Learning Games for Children

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Counting Cups

Purpose: This game is great for learning to identify numbers and associate them with concrete items.

How to make: Get 10 small 4 oz. solo cups. Using a permanent marker, write the number 1 on a cup, the number 2 on the second cup, the number 3 on the next cup, etc. If you want to, you may spell out the number on the back side of the cup and you could eventually teach him the spelling of each number.

How to play: Use crackers, raisins, m and m's, beads, etc. Begin with the first two or three cups. Tell the child what number is on the cup. Point out it's distinguishing features. (i.e. "An eight is two circles one on top of the other.") Have the child count out the correct number of items and place them in the correct cup. Let the child eat the raisins when he is finished.



Bunnies

Purpose: The bunnies and carrots may be used to teach number identification.

How to make: Copy the carrots on to orange cardstock and cut out. Make 10 carrot tops out of green paper using the pattern on the page with the carrots. Glue the carrot tops on to the carrots. Copy the page with the bunnies 5 times and cut out 10 of the bunnies. Write the number 1 on one bunny, number 2 on the next bunny, number 3 on the next bunny, etc. Color the ears of the bunnies pink and the bows various colors.

How to play: Be creative as you tell a story about a mommy bunny and her 10 little baby bunnies. Tell how mommy gave each bunny a carrot for breakfast but the baby bunnies wanted to go out to play. They put their carrots in a pile on the table and went outside. When they came back in they discovered that mommy bunny had hidden their carrots. Each bunny had to find their own carrot before they could have their breakfast. Have fun…kids love drama.

Now have your child find the carrots that you have hidden around the room. She needs to match the bunny with the correct carrot. They will need to correctly count the black dots on the carrots to do this.

See appendix for bunny and carrot templates.



Goin' Fishin'

Purpose: To learn how to count and identify the numbers 1 – 10

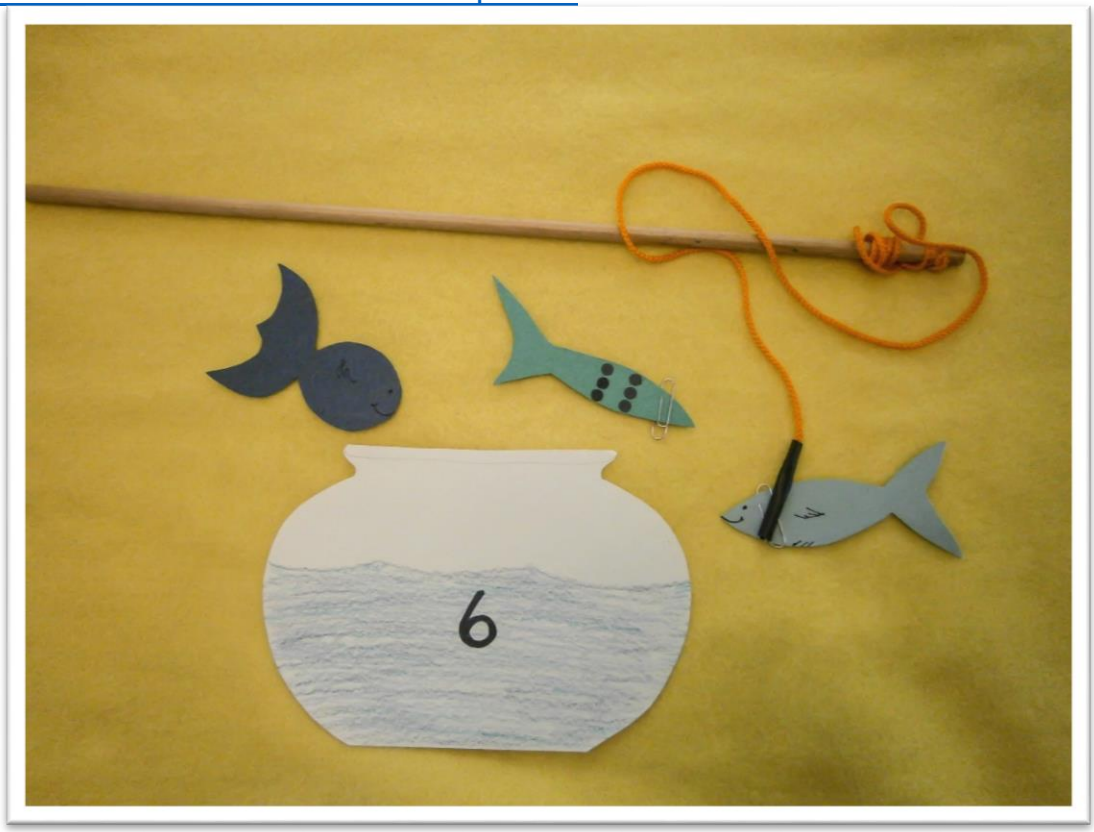
How to make: Copy the page with the fish bowls 5 times. Color the water blue and write number 1 on the first bowl, number 2 on the next and so on.

Copy the page with the fish. Cut out each fish and use a black marker to make large dots on each fish. Put one dot on the back of the first fish, two dots on the second, etc. Put a paper clip on each fish.

Get a doll rod about 12" long. (A wooden spoon would also work." Tie a shoe string or cord around the stick. Glue or tie a magnet on the end of the string.

How to play: Tell your child he can go fishing today. Place a blue cloth (optional) on the floor and scatter the fish in the "water". Have him use his fishing pole to catch the fish. When he catches one he needs to count the dots and put the fish in the corresponding fish bowl. You can even give him a fishing hat to wear as he fishes.

See appendix for fish and fishbowl templates.



Egg Carton

Purpose: May be used to learn numbers and do addition or subtraction.

How to make: Using a permanent marker, randomly write the numbers 1 through 12 in the bottom of each egg cup. Put a bean or puff ball or marble in the egg carton.

How to play: Shake the egg carton and open it up. Identify what number the bean has landed on. You may add a second object and identify both numbers. As the child becomes more confident, you can have him add or subtract the two numbers that the objects fall on.



Puzzles

Purpose: Puzzles are great for any facts including science, history, math, etc.

How to make: Use 3 x 5 index cards. Cut down the center in an unusual design. This makes two halves that will match.

A few suggestions for you to make:

Upper case letters on the left – lower case letters on the right

Number on the left – corresponding number of stickers on the right

Math fact (2 + 4 =) on the left – answer on the right (8)

Question from science, history, etc. on left – answer to question on right

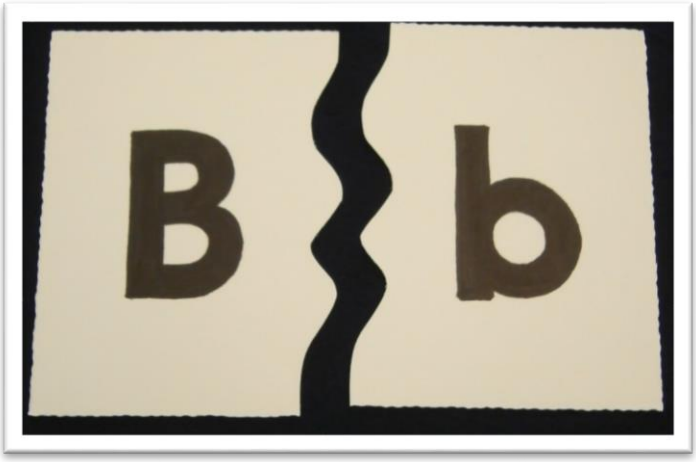
Puzzles are great because the child will know he has the correct answer when the two puzzle pieces match.

How to play: Spread all of the cards and their answers out on the table. Have child find the two halves that match. Younger children may need to start with 3 or 4 cards and then gradually add more matches until you are using the entire set of cards.









Clocks

Purpose: It is important for children to understand time. Don't just rely on digital clocks for telling time; however, you could use a digital clock with your handmade clock and let your child set the clocks to match.

How to make: From poster board, cut out a large circle (I trace around a dinner plate.) Mark black hash marks around the perimeter of the clock for the 12 numbers. Write the numbers 1 – 12 in the appropriate places. Then finish with the 4 smaller marks for the 60 minutes.

How to play: Explain how clocks work. Explain the difference between the hour, minute and second hands. Show your child what you want him to do. Practice making the various times that you ask for.

1st stage: begin with o'clock (7 o'clock, 10 o'clock, etc.)
2nd stage: learn half hour (1:30, 3:30, etc.)
3rd stage: counting by 5's (10:35, 9:45)
4th stage: (9:33, 5:28, etc.)

Have your child give you a time and you set the clock. Have him check to see if you set the hands correctly. Occasionally make a mistake and have your child correct you.



Money

Purpose: To teach children about various denominations of coins and bills.

How to play: Have a tin can or box with coins and practice every day. Point out the distinguishing features of each coin. (The penny is the only coin that is copper. It has smooth edges. What do you see on the front of the coin? What do you see on the back? The penny is one cent. If we count pennies, we count 1, 2, 3…)

1st stage: learn to count pennies, by ones
2nd stage: learn to count nickels, by fives
3rd stage: learn to count dimes, by tens
4th stage: learn to count quarters, by twenty-fives
5th stage: learn to mix coins and add them together
6th stage: learn to make 100 or one dollar in different ways
7th stage: learn to make change



Let's Go Shopping

Purpose: To help children understand that money buys things in stores, restaurants, etc.

How to play: Take canned goods and boxed food, put price tags on them. Spread them out on the table or book shelf. Have your child shop first and select two or three items, add the amounts together, give you the correct amount of money. If you have a toy grocery cart or cash register, use them to make this even more fun. Don't forget to bag up the items. Dressing up and carrying a purse or wallet makes this even more entertaining.

Next, you can be the customer and shop, and then let your child make change.

