

## Fistful of Counters

This activity is an introduction to the 10-frame and provides a visual exploration of number. It calls for math discourse, and is an opportunity to attend to two of the standards for math practice: MP3 Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others; and MP5: Use appropriate tools strategically.

Launch: Fill two bowls with different sized counters. One bowl should be counters that are identical and graspable such as slinking cubes. The other bowl should be counting objects that are larger, also identical and graspable, such as small blocks or corks.

Each student will need a ten frame to record their work.

Students take turns using one hand to grasp objects from one bowl. They place the objects on the ten-frame, one per box.

After they place the objects, they count them one at a time, slowly touching each object as they say the number out loud.

During: As students take turns, write down their names, the number of bears they grasped with one hand, and a note of errors and comments the child made. This will serve as a quick assessment of verbal counting skills and 1:1 correspondence.

To assess and practice cardinality, you should always ask, "How many?" after a child counts. If they do not answer, count again with the child and model the answer; "Five. There are five bears." Invite the children to try it a second or third time, keeping track of each result.

Extension/ Closure: Invite children to write or draw the number of bears they grasped using the ten frame or a blank piece of paper. Discuss how they came up with the answers. Who grasped the same number of bears? Why did I grasp more? What did you notice about the number of blocks you grasped? Why?