

Math Activities for Learning Mats for the pond, town, camping, and house mats

Strong early math skills are important for school success. The following activities will help support your child's growth in number sense, comparing, recognizing shapes and patterns, spatial awareness, and problem-solving. Have fun with your child, adjusting and expanding these activities as needed, while you build math and language skills.

Getting Started:

- Spend time just talking about the pictures on the mats to build language and vocabulary skills, before introducing extra materials. There are many pictures you can count with your child on the mats (birds, trees, rocks, etc.).
- Let your child enjoy playing with the frogs and shapes on the mat. You might also have other materials such as plastic people or animals that would be fun to add to the mats. Make observations, ask questions, and model counting as you play alongside your child:
 - I am going to count how many frogs are in the canoe.*
 - I wonder how many squirrels are climbing in the tree?*
 - I noticed most of your frogs are playing on the log.*
 - Do you want to count how many birds are in the sky with me?*

Activities for the Front of the Camping, House, Town, or Pond Mats:

- Model telling math stories in which you are counting objects and adding or subtracting. Examples:
 - *Once upon a time there were three frogs having a picnic. One more joined. Now there are four. (Touch each frog as you count.)*
 - *Five frogs were sleeping on the log. I am going to count and touch each frog to make sure there are five. 1-2-3-4-5. Then one frog woke up and decided to jump into the pond. I wonder how many frogs are on the log now? Let's count together and find out.*
- Ask questions related to the math stories you are telling such as: *How many frogs are in the canoe now? Where are most of the frogs? How could we make it so there are the same number of frogs on the log and the slide?*
- Invite your child to tell stories about the frogs or other objects. You may want to help by giving a story starter such as, *Once upon a time...*
- Tell math stories in which you are making comparisons. Put some animals in the grass and some on the sidewalk. Ask comparison questions such as: *Are there more animals on the grass or on the sidewalk? I am going to count to find out. There are 4 animals on the grass and 2 on the sidewalk. There are more animals on the grass and fewer animals on the sidewalk.*



- Invite your child to make comparisons about the objects on their mat. Or ask comparison questions such as, “*Where are most of the frogs right now?*”
- Tell math stories in which you emphasize position words. Example: *My frog is going to stand next to the tree. My other frog is going to stand in front of the tent. Now my frog is on the picnic table. Your frog is under the tree.*
- Take turns playing “I Spy” using position words, number words, and attributes. Examples: *I spy a frog next to the rocks. I spy five frogs. I spy three birds. I spy a large rock near the water. I spy a straight line. I spy a triangle.*
- Build on the mats with small blocks or playdough. Describe the creations. Have conversations or tell stories about the creations you have made with your child.
- Take turns rolling a die and adding that number of objects to a mat.
- Show your child how to use their frogs (or other small objects such as paperclips) to measure objects on the mat or pose questions that require children to measure. Example: *How many frogs long is the slide? How many frogs will fit on the picnic bench? On the blanket? In the canoe?*

Back of the Mat Activities:

- Shape Path to the Cave/ Large Dice (back of the camping mat)
 - Model how a frog can jump on the shape path to the cave and back.
 - With pattern blocks, have your child cover the shapes with the matching pattern block. Name each shape as you go.
 - Model counting and naming the shapes as you jump along the path. Invite your child to try.
 - Count the “pips” (dots) on the large dice on the mat. Roll a die and match it to the picture of a large one. Label the dice with the corresponding number on post it notes or with an erasable marker.
 - Roll a die and when it is matched to the large die, make a tally mark underneath the large die. See which large die gets the most tally marks as you and your child take turns rolling the die. The next time you play, predict which large die will get the most tally marks.
- Place the pattern blocks on the shapes. Play “I Spy” with the objects on the back of the mat. (*I spy a triangle. I spy three dots. I spy a red trapezoid.*)
- Race Car Game (back of house mat)
 - See the directions printed on the mat for how to play the Race Car Game.

- Gingerbread People, Stairs and Shapes (back of pond mat)
 - Help your child count the buttons on the gingerbread people and count the number of gingerbread people.
 - Make your own gingerbread person out of paper with your child and add buttons.
 - Play “I Spy” with attributes. Examples: *I spy a gingerbread person with four buttons. I spy a gingerbread person with circle buttons.*
 - Teach your child how to count up the stairs and back down while jumping a frog up and down the stairs. 1-2-3-4-5 and then 5-4-3-2-1-0
 - Name the shapes under the stairs and match the pattern blocks to the shapes.
 - Put pattern blocks in a sock or bag. Take turns picking out a shape and putting it on the corresponding shape on the mat. See if your child can guess what shape was grabbed, before pulling it out of the sock, based on how it feels. Make it even more challenging by adding all the pattern blocks to the sock.
- Two Teddy Bears (back of town mat)
 - Invite your child to add “buttons” on the bears’ shirts (cereal works well). Then help your child count the buttons. You can create simple addition problems. “One shirt has 3 buttons and the other has 1 button. How many altogether?”
 - Write the number 1 above the first bear and the number 2 above the second bear. Find objects that can be sorted by different attributes. Perhaps Bear 1 only likes things that are round. Together, sort the objects by this attribute. Try another attribute. Example: “Bear 2” only likes things that are smaller than a frog. The possibilities are endless! Count the objects that each bear has after you have sorted.
 - Practice dividing objects evenly between the two bears. Example: The bears are going to split these six buttons.
 - Invite your child to draw designs and shapes on the bears’ shirts.
 - Name the bears and write their names above each bear. Compare their names and count how many letters each bear has in its name.
 - Tell math stories about the bears.

For more supplies: Please visit <https://www.lakeshorelearning.com/>

For more ideas: Scan this QR code or visit the link <https://youtu.be/jhQWjmb6rDs>