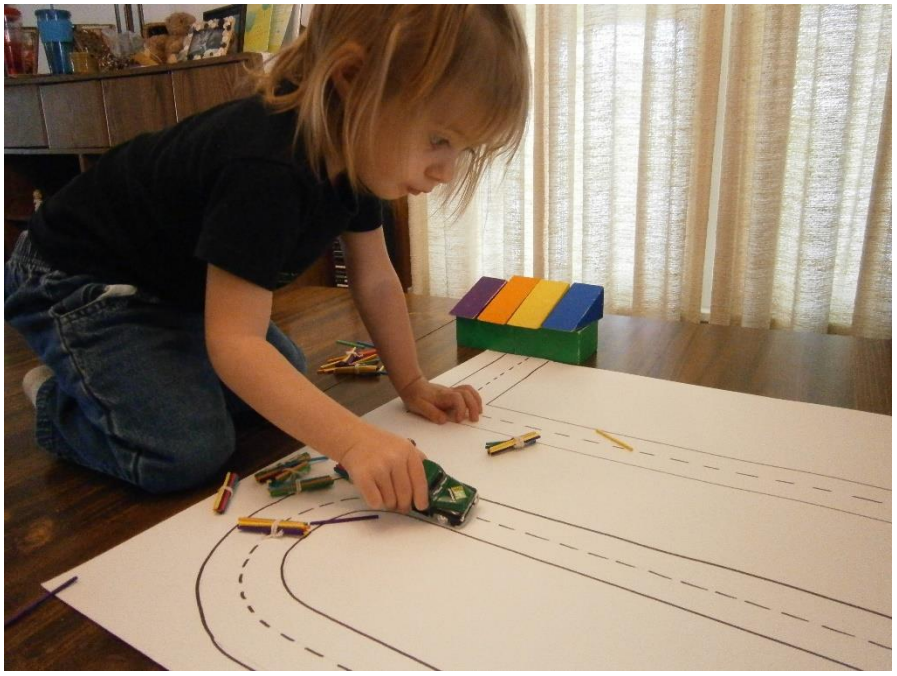
Note: You can also use categories of canned items (i.e. fruit, vegetable, legumes, etc.) and learn about what makes an item a fruit, etc.

Lumberyard

Purpose: This game is designed to help your child count by ones and tens.

How to make: You will need at least 100 toothpicks. Bundle them in groups of 10 using a rubber band or string to tie them together. Involve your child so that he sees that there are 10 per bundle. You will need a toy pick up truck for this game. On a large white poster board, draw a house on the bottom left corner and a lumberyard in the top right corner. Between these two buildings, draw a road for the truck to drive on with a dashed line down the center.

Variation: Use masking tape and "build" a road on your carpet or floor. Have one of your children build the lumberyard and a house out of Legos or blocks. Have the child "drive" his truck on the masking tape road from the house to the lumberyard.



How to play: This game is especially appealing to boys because of the toy truck, but your daughters will like it too. Before playing the game, have your child count out 10 "boards of lumber" and tie them into a bundle. Explain that each bundle has 10 "boards" in it. You can use toothpicks or small craft sticks for the lumber. Practice counting by 10's. Ask your child what would be faster, counting by 1's up to 100 or counting by 10's up to 100. If he doesn't know, you can count by 10's while he counts by 1's. Have a race and see who reaches 100 first.

Now pretend that your child is adding an addition on to your house and needs some lumber. Have him decide how many 2 x 4's he needs. Have him drive his truck to the lumberyard and place an order for 56 boards. The sales person at the lumberyard then counts out 5 bundles of 10's and 6 ones. Have your child double check you to make sure you gave him the correct amount of lumber. He can then load up his pickup truck and drive home. Have fun using different voices and play acting. Also, change roles so that he can be the sales person at the lumberyard.

Flannel Graph

Purpose: Flannel graphs are very versatile. Use to teach colors, shapes, counting, addition, subtraction, and as an incentive for answering questions correctly for any subject.

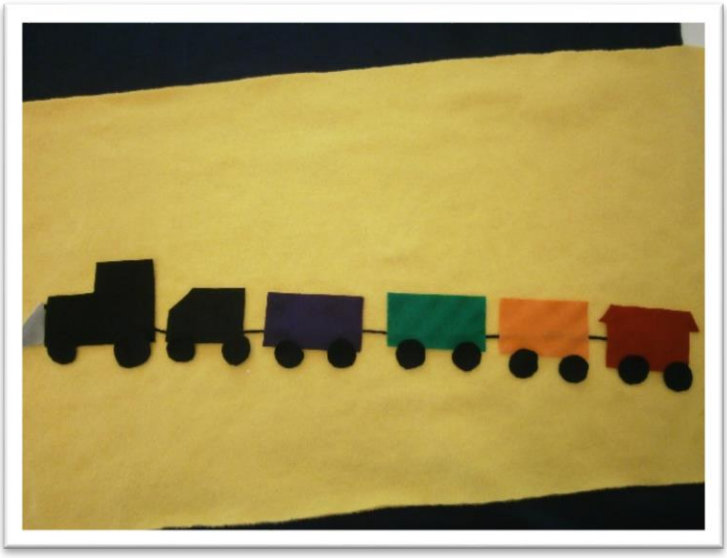


How to make: You can make an actual board; however, if that is not an option, you could just spread the piece of flannel on the table or thumb tack to wall. You could always cover a piece of corrugated cardboard with flannel.

Cut out 2" squares of all different colors of felt. I use my rotary cutter to simplify this task, but measuring and cutting works fine. Cut out all different shapes all in the same color so the child is not learning the shape by associating it with the color. Cut out a train and "Chuckles the Clown" (see picture).

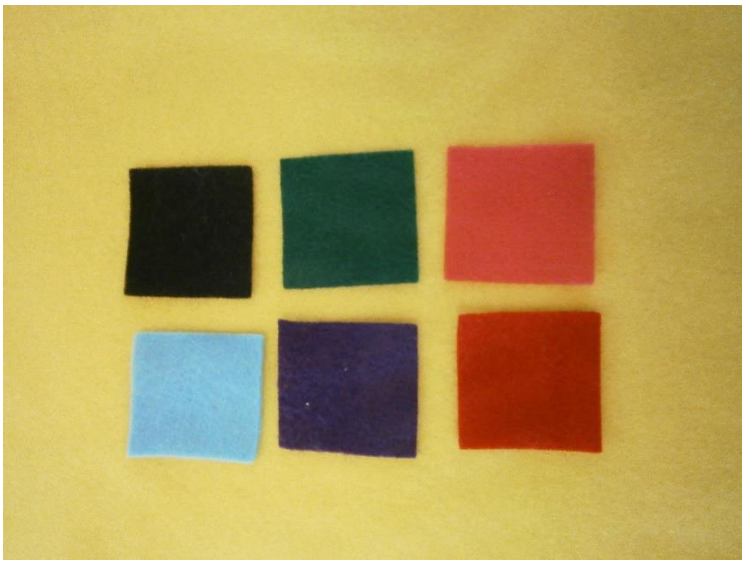
How to play:

Have your child place the pieces for "Chuckles the Clown" on the flannel graph board one at a time after answering questions correctly. The question may be about any topic or subject you choose. Begin by placing the larger pieces and follow the picture on the envelope.



The train may be used like “Chuckles” or may be used to practice phonics.
Use the last five railroad cards and put “a, e, i, o and u” and practice saying the short vowel sounds and the long vowel sounds. Next put a consonant on the engine and say the consonant with the vowels together. You may put a consonant on the caboose to make three or four letter words.

Any pictures or letters that you want to use with your flannel graph can be made to “stick” by gluing squares of sand paper to the back. You can also purchase flannel graph Bible stories, parts of the body, etc.

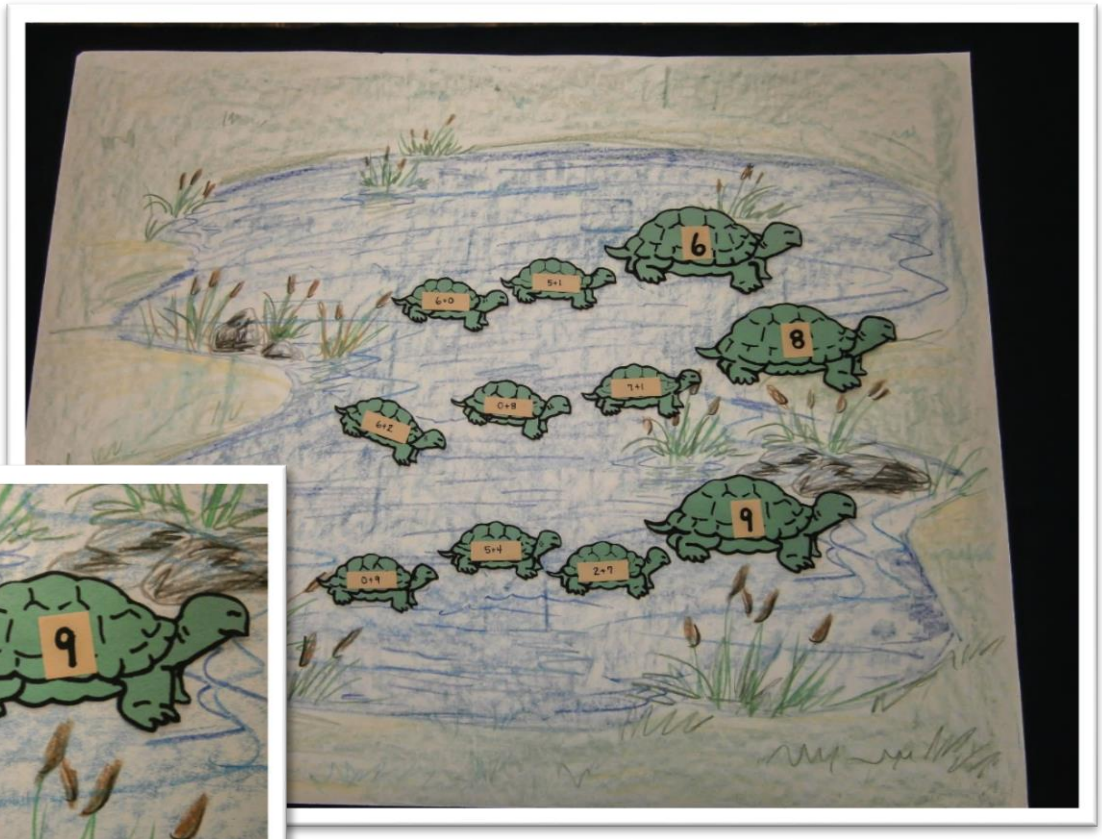


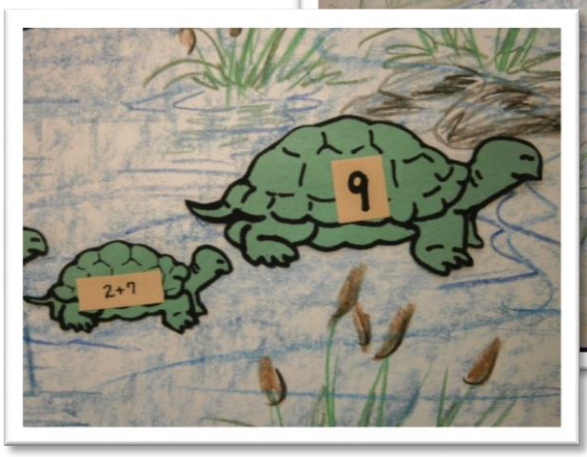
Turtles

Purpose: To practice math facts in a different way.

