

How to use Y1 Catch-up

The children starting Y1 this year have missed out on almost half their time in Reception. Helping them catch up is inevitably going to involve working with small groups on targeted skills or concepts. However, whilst this will be any teacher's main endeavour, it will also help to work with the whole class or a large group on ritualised skills such as counting.

Counting – with a large group

The activities here were initially suggested for parents at home but equally make excellent whole class counting activities. Most need either a very small amount of preparation or none at all, and each only takes ten minutes or less. They make ideal 'fillers', usefully practising a key skill whilst waiting for playtime, or after PE.

Little and often is the key and lots of repetition is positively beneficial.

Targeted Small Group Activities

Again, these activities were produced for one or two children but are readily adapted for a small group. There are plenty of choices within a few key themed skills and concepts, like counting on/ back and number facts, e.g. bonds to 10. This allows for different activities to be done with specifically targeted groups of children.



Top Tips for how to adapt the activities to your context

The activities were originally aimed at one adult with one or two children. However, they can be very successful when used with up to 6 children in a small group.

- Put children in pairs, so they are working with a partner. If asking a question, or waiting for them to spot something, suggest that they *whisper* an answer to their partner. This prevents all children waiting for one chosen child to answer – a sure recipe for boredom and disengagement!
- If the activity involves a game, it often helps to play '*teacher against children*'. The children then band together to defeat you!
- Short and sweet – keep the activities brisk and pacy. If children are stuck, use hints or prompts to move them along. Enlist other children's support so that there is a feeling of mutual engagement rather than six competitive individuals!
- Prepare / prepare / prepare ... You need to have laid things out, or made the game or cut out the cards. Check what needs doing in advance and do it!

