Play the Fish for Numbers Game!

Is your child struggling with number recognition? Sometimes all it takes to learn something new is a little incentive – that's business talk for, "turn it into a fun game and they'll practice for hours." Here's a great way to go fishing for numbers that will feel more like play than counting practice!

What You Need:

- Construction paper in various colors
- Scissors
- A hole punch
- A magnet
- Paper clips
- A dowel or Tinker Toy to form the handle of the fishing pole
- String to form the fishing line
- Superglue

What You Do:

1. Cut ten fish shapes, about 6-inches long each, out of the construction paper in different colors.
2. Write a different number from 1 to 10 on each fish.
3. Punch a hole in each one near the mouth area. Slide a paper clip through each hole to attach.
4. Tie the string to the dowel to make a fishing rod.
5. Superglue the magnet to the end of the string. Let dry thoroughly.
6. To play: Scatter the fish so that the numbers are clearly visible. Tell your child, "I'm hungry for a number 4 fish!" and watch him hunt for it, then carefully lower the "rod" until the magnet catches the paper clip and he reels it in. Repeat with other numbers until all the fish are caught for a game that's so fun, it doesn't even feel like math practice!

Vary the game by using it to practice other things, too! Write letters on the fish to work on alphabet recognition, or put a site word or Dolch word on each fish. Or, for some more advanced math practice, shout out a number and ask kids to fish for something "bigger" or "smaller".

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