

Math Concepts, continued

See video instructions for more details and Montessori theory.

Sandpaper Numbers In Order - Lay out all of the sandpaper numbers in order, including 0. You will need 45 of the starfish counters (this provides a control of error for the child to be able to check their work). Have your child place the correct number of starfish below each sandpaper number until they have counted out all of the starfish. If they end up with extras or some missing, go back to the beginning and help them count again to check their work and discover where they made the mistake. Don't point it out to them, but help them discover for themselves where the mistake was made.

Concept of Nothing & Zero - If your child asks why there are no starfish under the 0 in the previous activity, you can say "This says zero, which means nothing". See the article linked on the resource page for how Dr. Montessori introduced this fun concept to her students.

More & Less - This activity is to help your child visualize and learn the difference between more and less. You will need 2 sandpaper numbers, (in the video, we used 2 and 5 since it is easy to see the difference between them), and the starfish. Place the 2 sandpaper numbers down, and then count out the correct number of starfish. Once all of the starfish have been laid out, ask the child "Which group has more starfish?" "Yes, two comes before five". Repeat this activity with several more numbers that are quite obviously different, then do ones that are closer.

Sequence, Odd and Even - The first part of this activity is having your child lay out all of the sandpaper numbers in order. You can have them in mixed order on the bottom of the child's workspace and then have your child put them in correct order. You will not need zero to introduce the concept of odd and even, so leave that one out. After the sandpaper numbers are in order, have the child count out all of the starfish. Once they have counted them all out, you can show them that all of the ones where the starfish have a friend (a starfish next to it) are even, and all of the ones that are missing a friend are odd.