

Learning to count '1, 2'

Following on from section A and B, where you and the child have worked to build a 1, 2 path or a 1, 2, 3 path, or a 0, 1, 2, 3 path and then used the number bag to generate and match some Numicon shapes, the next step is to teach counting. This is called one to one correspondence – tagging items with 'one, 'two'.

Resources:

A4 mats 1, 2 (possibly 0 and 3 if at this stage for rote counting)

Or

Desk top number path cards 1, 2 (and 0, 3 if at this stage)

Numicon 2 shapes

Die showing 1s and 2s only

Selection of objects x 2: plastic animals, Duplo bricks, socks, balls, biscuits, raisins

Start with counting 1, 2 only. For example, offer the child a choice of a dog or pig, once chosen give them two dogs or two pigs and help them to place them onto the large Numicon image of two.



Counting out
two pigs

The adult points to count "one, two", and then guides the child's pointing finger to each item and counts one, two again. Working towards pointing independently as the parent says the count sequence.

The number session is finished by counting the items into a basket, 1, 2, thus introducing counting by moving items as well as counting by pointing.

Both of these tasks are something that both younger, and older children, with Down syndrome struggle with as the task involves many skills; fine motor skills, hand eye coordination, speech and recall of a sequence.

The task needs to be split. At first encouraging the child to watch while an adult performs the task is sufficient, then hand over hand, then if the child is moving the objects, the adult

says the count sequence. Later roles are exchanged so that the adult is moving items while the child is saying the count sequence.

Other activities to develop one to one correspondence and the meaning of '1, 2'

Incorporating colours:

- Give out 2 blue bricks each. Encourage the signing and recognition of colour. Place the two bricks onto a A4 Numicon 2 mat, saying 'one, two' and ask the parent to demonstrate pointing and counting '1, 2' and encourage their child to then have a go. Repeat several times then as a group build a large tower between you – as the child places their bricks onto the tower say, '1, 2' so the tower is built of '1, 2 1, 2 1, 2, etc' bricks. Then watch it fall down - "crash". Tidy bricks into a blue box.
- Repeat with other colours, eventually having two different high contrast colours to choose from, eg count two red or two yellow bricks. After the tower has crashed, sort the bricks into red and yellow boxes.

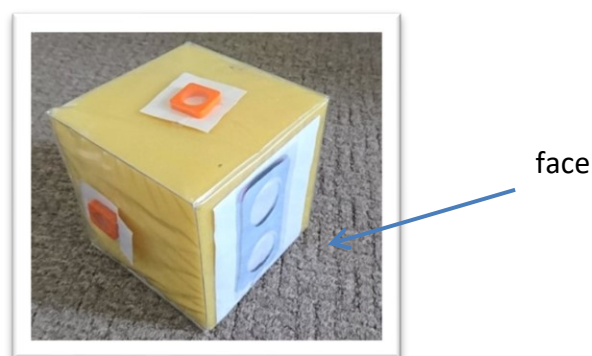
Incorporating body parts

Give out a large picture of a blank face to each child and practice placing/drawing eyes, ears, mouth, nose and hair in the correct place. I use laminated faces with Velcro in the relevant places. Use the correct vocabulary and once in place count 1 nose, 1 mouth, 2 eyes, 2 ears, etc. This can then continue in everyday life including 2 arms, 2 legs.

Using a die

Use a die showing 1, 2.

Start with Numicon representations only as the children will relate to these easier. Later include digit on one face and Numicon shape on another:



Take turns to roll the die.

In the beginning encourage the children to put up one arm or two arms, depending on the number rolled.

Later as fine motor skills are developing encourage them to show one or two fingers.

Spread A4 images of one and two across the floor. Roll the die, find the number and jump the correct number of times (with help from adult!)

Using socks

Give out two socks each – use primary colours - red, yellow and blue. Help the child to place the socks on their hands. Then count:

1, 2 as you bang the floor with each hand in turn

1, 2 as you wave each arm etc.

Take the socks off (can they do it independently?) and make them into balls and bounce them on a cloth, saying "1, 2 up"

Using balls

One, two balls are rolled back and forth between parent and child.

You can also use large cardboard tubes and count as the ball pops out of the end and hits the floor.

We are surrounded by opportunities to count 1, 2, and parents need to be encouraged to use these opportunities in everyday life.

Using snack time

Snack time also incorporates counting skills. We use small biscuits and give each child a 2 shape and two biscuits guiding them to count out the two biscuits onto the two shape. In time this task is increased and eventually they are offered a plate of biscuits and asked to take two (working on cardinality).



We also count out raisins (some of them chocolate) starting with two and increasing slowly over the years.

At snack time we have two for the biscuits and once we have introduced the Numicon three shape we encourage the children to count out three raisins before they eat them.



By year 4 of our Early Development Groups we are giving the children a choice asking if they want 5 or 8 raisins by showing them the 5 and 8 Numicon shape; they choose the shape and are then given the correct number of raisins to count into the shape.



counting out seven raisins at snack time

They are encouraged to place them into the Numicon shape in “twos” thus forming the Numicon format for the lower numbers. They very quickly grasp that the larger shape gives them more raisins and can spend ages carefully counting out the raisins before they eat them.

Activity – snack time

Have some small biscuits, for example, mini jammy dodgers, enough for two each. When they have asked/signed for a biscuit place a Numicon two shape in front of them and count out two biscuits onto the shape. Sign and say biscuit and encourage child to point to count the biscuits before they eat them. They will get used to doing this and begin to ask for the two shape ready to count the biscuits onto independently.