How to make: On a large white poster board, draw a pond with cattails, grass, rocks, etc. Use the template to copy turtles onto green cardstock and cut out mommy and baby turtles. On the mommy turtle put a single digit number such as 9. On the baby turtles write equations such as: 1 + 8 =; 2 + 7 =; 3 + 6 =; and so on.
Make sets of matching equations for any addition facts that you want to practice with your child.

How to play: Tell a story about three mommy turtles and how their babies like to follow in a line behind them. Use your imagination. The objective is to have your child put the correct baby turtles with the correct mommy turtle. Mix up all of the babies and have the child line up the smaller turtles behind their corresponding mommy.
See appendix for turtle templates.





Raccoons

Purpose: To learn how to count using pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters.

How to make: Copy the template of the raccoons onto brown cardstock, and cut out the raccoons. Copy the template of the money bags onto cream cardstock, and cut out the money bags. Write $1.00 on the abdomen of the first raccoon, $.75 on the abdomen of the second raccoon, $.50 on the third, and $.25 on the fourth. On the money bags write a list of coins such as: 2 quarters, 1 dime, 2 nickels, and 5 pennies; or 3 quarters, etc.

How to play: Hide the "money bags around the room" when your child is not around. Tell him a story about 4 brother raccoons named "Ricky, Robbie, Randy, and Rocky". Each of the brothers loves to explore the field near their home. One day they find all sorts of money bags. (Elaborate and make the story fun for your child.) Have the child find the money bags and give them to the appropriate brother. If the child cannot work out the math easily, provide him with actual coins and help him count out the correct coins and then add them up together.

See appendix for raccoon templates.

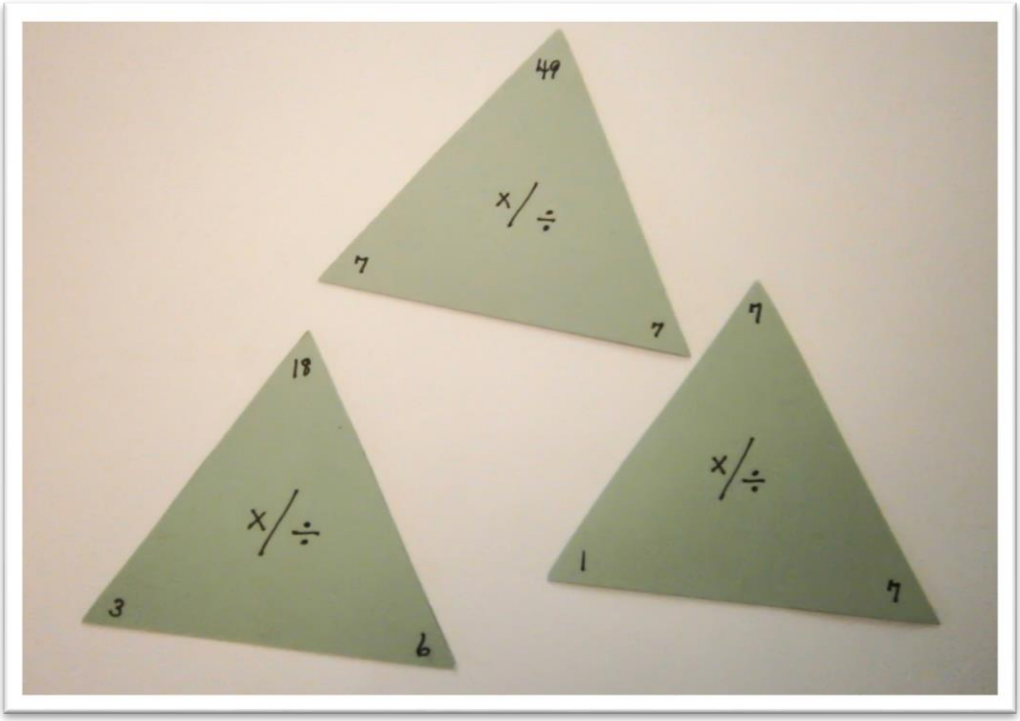




△ Flashcards

Purpose: These flashcards are good for seeing the correlation between addition/subtraction or multiplication/division. The unique thing about triangle flashcards is that the child can see all three numbers at one time.

How to play: Hold your finger over the 8 on the triangle. Have the child say, "2 times 4 equals" and then answer the question by supplying the number under your finger which is 8. Now hold your finger over the 2 and say, "8 divided by 4 equals" and then answer 2. Lastly hide the 4 under your finger. Have the child recite "8 divided by 2 equals" and answer with 4. Emphasize that none of the numbers changed.

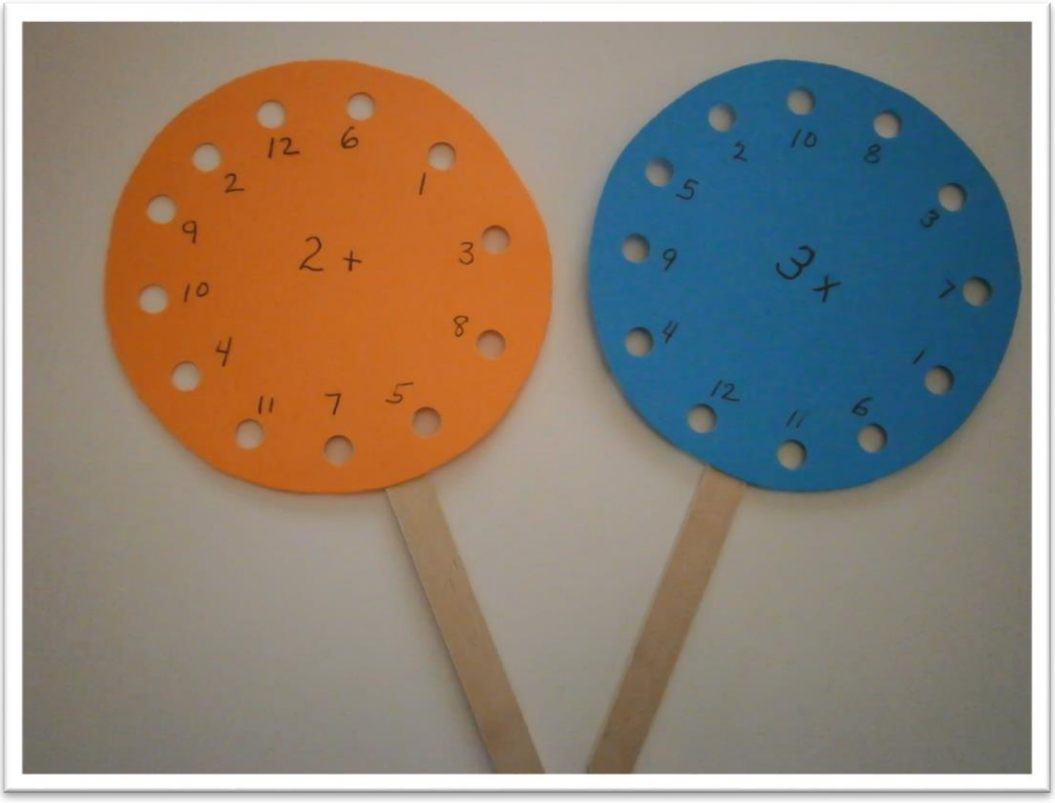


Lollipops

Purpose: These lollipops can be self-checking or two siblings can do this together. May be used for addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division

How to make: Cut out circles approximately "3 ½ - 4" in diameter. Use a cup or bowl to trace circles. Put the first part of the math equation in the center (i.e. "5 X" or "4 +" in the middle of the circle. Then around the outer edge put the numbers 1 through 12 in a random order. Using a hole punch, make holes for each of the 12 numbers. On the back side of the circle, place the answers. Attach a popsicle stick to the bottom.

How to play: Have one child hold the "lollipop" and read the math equation. As he answers each one he pokes a pencil point or toothpick in the hole to check to make sure he has answered correctly. A second person can sit opposite and check the answers for him.

