



# Nurture, Inspire, Grow, Flourish



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## Subitising

### Mastering Maths!

Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers 1-10, the relationship between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding — such as using manipulatives including pebbles and ten frames for organising counting— children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary for which mastery of mathematics is built.

It is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

EYFS 2021

By the end of reception.



## What is Subitising?

**Perceptual Subitising** is looking a group of objects and knowing what you see, eg 3 apples. Children can learn to subitise up to 5 objects.

Children have a natural ability to 'notice;' this is a crucial tool in ALL maths development. Children should be encouraged to notice their environment eg when containers are full and empty, different shapes of leaves, the season or pictures in books. Ask them "What do you notice?" "What do you see?" "How do you see it?"

**Conceptual subitising** is when a child sees the amount rather than just a symbol eg 5 objects in a 5 frame not the written number 5. We can teach children to connect the concept image and symbol together when their subitising is secure.



"What do you see?"  
"How do you see it?"  
"I see a 1 and a 1 and a 1!"

At Pips we Subitise everyday when we are:

- ◆ For self registration
- ◆ Walking to the woods
- ◆ When we are in woods
- ◆ When playing with loose parts
- ◆ Reading Stories
- ◆ Singing



"2 Donkeys!"

"I see 3 blue bricks . 1 red bricks and 2 orange bricks."



## How does counting fit in with subitising?

For our younger children we need to focus on 'more' and 'less'. Thinking about whether a group has 'more objects', whether it is 'bigger' or 'smaller'.

For all our children we count:

- ◆ Our steps: when playing 'What's the time Mr Wolf', going up and down stairs and the games we play.
- ◆ We listen and count the Church bells when they strike the hour, talking about what it represents for example 10 O'clock
- ◆ We sing songs with counting in
- ◆ We count the children when they are lining up
- ◆ Count the number of claps

This helps the children understand the order



## 5 Frames

We use 5 frames to help the children start to recognise an amount to 5.



When they want to know 'How Many?' they have, we encourage them to put the objects into a 5 frame so they can find out themselves. They learn that when the 5 frame is full, it has 5 objects in it and they need another 5 frame to put the rest of their objects in.

Through doing this they will learn that 2 objects and 3 objects fill the frame and that means they have 5 objects. Over time the children will know that a 4 and a 1 is 5 and 5 1's are 5 etc.



Teaching children numbers 1-10 is a long and complex process. The more we encourage children to notice, subitise and use 5 frames the better their learning will be. We need to revisit these activities everyday.

**“What do you see?” “How do you see it?”**

**Activities to do at home:**

- ◆ Setting the table— “We need 2 more cups.” “ Please go and get 3 more.”
- ◆ Snack time - “Everyone needs to have 1 each.”
- ◆ Encourage children to see groups of 1,2,3 and then 1,2,3,4,5 conkers, acorns, flowers
- ◆ Play 3 or not 3 games where you look at objects and decide if it’s 3 or not. First one to call it out wins!!



For more information please see

Karen Wilding’s An Introduction to Teaching Subitising on YouTube.

**References**

Karen Wilding

Gelman & Galister 1978, Counting Principles

Subitising Through the Years Valerie Faulkner

