math Adventure: The Great Number Hunt!

## Materials Needed:

- 10 large index cards or pieces of sturdy paper. Write one large, clear numeral (1 through 10) on each card.
- A variety of small, tactile objects for counting (choose items your student enjoys):
  - Building blocks (like LEGO Duplos)
  - Colorful pom-poms or cotton balls
  - Small favorite toys (like animal figures or toy cars)
  - Snack items (goldfish crackers, grapes, cereal loops)
- 10 small containers, bowls, or designated spots on a mat/floor.
- Optional: A "mystery bag" (a cloth bag or pillowcase) to hold the counting objects.
- Optional: A sensory bin filled with rice, sand, or water beads.

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## Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate one-to-one correspondence by touching one object for each number said aloud while counting.
- Match a quantity of objects (1-10) to the corresponding written numeral.
- Independently create a group of objects to represent a given number from 1 to 5.

## Curriculum Alignment

This lesson aligns with foundational math standards in **Counting and Cardinality**, focusing on the direct relationship between numbers and quantities. It is a critical pre-mathematical skill.

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## Lesson Plan & Activities (Approx. 20-25 minutes)

### Part 1: Warm-Up - Number & Body Connection (3-5 minutes)

1. **Goal:** To physically connect with the concept of numbers in a fun, low-pressure way.
2. **Activity:** Sit with your student. Say a number clearly and clap that many times. For example, say "Three!" and then clap slowly: "One... two... three." Encourage your student to clap with you. You can also stomp your feet or tap the table.
3. **Tip:** Start with smaller numbers (1-3) and repeat them several times before moving on. Use exaggerated movements and a cheerful tone.

### Part 2: Main Activity 1 - The Sorting Game (10-12 minutes)

1. **Goal:** To practice matching quantities to numerals in a structured, hands-on way.
2. **Setup:** Place the number cards for 1, 2, and 3 in a row on the floor or a large table. Next to each number card, place an empty bowl or container.
3. **Step 1 (Modeling):** Take a handful of counting objects (e.g., blocks). Pick up the number 1 card, point to it, and say "One." Place one block in the bowl next to it. Repeat for numbers 2

and 3, counting aloud slowly as you place each block: "One... two."

4. **Step 2 (Guided Practice):** Reset the bowls. Hand your student one block and guide their hand to place it in the "1" bowl. Use physical prompts (hand-over-hand) if needed, gradually fading support as they understand the task.
5. **Step 3 (Independent Practice):** Give your student a small pile of blocks. Point to the number 2 card and gesture for them to fill the bowl. Observe as they count. If they put in too many or too few, gently remove the extras or add more, re-counting with them.
6. **Progression:** Once they are comfortable with 1-3, add the numbers 4 and 5. Only move on to 6-10 when they show consistent success with the smaller numbers. Keep the session positive and end on a successful turn.

### Part 3: Main Activity 2 - The Number Hunt (5-7 minutes)

1. **Goal:** To apply the skill in a more active and engaging way, promoting movement.
2. **Setup:** Hide the number cards (start with 1-5) around the room in easy-to-find spots (on a chair, under a pillow, etc.).
3. **Activity:** Announce, "Let's go on a number hunt!" Help your student find the first card (e.g., the number 4). When they find it, celebrate! Then, say "Four! Let's find four pom-poms." Together, count out four pom-poms from your supply and place them on the number card.
4. **Continue:** Move on to find the next number card and repeat the process. This turns counting into a fun scavenger hunt.

### Part 4: Cool-Down & Assessment (2-3 minutes)

1. **Goal:** To assess understanding in a playful, non-verbal way.
2. **Activity:** Use a preferred snack item (like goldfish crackers). Place the number 2 card and the number 3 card in front of your student. Ask them, "Can you make me a pile of 3 goldfish?" You can also model this by asking, "Show me 3," while holding up three fingers.
3. **Assessment:** Observe if they can create a group of the correct quantity. Their ability to do this, even with a small number, is a great indicator of understanding. Then, let them enjoy the snack as a reward!

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## Differentiation and Inclusivity Notes

- **For Extra Support:**
  - Focus only on numbers 1-3 for the entire lesson. Mastery is more important than speed.
  - Use hand-over-hand guidance to help them feel the motion of counting and placing one object at a time.
  - Use high-contrast number cards (e.g., black numbers on a white background) for easier visual processing.
- **For an Extension (If the student shows quick mastery):**
  - Introduce numbers 6-10 in the sorting game.
  - Ask "what comes next?" questions by laying out cards 1, 2, \_\_, 4. Let them place the 3 card in the blank spot.
  - Create simple patterns, like "one block, one pom-pom, one block..." and see if they can continue it.
- **Sensory Adaptation:** If your student enjoys sensory input, hide the counting objects or number cards in a sensory bin filled with rice or sand for them to dig out before counting.

## Teaching Notes for Success

- **Keep it Short & Sweet:** Attention spans can vary. It's better to have a successful 15-minute lesson than a frustrating 30-minute one. Watch for signs of fatigue or frustration and be ready

to stop.

- **Praise Effort, Not Just Accuracy:** Celebrate their participation! A high-five, a smile, or a cheerful "You did it!" goes a long way. The goal is to build positive associations with learning.
- **Use Clear, Simple Language:** Stick to key phrases like "Count with me," "Show me five," and "Good job!" Avoid long, complex instructions.
- **Follow Their Lead:** If they are particularly interested in the toy cars, use the toy cars for the entire lesson! Tapping into their interests is the key to engagement.

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