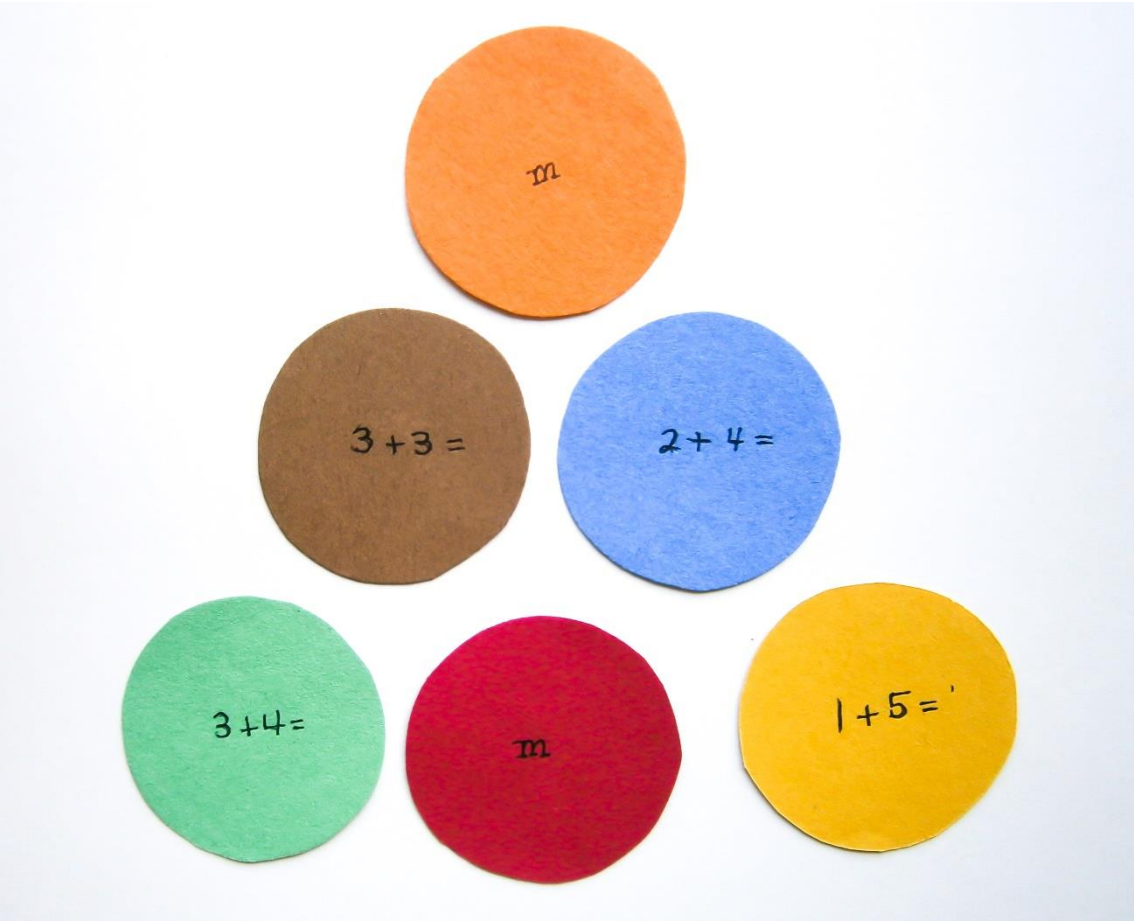


M & M's

Purpose: To practice math facts. May be used for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

How to make: Cut out small circles about 1 ½ - 2 inches in diameter. I use the colors found in the package of m & m's. (red, orange, yellow, blue, green and brown.) Put a small "m" on the first side and a math fact on the opposite side.

How to play: Practice the flashcards. For every correct answer, let your child eat that many m & m's as a reward.



Skip Counting

Purpose: This is a precursor to multiplication.

How to use: Make a copy of the charts provided. If you are working on multiples of 3, then use that particular chart. The first person whispers “1”, “2” and the child who needs the practice says “3” out loud. The first person whispers “4”, “5” and the child says “6”. The chart helps the child see the multiples of 3 because they are in a different color that stands out from all of the other numbers. He is also hearing 3, 6, 9 etc. Eventually have the child say the numbers in the last column without anyone whispering the other numbers.

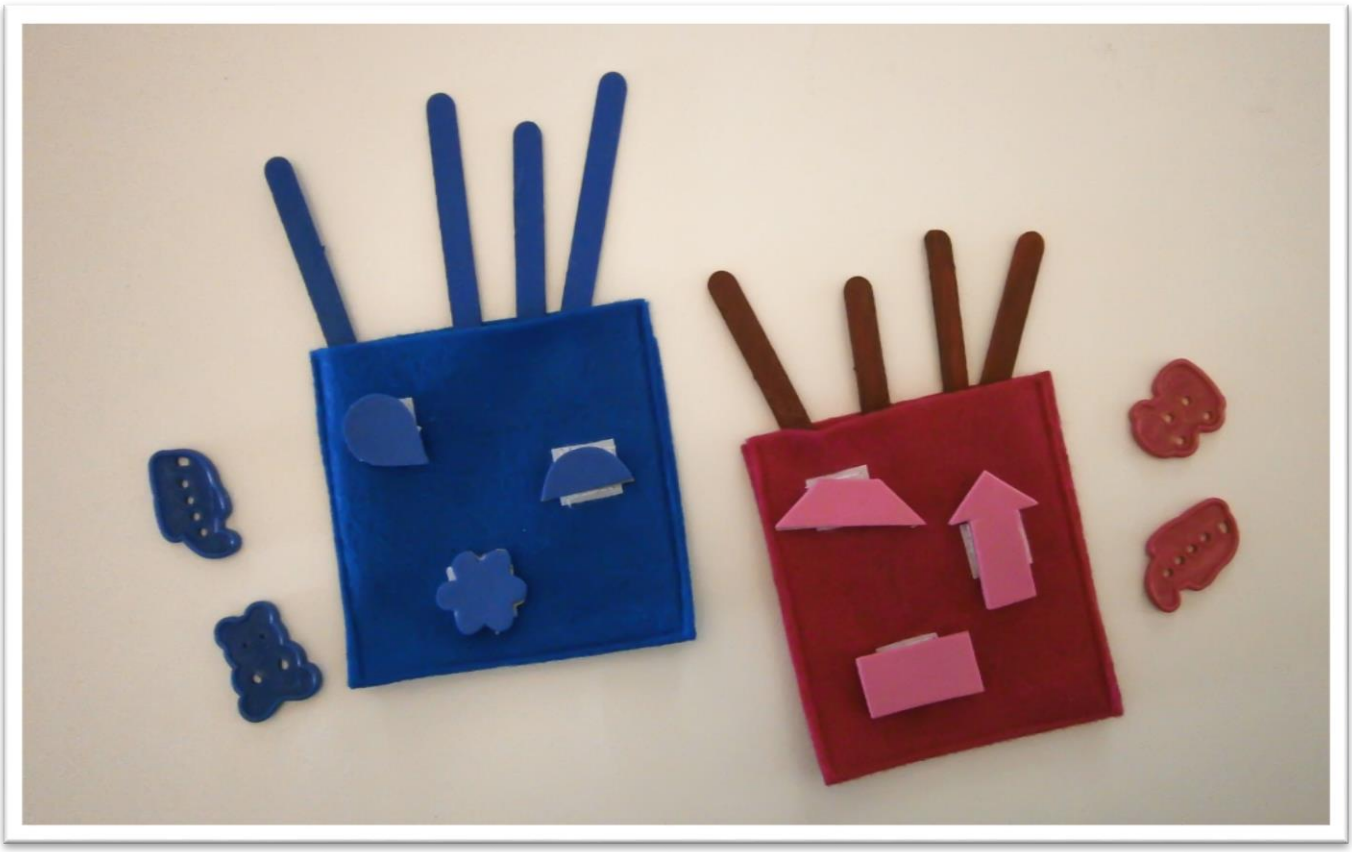
See appendix for skip counting templates.

Fun with Colors

Purpose: To match colors correctly.

How to make: Sew small pockets out of felt approximately 4" x 4". Paint 4 or 5 popsicle sticks the same color as the pouch. Find 3 or 4 buttons that match the colors of your pockets. You can also sew or glue Velcro to the pocket and cut various shapes out of colored foam and glue the other side of the Velcro to these shapes.

How to play: Have the child put the popsicle sticks and buttons in the correct pockets. Have him also find the matching colored shapes and stick them to the Velcro on the pocket.



Shades of Colors

Purpose: To match the shades of colors correctly. Talk about light, lighter, lightest, and dark, darker, darkest, etc.

How to make: Get some color strips from the paint store or Wal-Mart. You will need two cards that match. Get a variety of sets. Cut a small rectangular piece of each shade out of the second card and glue the rectangle onto a clothespin that you squeeze to open.

How to play: Give the child one color card. Have the coordinating clothespins spread out on the table. Have your child clip the correct clothespin to the corresponding color on the card. If this is not challenging enough give him all of the cards and mix the clothespins up on the table. Teach him words like light, lighter, lightest and dark, darker, darkest.



Bucketful of Color

Purpose: To teach colors

How to make: Take a clear plastic container (I use an empty Aldi's pretzel container). Fill with items that are all the same color, such as: pencil, ponytail holder, pom pom, shoe lace, paper clip, sticker, rubber band, toy, truck, Lego, sponge, etc.

How to play: Change the color every week or every few days. Explain that all of the items in the bucket are "red". You can take them out of the bucket and say, "This is a red pencil. This is a red ball. Etc." Ask the child to look around the room and find something else that is red.

You could put one item in the bucket that is not red. Ask your child, "Which item does not belong? Why does it not fit with all of the rest of the objects?

