



Subtraction In The Foundation Stage

Subtraction is about taking a number away and working out how many you have left. For example

$$10-5=5$$

The children need to know that the number they end up with will always be smaller. The children will need to be able to use a variety of strategies-

- Fingers-folding down the number taken away and counting how many left.
- Counting objects, moving away the number you are taking away and counting how many are left.
- Using a number line-jumping down the number line from your starting number. What number do you end up at? This will be the answer. We always ask the children to then check their answer using their fingers.
- Counting back from the number using fingers to help, e.g. $10-5$: 10,9,8,7,6,5 putting a finger down as you count 1 back.
- The children will eventually need to be able to do it mentally.

Vocabulary the children need to be familiar with

Subtraction	equals
Taking away	minus
How many left?	number line
How many altogether?	number sentence
Removing	
Count back	

To achieve the expected level at the end of the Foundation stage the children need to subtract two single digit numbers eg to 10. However if your butterfly is confident and competent with numbers mentally to 10 then try working with numbers to 20.

Ideas of things to do at home

*Sing songs where you take an object away e.g. 5 little speckled frogs, 10 green bottles or
5 little monkeys jumping on the bed
One fell off and bumped his head
Mummy called the doctor and the doctor said
"No more monkeys jumping on the bed!"
4 little monkeys jumping on the bed ...

Make it more difficult by varying the number you are taking away e.g. 2, 3.

* Give the children number stories e.g. there were 10 people on the bus, the bus stopped at the swimming pool, 2 people got off how many are left? The bus carried on. At the next stop 4 people got off. How many are left?

*Subtraction can be done whilst you are eating e.g. count the segments in your Satsuma, peas on your plate, apple slices. Eat 1, 2 how many are left?

*Build a tower with bricks or lego. Roll the dice, take that many off. How many are left? Continue until you have none left.

*Play games that involve taking away and dice e.g. subtraction bingo (ask if you would like a copy of one to make), Bus Stop Game (orchard games have a good selection)

*Helping with washing-count socks to go in the washing machine, put 1 in, how many left?

*Loading the dishwasher-give your butterfly 10 objects on a tray, ask them to put 1, 2, 3 in and ask them how many they have left.

For all activities encourage the children to select their own strategies to work out the answer. Ask them to talk about what they are doing and how they got the answer.

*If you are working with numbers to 10 can the children recognise they are number bonds. For example, $10-4=6$ Can they spot that 4 and 6 make 10?

With all activities make them fun and enjoyable. Give the children praise and gently guide them when they make mistakes and model how to get the right answer. The children need to apply their understanding of subtraction to everyday life. So think subtraction everywhere!

Thank you very much for your help it really does make a big difference.

Any queries or questions please come and ask.

Foundation Stage Team



Bean bag throw

*Stand by a line on the playground.

*Throw the beanbags one at a time into the numbered hoops.

*When you have thrown all the beanbags, count up your score.

*You can mark it on the clipboard however you like- as a tally, jottings, number sentence..

*Make sure you remember your total.

*Now repeat it and see if you can beat your own score!

This activity helps with number concepts and addition. The children are encouraged to record their results in their own way.



Weighing

*Choose 2 brown paper bags, do not look inside!

*Hold one in each hand and describe how they feel.

The children will hopefully use mathematical language e.g. heavy, light, lighter, heavier.

*Ask the children to say which one is heaviest and lightest.

*Test the children's estimate by placing them on the scales. Ask the children to talk about what is happening.

What happens to the scale of the heaviest one/lightest one? Why?

*Ask the children about size-will the biggest one be the heaviest?

*Place the bags in the correct sorting ring depending on whether they were heavy or light.

*Look inside the bags and see what was heavy and light.

This activity introduces the concept of weight. Children need to accurately use the vocabulary of weight e.g. heavy/light.

The children need to estimate how heavy an object is and then test it using scales.