

First Grade News

January 28, 2008

Unit 6: Developing Fact Power

Knowing the basic facts is as important to mathematics as knowing words by sight is to reading. Your child should start to get a good handle on many addition and subtraction facts by the end of the year.

Learning the facts takes practice. It is not necessary to practice for a long time, but it is important to practice often, almost every day. One good way to practice is to play the games that are introduced at school. (see page 3 for ideas.)

In Unit 6, children will learn shortcuts that will make it easier to learn the facts. One shortcut is the turn-around rule, which simply states that the order in which numbers are added does not change the sum. For example, $3 + 4$ and $4 + 3$ both equal 7, so when your child has learned one of these facts, he or she automatically knows its turn-around fact. Your child will also learn how easy it is to add 0 and 1 to any number. Working with shortcuts like these will help build “fact power.”

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Later in this unit, children will extend their time-telling skills by learning to tell time to the nearest 5 minutes and by representing the time in digital notation, as it appears on a digital clock.

Math Tools

Your child will be using Fact Triangles to practice and review addition and subtraction facts. Fact Triangles are a “new and improved” version of flash cards; the addition and subtraction facts are made from the same three numbers, and this helps your child understand the relationships among those facts.

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Vocabulary

addition and subtraction facts The addition facts are 100 possible combinations of two one-digit addends. The subtraction facts are the inverses of the addition facts.

family fact A group of addition facts together with the subtraction facts. For example, the following facts form the fact family for the numbers 3, 4, and 7: $3+4=7$ $4+3=7$ $7-3=4$ $7-4=3$

function machine A diagram of an imaginary machine programmed to process numbers according to a certain rule. A number (input) is put into the machine and is transformed into a second number (output) through the application of a rule.

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name-collection box A boxlike diagram tagged with a given number and used for collecting equivalent names for that number.

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range The difference between the greatest least numbers in a set of data. For example, in the set of data below, the difference between 36 and 28 is 8, so 8 is the range.

middle value The number in the middle when a set of data is organized in sequential order. For example, in the following set of data, 32 is the middle value

28: **28 28 31 32 33 35 36**

Vocabulary, continued

digital clock A clock that uses only numbers to show the time in hours and minutes, with a colon used to separate them.

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“What’s my rule?” A routine that consists of a set of number pairs in which numbers in each pair are related to each other according to the same rule. The problems are usually displayed in table format, in which 2 of the 3 parts are known. The goal is to find the unknown part.

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Building Skills through Games

In Unit 6, your child will practice addition, subtraction and place-value skills by playing the following games.

Beat the Calculator A “Calculator” (player who uses a calculator) and a “Brain” (a player who solves the problem without a calculator) race to see who will be first to solve addition problems.

Difference Game Players pick a card and collect as many pennies as the number shown on the card. Then players count each other’s pennies and figure out how many more pennies one player has than the other.

Tens-and-Ones Trading Game Players take turns putting base-10 blocks on their Tens-and-Ones Mat according to the roll of a die. Whenever possible, they exchange 10 cubes for 1 long. The first player to get 10 longs wins!

Do-Anytime Activities

To work with your child on the concepts taught in this unit and previous units, try these interesting and rewarding activities.

1. Using the Fact Triangles, cover the sum for addition practice. Cover one of the other numbers for subtraction practice. Make this brief and fun.
2. Have your child tell you a number story that fits a given number model, such as $3+5=8$.
3. Go to the library and check out the book *12 Ways to Get to 11* by Eve Merriam, an entertaining book that presents addition facts.
4. Play with name-collection boxes. Begin with a number, such as 20, and find at least five equivalent names for the number.

Important Reminders

Monday, January 28

Lower School Family Book Party

Topic: "Penguins"

Hassenfeld Library, 5:00 PM

Tuesday, January 29

Scholastic Book Fair

Family Night, 5:00-7:00 PM

January 28-February 1

Scholastic Book Fair

Hassenfeld Library Lobby

Thursday, January 31

11:30 Dismissal

Parent/Teacher Conferences*

Friday, February 1

NO SCHOOL

Parent/Teacher Conferences*

*Written reports will be sent home in March

Thursday, February 14:

Valentine's Day Party

12:30-1:30 in each classroom

Monday, February 18:

President's Day...NO SCHOOL

We would like to remind you of the upcoming parent/teacher conferences on Thursday and Friday. We look forward to discussing your child's progress and sharing work samples with you since our last communication on November 16. There will be no written report at this conference; however, a progress report will be sent home six weeks later outlining your child's progress through March 12.

At the end of the school year, you will receive the last written report for the year, and there will also be a parent/teacher conference on either May 22 or May 23.