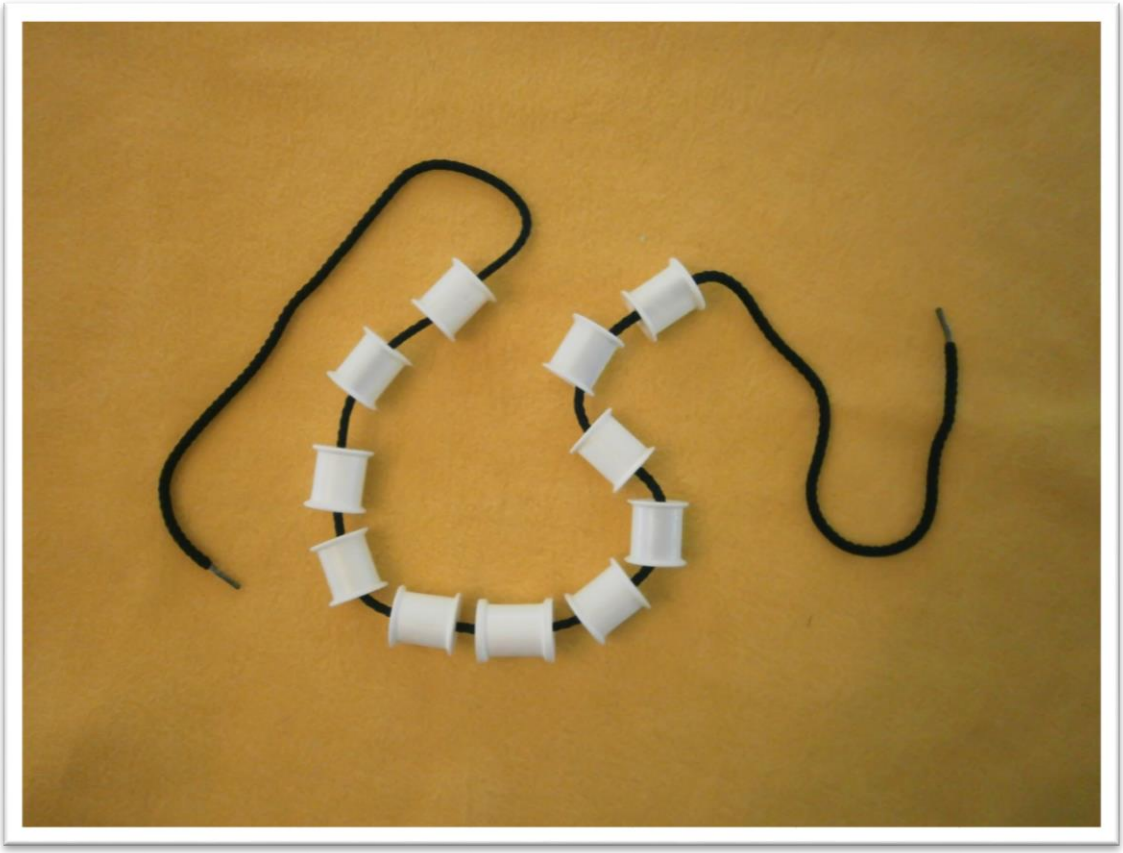


String and Spools

Purpose: This is great for hand eye coordination. You may also use the spools for ordering numbers from 1 – 10.

How to make: Find 10 spools or objects with holes for stringing. With permanent marker, put the numbers from 1 – 10 on them.

How to play: Give your child a shoestring and have him/her thread the spools on to the shoestring in the correct order. If your child is young or has trouble getting the spools on to the shoestring, make the end firm by attaching a toothpick or very small doll rod to the end.



Fun with Puffy Balls

Purpose: This helps with hand eye coordination, identifying colors, and understanding little, littler littlest and big, bigger biggest. Learn about patterns and sequence.

How to Make: Save a plastic container from yogurt, sour cream etc. Cut 4- 5 holes in the top of various sizes. Buy multi-colored puff balls (should come in a package with a variety of sizes) from Wal-Mart or a Dollar Store.

How to Play: Have your child dump all of the puff balls on the table. Then have her put the smallest ball into the smallest hole. The next size up should be put in the next size hole and so on. You can ask her to put all of the pink balls in, or put all of the yellow balls in to the container. Line up the balls according to size and show her which one is little, littler and littlest. Have her choose from the pile one of the balls that is biggest.

As your child gets older, work with patterns and sequences. Lay out a pattern of alternating colors and have her tell you which color comes next in the sequence. Lay out a more complex pattern with size and color and see if she can correctly pick the ball that comes next.



Textures (Adjectives)

Purpose: to learn adjectives (words that describe nouns) and increase memory skills

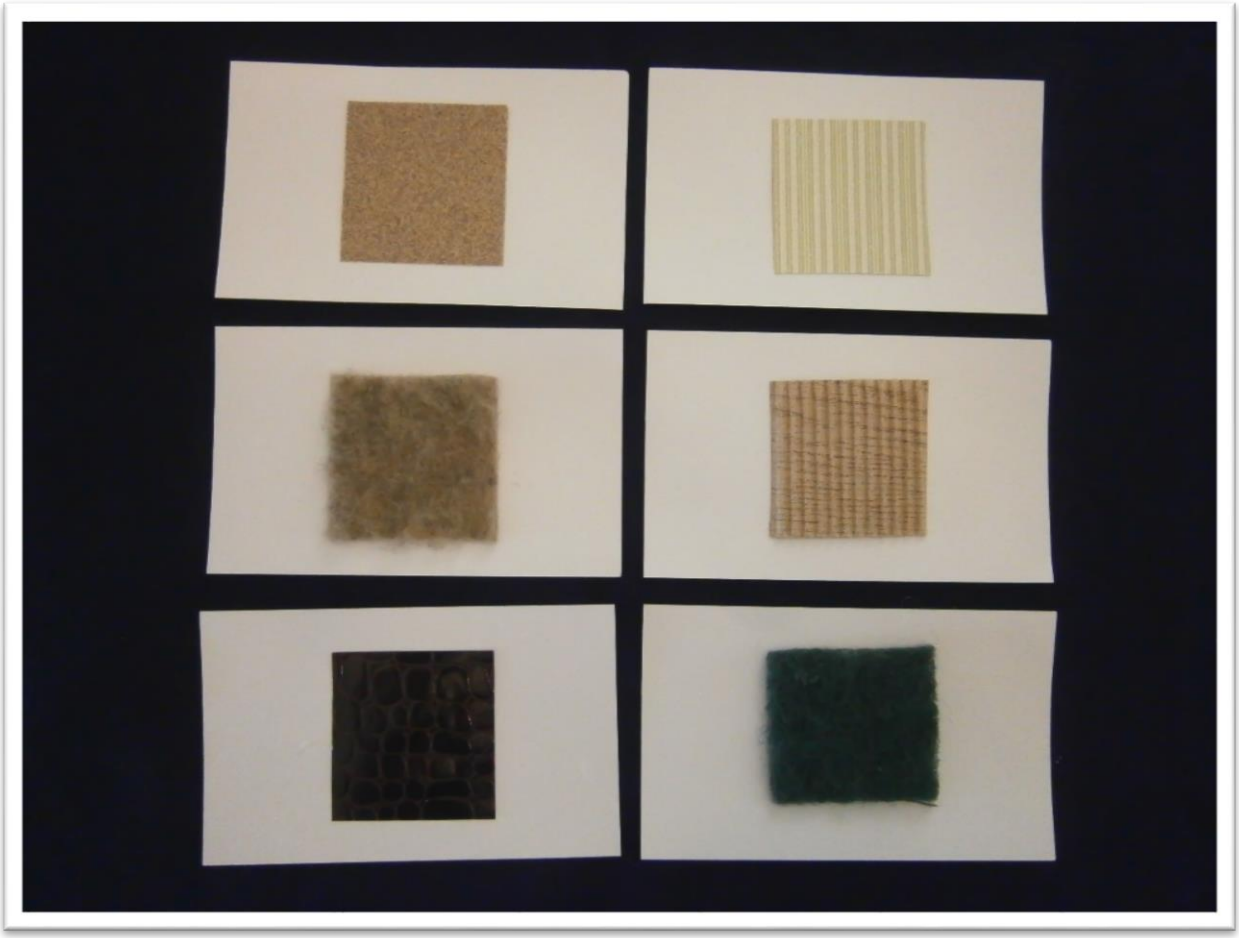
How to make: Find various cloths, items, etc. that have textures or unique qualities. Cut each of these items into 2" squares and glue onto cardstock or 3" x 5" cards. Items that can be used: green scratch pad, sandpaper, lace, satin, shiny scrapbook paper, glittery paper, bumpy material, paper with ridges, rubbery item, smooth, soft, furry, feathery, etc.

How to play:

1st stage: Using only one card, teach them scratchy, smooth, bumpy, etc.

2nd stage: Have the cards spread out on the table, then show them bumpy and have them point to the other bumpy card. Have them find the two shiny cards, etc.

3rd stage: Turn over all matches and play memory game.



Finger Painting with Shaving Cream

Purpose: This will increase your child's artistic skills and is just plain fun!

How to play: Squirt some shaving cream on the refrigerator (refrigerator must be something other than white), let them finger paint. You can practice drawing various shapes, letters or make pictures. When the shaving cream starts to get dry, you can spray it with water. When your child is done, simply wipe down the refrigerator and it will be sparkly clean.

Match/Memory Games

Purpose: To encourage children to use their memory.

How to make: Glue or stick matching pictures or stickers to sets of 3" x 5" cards. Wrapping paper will also work if it has small pictures like teddy bears, balls, toys, etc. You will need to cut out matching pictures and glue to the cards. If the stickers or pictures are small, you can cut your 3" x 5" cards in half.

How to play: All of the cards are laid face down on the table in rows. The 1st person turns over a card, and then turns over a second card hoping to find a match. If he matches them he keeps the set of cards gets an additional turn. If the cards do not match, he puts them face down again and the 2nd player takes his turn. Play continues until all of the cards have been matched and collected. Player with the most matches wins the game. If you are playing with a younger child, use fewer matches. Teach the child to remember what has been revealed and not to keep turning over the same cards.



