Hampshire Services
HIAS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Helping your children with counting

Learning to count is an important part of mathematics and helps children to become confident and successful in their learning. The National Curriculum specifies the parts of the number system that children need to learn about. Each year children's knowledge is extended further, while some re-visiting of earlier work is also very helpful. The key areas of counting the children need to learn over their primary education include the following:

- counting forwards
- counting backwards
- counting in steps of different sizes, for example counting in ones, twos, fives, tens, hundreds and so on
- counting forwards and backwards from different numbers, for example 0, 1, 15, 48, 1000 and so on
- Counting in fraction and decimal steps, for example 1/2, 1/3, ¼, 0.1, 0.01 and so on
- Counting with negative numbers, for example counting backwards from 0: -1, -2, -3 ….

All these activities help children to get to the know the number system and this knowledge is used across a wide range of mathematics, including calculating, measures and problem solving. It is very helpful if children can link their counting to number lines. These help children to see patterns in numbers and to develop a visual picture in their minds as to where numbers are in relation to each other.

A good starting point is to look at the areas of counting suggested below for each year group. You could begin by asking your child to start counting with some numbers they feel confident with. It is good to revise some work from earlier year groups if your child finds this helpful. Five to ten minutes a day a few times a week soon starts to build confidence and knowledge.

Examples of helpful questions you could ask when doing these activities

What number comes after 16 (or whatever number you chose) when we count in ones (or whatever step size 2, 5, 10 etc you chose)?

Tell me about the pattern you can see.

Count out loud or write down some numbers, for example 25, 50, 75, 100, 125, 150, 200 (could be on a number line). "I think I might have made a mistake somewhere. Can you say where I have missed a number?"

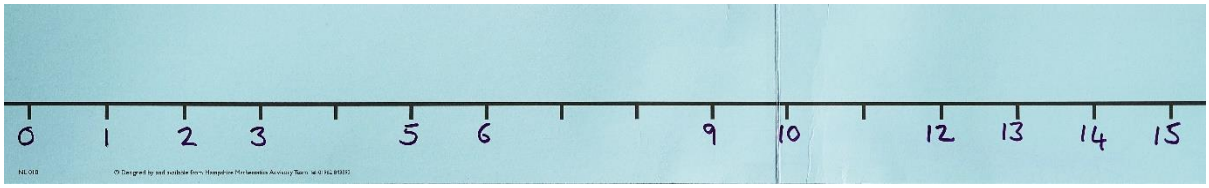
If I count from 0 in 10s will I say the number 35?

Suggestions for each year group to try

Reception

- count (forwards and backwards) reliably with the numbers from 1 to 20, place them in order and say which number is one more or one less than a given number.

Things to count

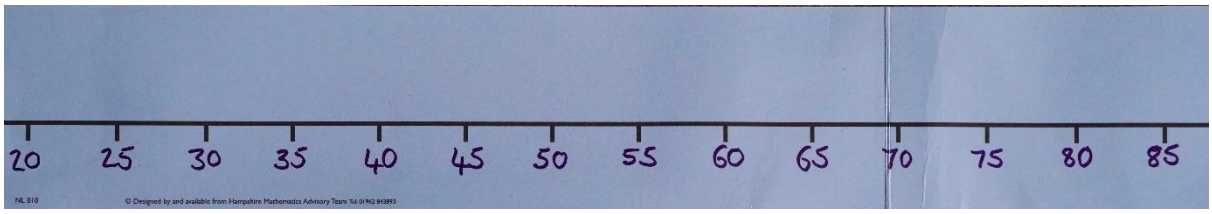


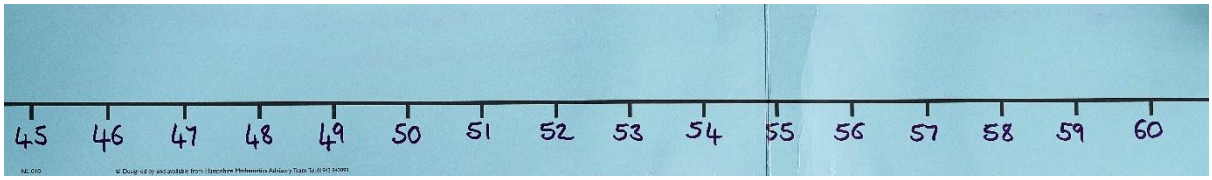
Asking a child to spot the missing numbers could be one activity.

