

Play Subtraction Sacks

Want a simple solution for your child's struggles with subtraction? Invite her to play this subtraction sacks game! This kinesthetic learning activity will strengthen her understanding of subtraction and help her memorize basic subtraction facts. The combination of visually counting and removing counters, guessing how many counters remain in the sack, and then checking how many counters are actually left, is a surefire way to get her actively involved in math.

What You Need:

- Six paper bags
- Index cards
- Markers
- Counters



What You Do:

Sack Number	# of Counters	Number Cards
0	0	-0
1	1	-0, -1
2	2	-0, -1, -2
3	3	-0, -1, -2, -3
4	4	-0, -1, -2, -3, -4
5	5	-0, -1, -2, -3, -4, -5

1. Have your child write the numbers 0-5 on the sacks.
2. Make number cards for each sack by writing the numbers shown in the above chart on index cards.
3. Stack each set of cards in front of the appropriate sack and ask your child to place one, two, three, four, or five counters into its corresponding sack.
4. Invite your child to draw a card, subtract the number of counters shown on the card from the sack, and guess the number of counters that are left in the sack.
5. The number of counters in the sack will validate her answer.
6. Encourage your child to say a number sentence that explains what she's done.
7. Repeat this activity multiple times with different number cards for each sack.

Try practicing this game every evening until she gets the hang of these fundamental subtraction facts. When she is ready to move on, try extending the game to include numbers 6-10.

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