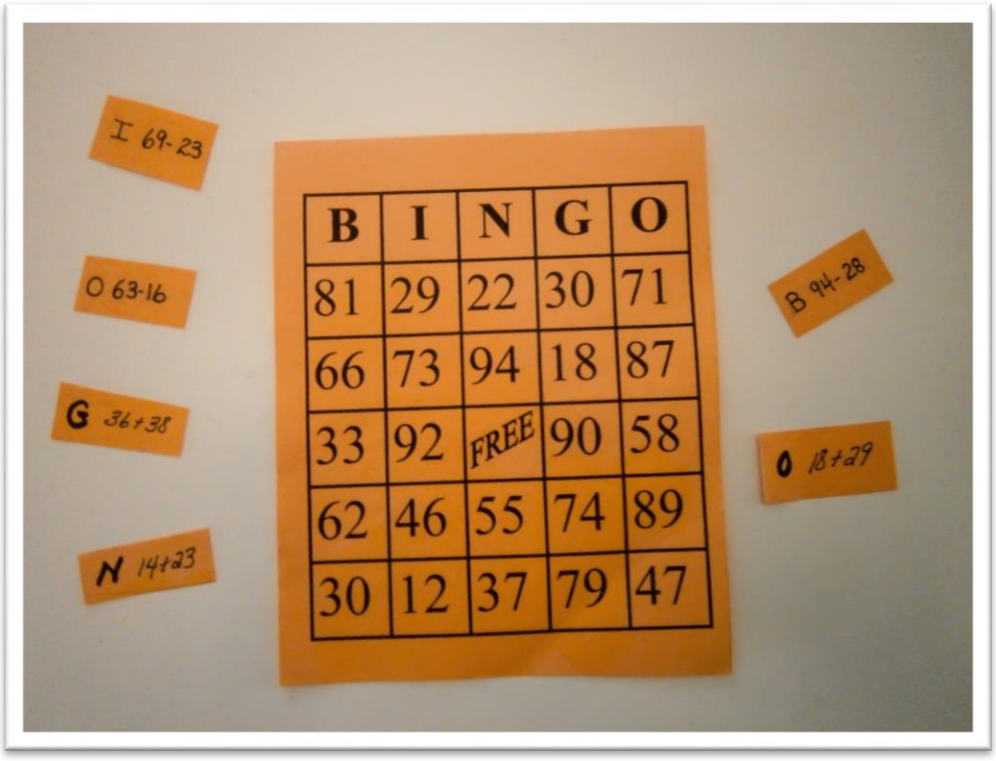
Bingo

Purpose: To practice addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division

How to make: Make a table that is 5 columns across and 6 rows down.
In the first row, type the letters “B”, “I”, “N”, “G”, and “O”. In the center square type the word free.

Choose which operation you would like to have your child to practice. Make small cards with the various equations. (i.e. B - 2 +2=,I - 2+3=, N - 2+4=, etc.) Make plenty of Bingo cards that correspond. Each card will need to have the answers in different locations. Lastly provide chips, beans, or pennies to use as markers.

How to play: Play like regular “Bingo” with the objective being to get 5 across, 5 down, or 5 on a diagonal. Instead of calling out “B - 16”, call “B - 2 X 8”. Have small cards made up for the math facts you want the child to learn. Before placing his marker he will have to solve the equation.



Lacing Cards

Purpose: Creative and fun way to increase hand eye coordination

How to make: Find a picture from a calendar, perhaps something fun for a child like a kitten or puppy. Cut around the animal and glue onto white poster board. Laminate the card if possible before punching holes. Using a hole punch, punch holes around the outside edge. Find a long shoe lace with a stiff tip. Laminate the card if possible before punching holes.

How to use: Give the child the shoelace and have her insert into any hole around the edge. You may want to tie a knot so that it does not pull all the way through. Have her go up from the bottom and down from the top. Also try a second method of always up from the bottom so that the lace wraps around the outer edge.



Calendar

Purpose: To learn days, weeks, months, and years

How to make: You will need a large piece of plywood. Use either nails or cup hooks in five rows spaced evenly apart with rows of seven. (35 nails or hooks needed)

Cut out shapes for each month:
January – snowflake or party hat
February – hearts
March – Kites

Make a special card for each of your children for their birthdays.
Using a large font on the computer, type out each month and cut out.
Using a smaller font, type out the seven days of the week and cut these out.

How to use: Have child(ren) put up the number on the peg board and say: "Today is Monday, June 6, 2014". Alternate children each day so they all have a turn practicing.





Appendix

Skip Counting – Two's

1	**2**
3	**4**
5	**6**
7	**8**
9	**10**
11	**12**
13	**14**
15	**16**
17	**18**
19	**20**
21	**22**
23	**24**

Skip Counting – Three's

1	2	**3**
4	5	**6**
7	8	**9**
10	11	**12**
13	14	**15**
16	17	**18**
19	20	**21**
22	23	**24**
25	26	**27**
28	29	**30**
31	32	**33**
34	35	**36**

Skip Counting – Four's

1	2	3	**4**
5	6	7	**8**
9	10	11	**12**
13	14	15	**16**
17	18	19	**20**
21	22	23	**24**
25	26	27	**28**
29	30	31	**32**
33	34	35	**36**
37	38	39	**40**
41	42	43	**44**
45	46	47	**48**

Skip Counting – Five's

1	2	3	4	**5**
6	7	8	9	**10**
11	12	13	14	**15**
16	17	18	19	**20**
21	22	23	24	**25**
26	27	28	29	**30**
31	32	33	34	**35**
36	37	38	39	**40**
41	42	43	44	**45**
46	47	48	49	**50**
51	52	53	54	**55**
56	57	58	59	**60**

Skip Counting – Six's

1	2	3	4	5	**6**
7	8	9	10	11	**12**
13	14	15	16	17	**18**
19	20	21	22	23	**24**
25	26	27	28	29	**30**
31	32	33	34	35	**36**
37	38	39	40	41	**42**
43	44	45	46	47	**48**
49	50	51	52	53	**54**
55	56	57	58	59	**60**
61	62	63	64	65	**66**
67	68	69	70	71	**72**

Skip Counting – Seven's

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	32	33	34	35
36	37	38	39	40	41	42
43	44	45	46	47	48	49
50	51	52	53	54	55	56
57	58	59	60	61	62	63
64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75	76	77

