FIRST GRADE MATH: ACTIVITIES AND GAMES FOR LEARNING NUMBERS

Hop, Clap, Touch Your Toes (Great transition activity)
1. Give an instruction such as, “Hop six times” or “Touch your toes three times” or “Clap three times and hop one time”.
2. Students do action.

Tactile Numbers
1. Have pairs make numbers out of play dough and/or with glue and sand on index cards.
2. Have enough blindfolds so that the students take turns touching the numbers and identifying them.

Blind Wise One
1. Choose a volunteer to be the Blind Wise One. Blindfold this student and have her put out her hand for other students to shake.
2. Choose other students by pointing to them to quietly come up to shake the Wise One’s hand.
3. Wise One's sight returns and tells the class how many people she shook hands with.
Variations:
1. The rest of the students write the number of people Wise One shook hands with on their slates.
2. Have designated students tap the Wise One's shoulder instead of shaking hands.
3. Pair up students and have one partner close her eyes as the Wise One. The other partner looks at you as you show a number on your fingers or written on a slate. The other partner then taps the Wise One’s shoulder that many times or writes the numeral on the Wise One’s back.

Smelly Numbers
Preparation: Collect a few very different scents, such as a cut lemon, peppermint leaves, slice of cheese, bottle of maple syrup, etc.
1. Have all the students smell each scent. (This may be enough for one lesson!)
2. Blindfold a volunteer and then give him a number of scents to smell without touching the object. The other students observe and keep a record of how many smells the volunteer smelled.
3. Volunteer says how many smells she smelled.

Eagle Eye
Preparation: Find a tray and a cloth to cover it. Collect up to 12 small items. Begin with 12 of the same item such as 12 beanbags. Place 2-4 items on the tray and cover. I suggest that you place the items in dice/domino patterns at first. (Once they have those number patterns in their long term memory move to any other number patterns – like the 5-pointed star – or random placement.) Place the remaining items in a basket nearby.
1. Have children sitting and standing around you and covered tray. Tell the children to count inside the number of items they see once you take off the cloth.
2. Take the cloth off the tray and quietly count 3 seconds. Cover the tray again.
3. Volunteers raise hands to tell you the number of items.
4. Have students close eyes as you add or take away items.
Variations:
1. Collect random items for the game, such as a small glass bead, an eraser, a pencil, etc.
2. Have a student place more or less items on the tray.
3. Have students tell you how many items you added or took away from the last look.

Slate Activities
1. Say a number and students write it down. Tell them beforehand if they are to write Roman or Arabic numerals.
2. Write a Roman numeral on the BB. Students write the Arabic numeral. Or vice versa.
3. Show a number of fingers. Students write number or design of dice dots on slates.
4. Draw a pattern on the BB that they look at for 3 seconds and then write the number on their slates.
5. Draw number line 1-12 on BB. Have students close eyes and you erase a number. Have students write missing number on slate
6. Have students draw own number line with equal spaces between number dots and then write numbers on line.
Variation: Pair up students to play Slate Activities #1-5 as partners.

Grasshopper
Preparation: Buy 12 felt squares. Write each of the numbers 1-12 (or higher if appropriate) on each of the felt squares. Then cut squares into round rock shapes.
1. Place ‘rocks’ in a haphazard fashion across the floor close enough for the children to hop from one to the other.
2. Give each ‘grasshopper’ his or her instructions, examples, “Hop in order, 1-12” or “Hop to 5, now to 2, now to 10” or “Hop backwards from 7 to 1”
Variation: Add number word cards (one, two, etc.) and begin to trade them out with the numeral cards.

Number Lotto
1. Give students 2 blank cards each. Tell each student to draw a certain number of simple-to-draw objects (2 bananas, 5 stars, 9 dots, etc.) on one card and the corresponding numeral on the other card. Your choice depends on which numbers need practiced.
2. Check for accuracy in drawing and writing and help students self-correct.
3. Designate groups of 2-4 students to play together.
4. Object and numeral cards are mixed up and laid out in a grid face down.
5. Players take turns flipping pairs of cards over. On each turn, the 1st player will first turn one card over, then a second. If the two cards match, the player scores one point, the two cards are removed from the game, and the player gets another turn. If they do not match, the cards are turned back over.
Variation: Make shape cards that go along with numerals (circle=1, two half circles=2, triangle=3, etc.)

Number Tic Tac Toe
Play this if the students need more practice with object-numeral correspondence.
1. Show students how to make the grid on their slates.
2. A list of 12 or more numbers is written on a black board or sheet of paper and participants choose any 9 and write them on to their card in any order. The more numbers you offer the students, the longer the game.
3. Make cards with dots like dice or dominos to teach patterns.
4. Show the cards in random order. You may want to show them for 3-5 seconds at first and then cut the time to 1 second. The students look for the corresponding number on their cards. The students raise their hands to give the number. Students put an X over the number on their card if they have that number.
5. When a student has three boxes marked in a row, column or diagonal, she calls out, "Tic Tac Toe!" I play the game until everyone gets at least one Tic Tac Toe. That way everyone keeps playing and calling out their Tic Tac Toes. There are 8 possible Tic Tac Toes.

Variations:
1. Show the number with your fingers instead of with cards with objects.
2. Play with numbers 13-20. Have 2 volunteers come to the front to show a number greater than 10 together.

NUMBERS 1-100

Jump Rope
All students count numbers 1-100 as a whole group as each child jumps individually, picking up the next number in the count as a new student enters.

Variation: Have each student count for herself, counting up from the last student’s number.

Pebble Toss
Preparation: This game needs a board divided into 8 squares. Have students prepare playing boards with paper and colored pencils. Then have the students choose 8 numbers which are between 1-12 to write in each of squares of playing board. Example board:

```
  9  3  12  4
10  7  8  5
```

1. Players sit on floor facing each other with playing board between them.
2. Players take turns throwing pebbles at board and trying to land on one of numbers. If the pebble goes off board or lands on a line, player throws again.
3. When pebble lands on a number, player takes that many pebbles from the pouch.
4. Each player gets two throws.
5. Players count up pebbles to see how many they were able to get.

1-100 Chart Activities
Preparation: Print copies of a free 1-100 chart pdf from the internet.

1. Pass out the charts and ask the students to look it over and share what they notice. Hopefully they will notice how the 10’s line up down the last column for example. Take all observations.
2. Pass out glass gems. Say a number and students place a gem on that number.