

Subtracting: Use fingers or scoring out lines to do subtraction

Fingers

Write down a number sentence (with number lower than 10) and then hide the pen.

- What can we use to work out the answer?

Show children how they can use their fingers to work out the answer to subtraction questions to 10. Talk about the process as you go along.

- How many fingers do we start with?
- How many fingers are we subtracting?
- How many fingers are left?

Whiteboards (for numbers above 10)

Roll 2 dice to make and write a number sentence (reminding the child to start with the higher number and subtract the lower number).

If you wish, you can make up a story using the numbers from the dice. For example, with 6 and 3: "I have 6 pencils. 3 need sharpening. How many can I use?"

Ask "How could we work this out?"

Talk through the process of subtraction and draw lines/dots on the board to work it out.

- What number do we start with? Draw that many lines
- How do we know that we need to start with this many?
- What number are we subtracting? Cross out that many lines
- How many are left?
- Where do we write this answer?

Questions

To ensure that the child understands what is happening during subtraction, ask plenty of questions as you are working through examples. Ask the child to talk about what they are doing as they are doing it.

- What has happened to the number?
- Is the number getting bigger or smaller?
- Why is the number changing?