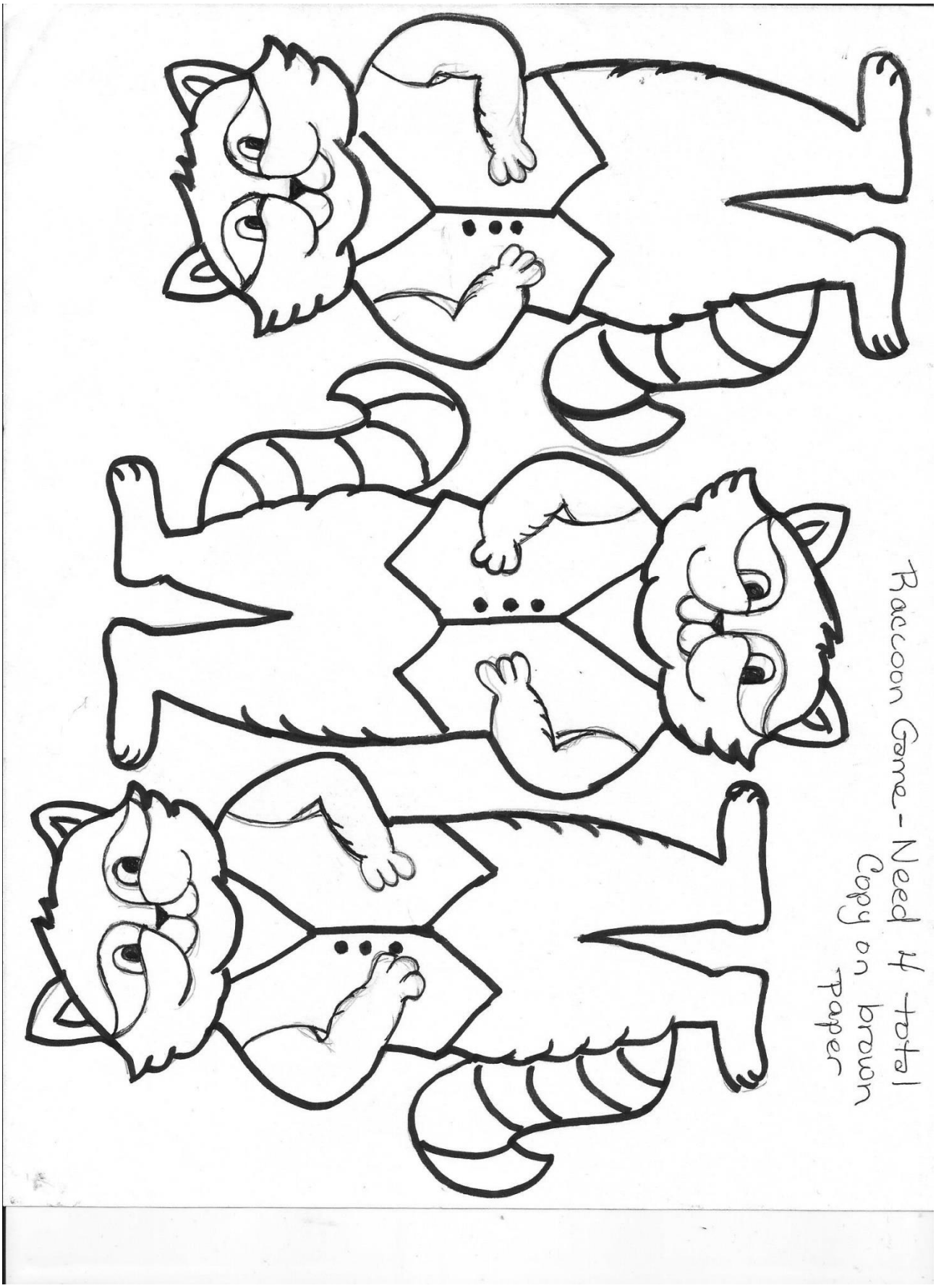
Skip Counting – Eight's

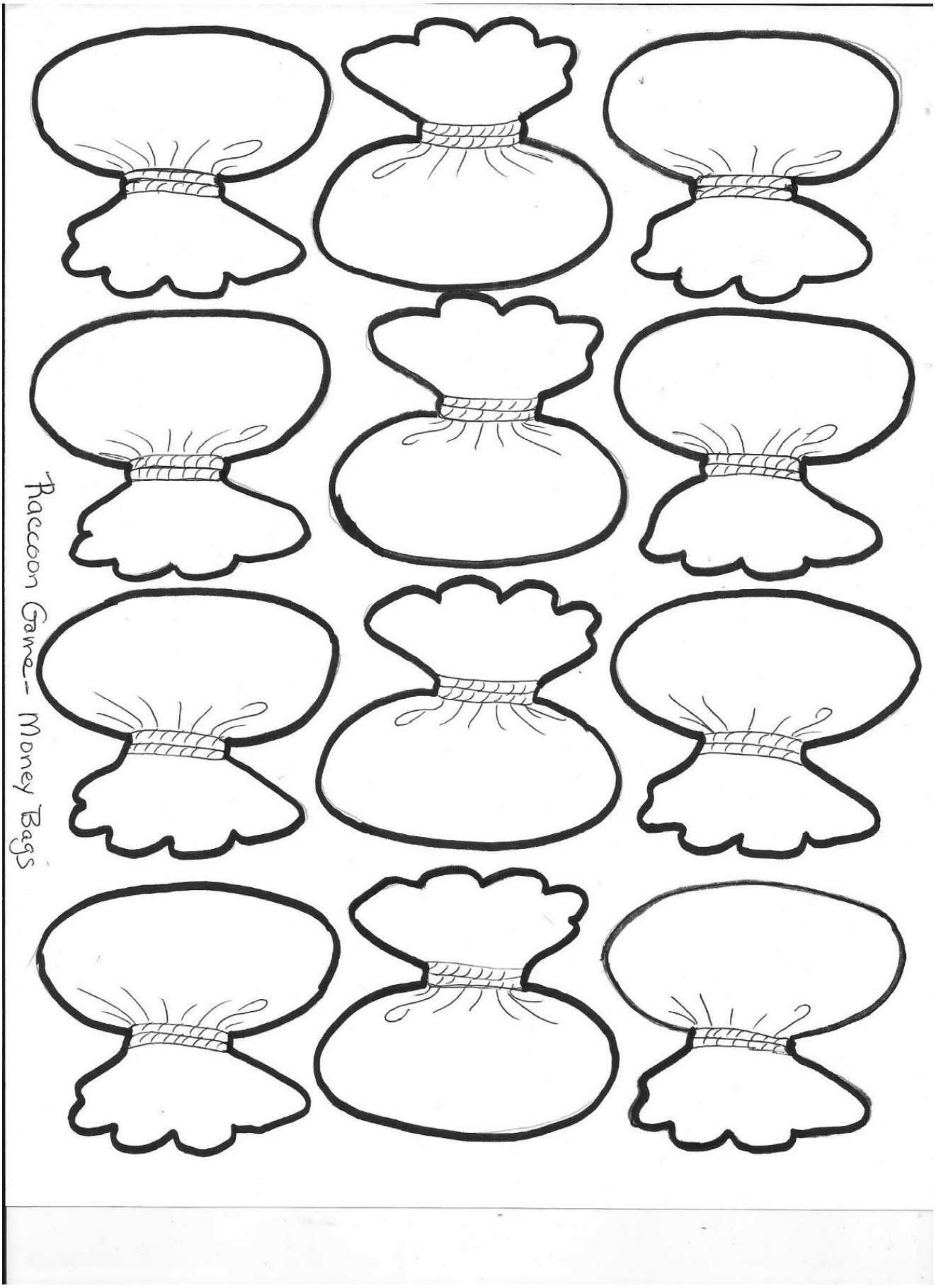
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	**8**
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	**16**
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	**24**
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	**32**
33	34	35	36	37	38	39	**40**
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	**48**
49	50	51	52	53	54	55	**56**
57	58	59	60	61	62	63	**64**
65	66	67	68	69	70	71	**72**
73	74	75	76	77	78	79	**80**
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	**88**
89	90	91	92	93	94	95	**96**

Skip Counting – Nine's

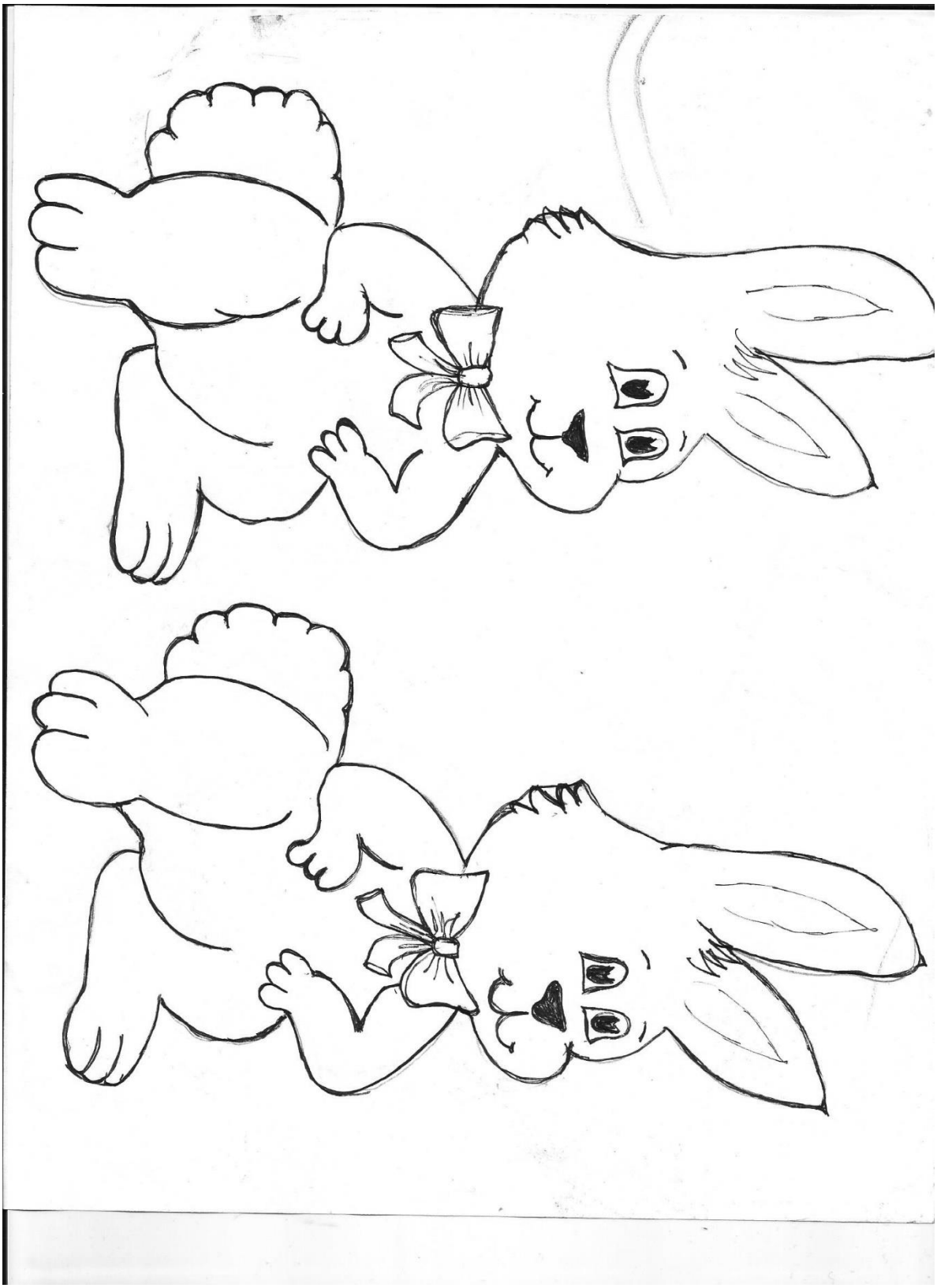
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	**18**
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	**27**
28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	**36**
37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	**45**
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	**54**
55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	**63**
64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	**72**
73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	**81**
82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	**90**
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	**99**
100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	**108**