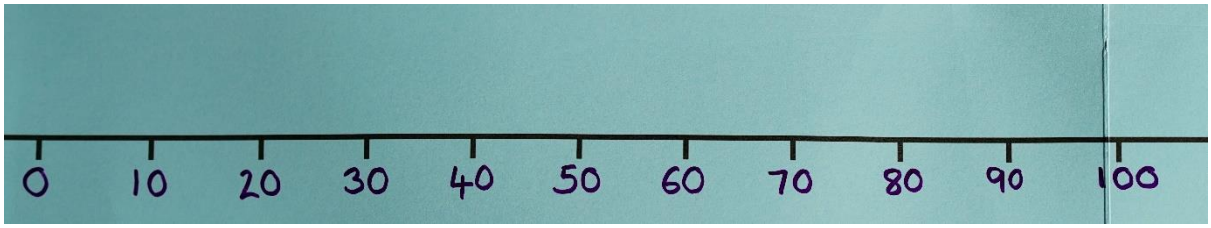
Year 1

- count to and across 100, forwards and backwards, beginning with 0 or 1, or from any given number

- count, read and write numbers to 100 in numerals; count in multiples of twos, fives and tens

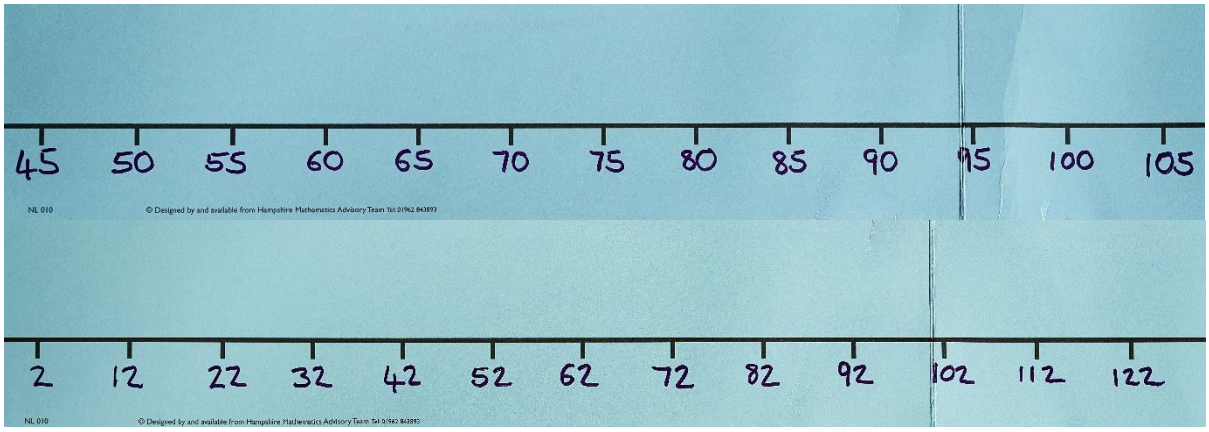






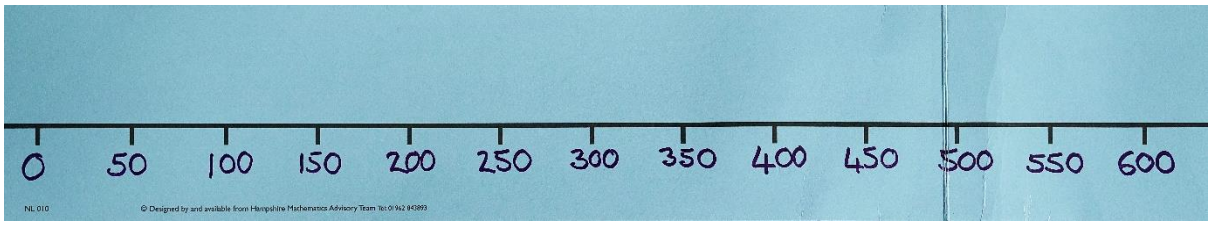
Year 2

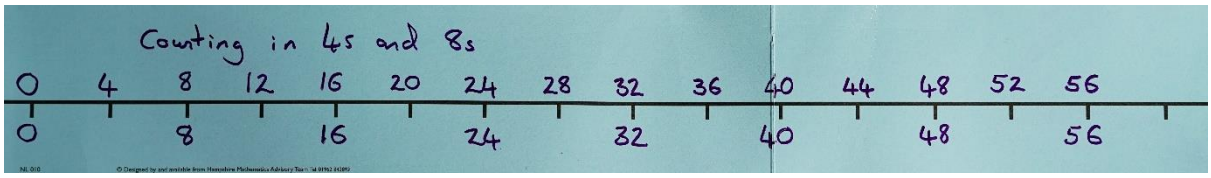
- count in steps of 1, 2, 3, and 5 from 0, and in tens from any number (to at least 100), forward and backwards

