

Supporting learning

Encourage children to close their eyes and count while you drop pebbles one by one into the water.

- *How many pebbles do you think I dropped into the water?*
- *Can you check by finding all the pebbles?*

Use prompts and questions to encourage children to count objects and actions.

- *You have put lots of people into your boat. I wonder how many people will fit in before it sinks. Shall we find out?*
- *You are pouring jugs of water into this pot. How many jugfuls have you poured in so far? Count on to find how many jugfuls it takes to fill the pot.*

Scaffold activities to allow you to model and promote the use of reasoning to support estimation.

- *It took Amy five blows to move the boat across the water tray. Do you think it will take you more or fewer blows? Make a sensible guess for how many blows you will take to blow your boat across.*
- *It took three cupfuls to fill the jug. The bucket is bigger than the jug, so I think it will hold more than three cupfuls. What do you think? Make a sensible guess for how many.*

Context: Water play

Illustrated learning outcomes

- Begin to make comparisons between quantities (CS Phase 1)
- Use some number language such as 'more' and 'a lot' (CS Phase 1)
- Know that the last number in the count gives the total (CS Phase 2)
- Count actions or sounds (CS Phase 3)
- Find one more or one less than a number from 1 to 10 (CS Phase 4)
- Estimate a number of objects that can be checked by counting (CS Phase 5)

Look, listen and note:

- the methods children use to describe and compare capacities
- the language children use to describe and compare capacities
- children's ability to count objects and actions accurately
- how children keep track of how many times a smaller container has to be poured to fill a larger container
- whether children use prior experience or reasoning to make sensible estimates

Resources and suggested activities

- Assorted containers and pourers including: jugs bottles spoons funnels tubing straws
Include containers with measuring scales.
- Objects to place and count into containers: natural objects such as conkers, pebbles manufactured objects such as marbles
- Boats and materials to make boats

Scaffold activities with boats to encourage children to make comparisons and predictions, for example:

- invite children to choose materials then design and make boats;
- encourage them to choose an object to fill their boat;
- ask questions that encourage counting and comparison, such as:
 - *How many people can you fit on your boat before it sinks?*
 - *Whose boat carries most people?*
- prompt children to make predictions:
 - *You can fit eight people in your boat. How many conkers do you think will fit?*
- Place a number track by the water tray to support children's counting.
- Provide mark-making equipment and plastic numerals so that children can choose to record relevant numbers.