

Engaging in numeracy games in kindergarten

Transcript of video

This video is available from www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/32158.html.

Desley Jones
Kindergarten teacher

Maths is a really big part of what we do. We have our dice game, which is one of several transition games. I really like transition time. I think transition times are a great little time for exposing children to new possibilities of games and new connections with other people.

The dice game is a lot of fun because they use a big foam dice. One person rolls it, and that person counts the dots on top of the dice and then that person counts the same number of children in a row to go to the bathroom [or the next part of the routine] with them.

So there's a lot of instruction in that. They're really having to use their working memories to get through that one, and the children waiting have to really respect the fact that this is one person's turn.

You do have cries of 'I haven't had a turn', and we acknowledge that, say, 'Yes, we know and that's disappointing but, remember, there's a long time at kindy. We'll play this game lots of times, so you will get a turn.'

So, again, for us, it meets lots and lots of outcomes. It is very much about relationships too, but it's equally about maths, and it's that acceptance of the fact that people will even count those dots differently. So we don't say that's right or that's good. We support them with that.

And I don't hear the other children say, 'Oh, you got that wrong' if they happen to skip a dot. I'll be there to say, 'I think your finger was moving a bit fast. I got mixed up with my numbers. Let's count it again, and maybe I'll hold your finger this time as we do it.'

So there are lots of ways we can help them out too so that they feel quite comfortable within the space. And so many today called out and said, 'Oh, it's my favourite game!' I said, 'Oh, well, that's great.' And then they often take it on, and if they've counted six then they'll say, 'Well, that's seven people going: it's six plus one more, the person who rolled the dice.' I think: it's maths! Maths is around children everywhere. So it's really exciting.

Excerpt from class session

Desley I'll bring it to you, Zara, so that you can roll the dice.

Zara One.

Desley One. Who will go? One.

Child 2 That makes two.

Desley And that makes two going to the bathroom, Zara and the one she counted. Your turn, Sophie.

Sophie One, two, three, four, five.

Desley Okay, now five children.

Sophie One, two, three, four, five.

Desley Five going, plus Sophie. I wonder how many that is altogether.

Children Six.