



# Math Center Activity Guide

The following activities can be used with the components of the [BECKER'S Math Center #BSS213311](#) to help young children learn and develop a range of essential early math skills, including:

- Patterning & sequencing
- Sorting & grouping
- Size ordering & measuring
- Early addition & subtraction
- Shape identification



## 5 Little Fishes - Numbers & Counting Wikki Stix®

### Materials:

- 5 fish made from Wikki Stix
- 1 shark made from Wikki Stix
- 1 dry erase lap board
- Number cards 1-5

### Preparation:

- Place the 5 fish and 1 shark on the dry erase board (Option: invite children to create other elements from Wikki Stix as objects in the sea.)
- Display the number cards 1-5 for the children to see

**Instructions:** Begin by showing the children the board with 5 fish and 1 shark. Count each object and show the corresponding number card (5 and 1). Sing or say the following rhyme. As each fish gets eaten by the shark, take one fish from the board and ask the children how many fish are left. Ask if anyone can find the number card that corresponds to how many fish are left each time (4, 3, 2, 1).

*5 Little Fishes, swimming in the sea.*

*The 1st one said, "You can't catch me!"*

*Along came Mr. Shark as HUNGRY as could be,*

*And ATE that fish right out of the sea!*

*4 Little Fishes, swimming in the sea.*

*The 1st one said, "You can't catch me!"*

*Along came Mr. Shark as HUNGRY as could be,*

*And ATE that fish right out of the sea!*

Repeat for the numbers 3, 2, 1 and then,

*NO (0) Little Fishies swimming in the sea.*

*None to tell the shark, YOU CAN'T CATCH ME!*

*When HUNGRY Mr. Shark came looking for his LUNCH...*

*There were no more fishes left to MUNCH and CRUNCH!*

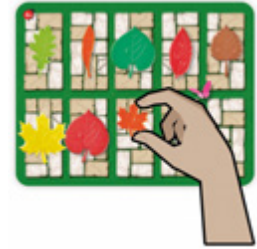




## Sensory Leaves Math Activity Set

**Materials:** Sensory Leaves, Card 2a, Card 3a

**Instructions:** On Card 2a, have children place a leaf on each section of the stone path, from left to right, saying the numbers as they go (1, 2, 3...). Then, have them touch each leaf as they count again. Once children are confident counting to 10, place Card 3a next to Card 2a and practice counting to 20.



**Materials:** Sensory Leaves, Card 2b, Card 3b

**Instructions:** Start with Card 2b. Have children sort the leaves into the three wheelbarrows by size. It may help them to focus on one type of leaf at a time.

**Ask:** How many leaves are in each group? Now, sort by the number of bugs each leaf has.

Count how many bugs are in each group.

Look at Card 3b and have children sort and stack the leaves into groups by type. Have them focus on one size at a time. Count the leaves in each group. Challenge children to think of other attributes to sort by (color, bumpy/smooth edges, etc.)



## Self-Portrait with Shape Rubbing Plates

**Materials:**

- Shape rubbing plates
- Large paper (12" x 18" or 18" x 24")
- Crayons (paper wrapper removed)
- Optional: mirror

**Instructions:** Arrange the materials on a table so that children have a choice of what shapes and colors of crayons they will use to create their self-portrait. If there is a mirror available, invite the children to look at their face in the mirror and describe the shape of their eyes, ears, nose, mouth, etc. Ask the children to draw an oval on their paper to represent their face (it will be a very large face!) Demonstrate how to place a rubbing plate under the paper and use the long edge of a crayon to rub on the paper, over the plate, revealing a textured shape design. Ask the children to choose different shapes for the different features on their face. As they create their faces, ask them to identify the number and type of shapes they used. Ex. "I used two triangles for ears and two circles for eyes."





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### Sorting and Measuring Worms

**Sorting Activity** - Sort the worms into groups! To begin, limit the number of worms in the bucket to three colors and two lengths. Have the children draw the worms out of the bucket one at a time and place them into appropriate piles. For example, have the children place all the 1" blue worms into a pile and all the 4" green worms into a separate pile. After each successful worm sorting activity, add one more color, length, or both. Continue until all the worms are sorted correctly.

**Measuring Activity** - Explain to children that they will be measuring with the worms. Using a ruler, show that each worm is approximately 1", 2", 3", and 4". Ask children to use the worms to measure items in the classroom. For example, "How many worms long is the math shelf?" Encourage children to devise their own way of measuring the items they find. Have them record the measurements by drawing the item and writing the number of worms used, length of the item, and colors of worms used. Now, challenge the children to use all the worms to measure something long (for example, a life-sized measurement of a classmate's arm). Encourage children to record the information such as the number of worms used, total length, etc.



### MathLink Cubes - 2D and 3D Shapes

**Materials:** 40-50 MathLink cubes

**Instructions:** 2-D Shapes - Discuss with the children the difference between a square and a rectangle. Invite the children to construct a square using 12 cubes and a rectangle using 16 cubes. Encourage children to build the shapes with the MathLink Cubes and think about the properties. Can they build a bigger or smaller square/rectangle? How many square and rectangle objects can you find?

**Materials:** 40-50 MathLink cubes

**Instructions:** 3-D Shapes - After constructing the 2D squares and rectangles, invite the children to see if they can connect two of the shapes with additional links at each corner in order to create the frame of a 3D object. Ask questions to prompt further exploration. How many links will you need to attach to each corner to make a cube? What happens if you add more links? It becomes a rectangular prism!