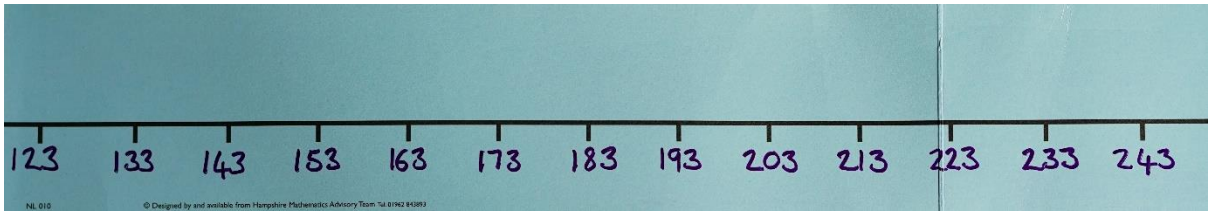


Year 3

- count from 0 in multiples of 4, 8, 50 and 100
- count in ones, tens and hundreds, with numbers up to 1000.

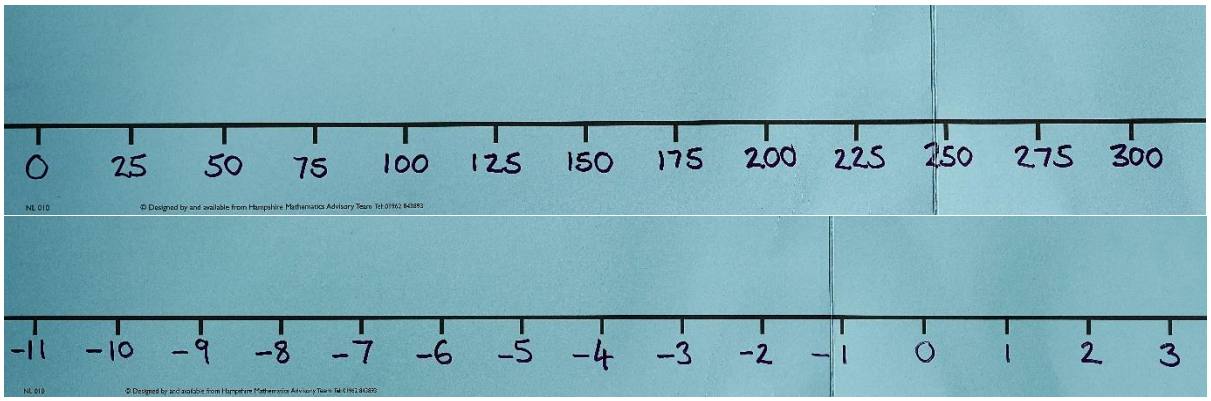






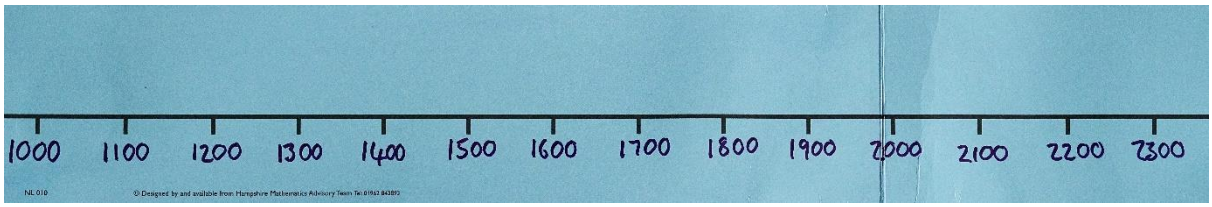
Year 4

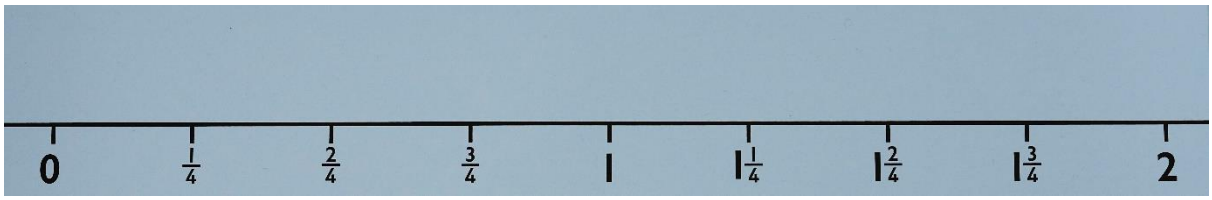
- count in multiples of 6, 7, 9, 25 and 1000
- count backwards through zero to include negative numbers



Year 5

- count forwards and backwards in 10s, 100s, 1000s up 1,000,000
- count forwards and backwards from 0 to 3 in ½, 1/3, ¼, 1/10 steps.





Year 6

- count forwards and backwards in 10s, 100s, 1000s up 10,000,000
- count forwards and backwards from 0 to 3 in 1/2, ¼, 1/10s recognising decimal and fraction equivalences.