Raccoons



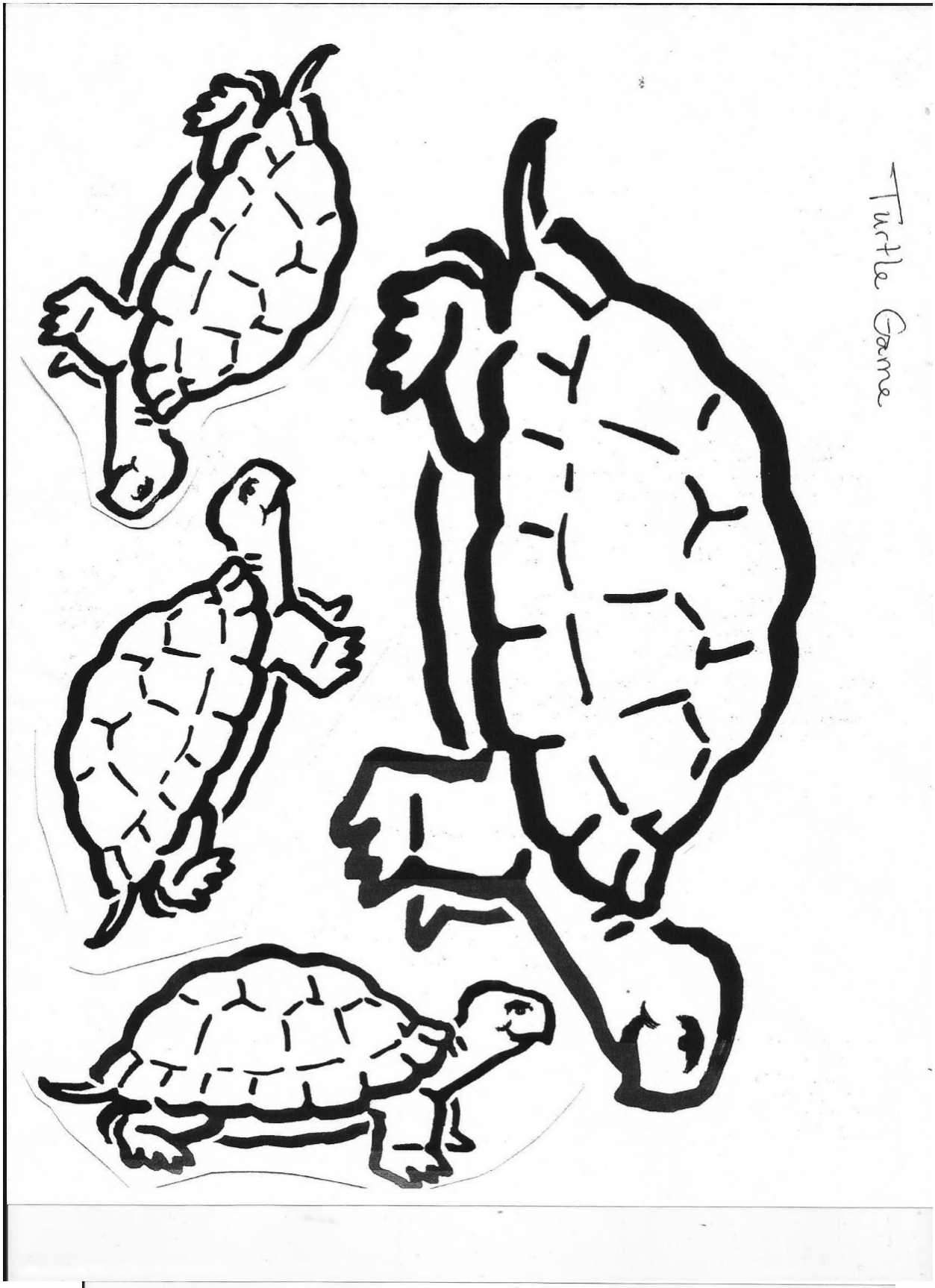

Raccoon Game- Money Bags

Bunnies

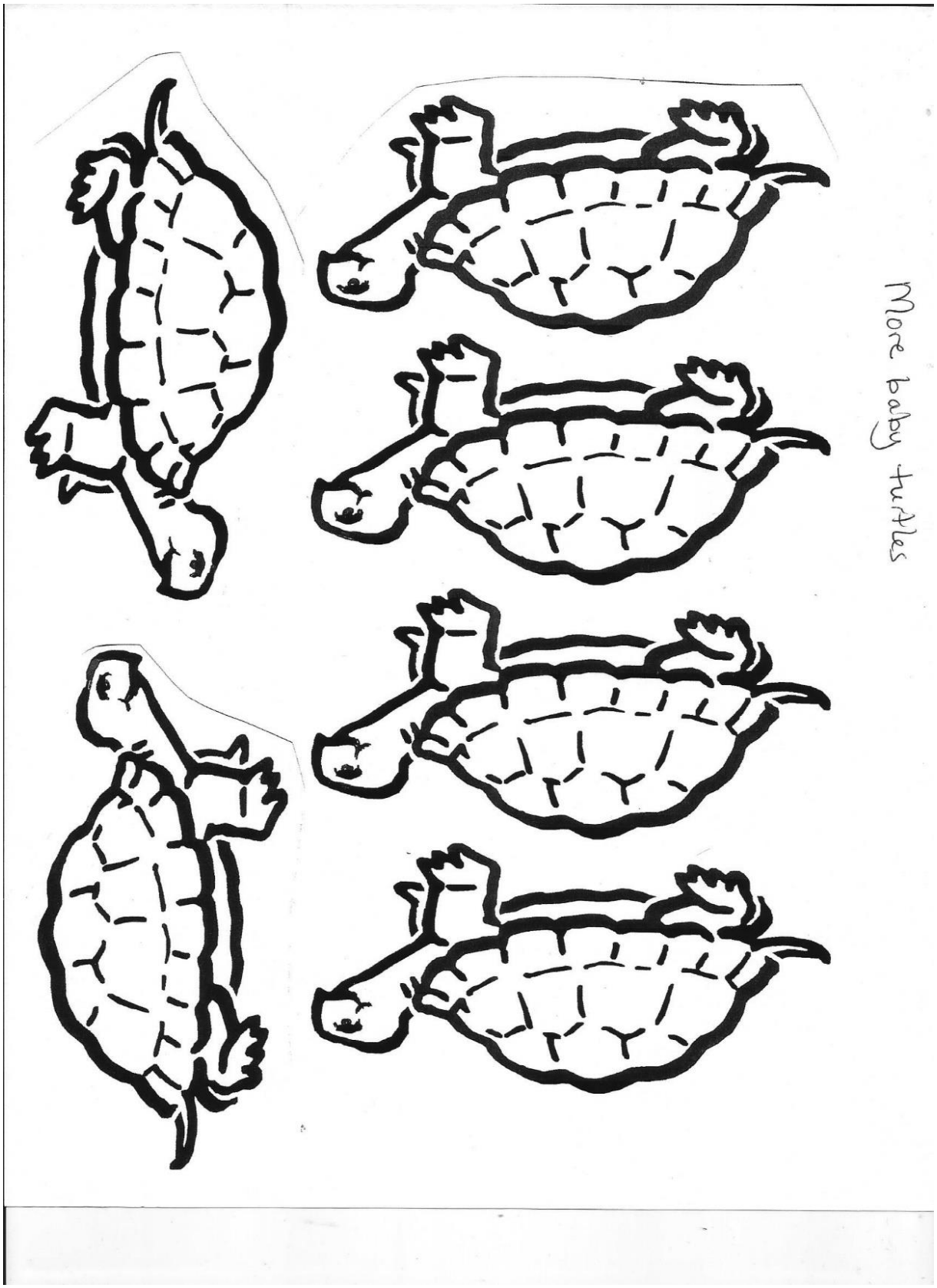


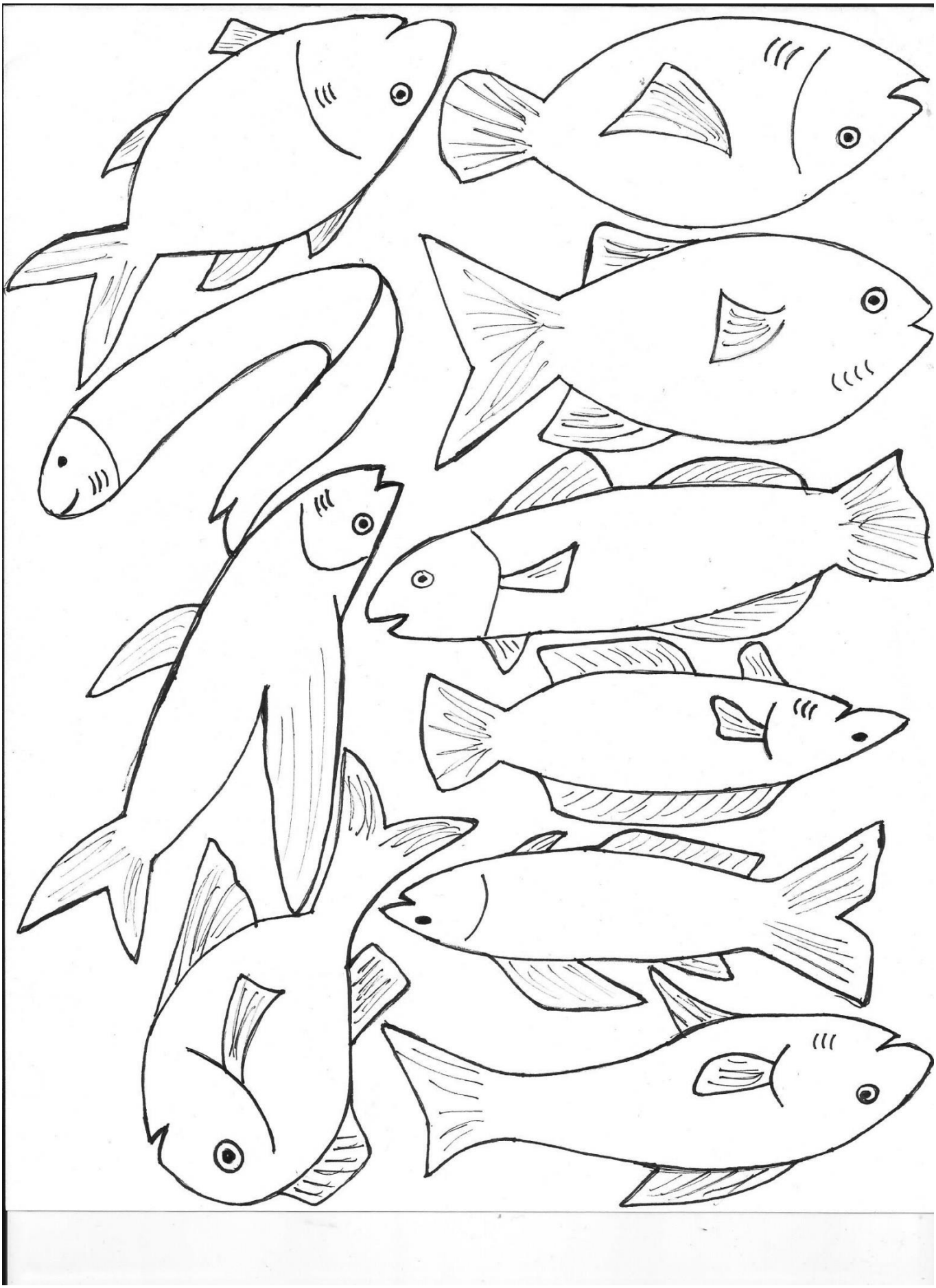
Bunny Game - Copy on Orange Paper - Use Green for leaves

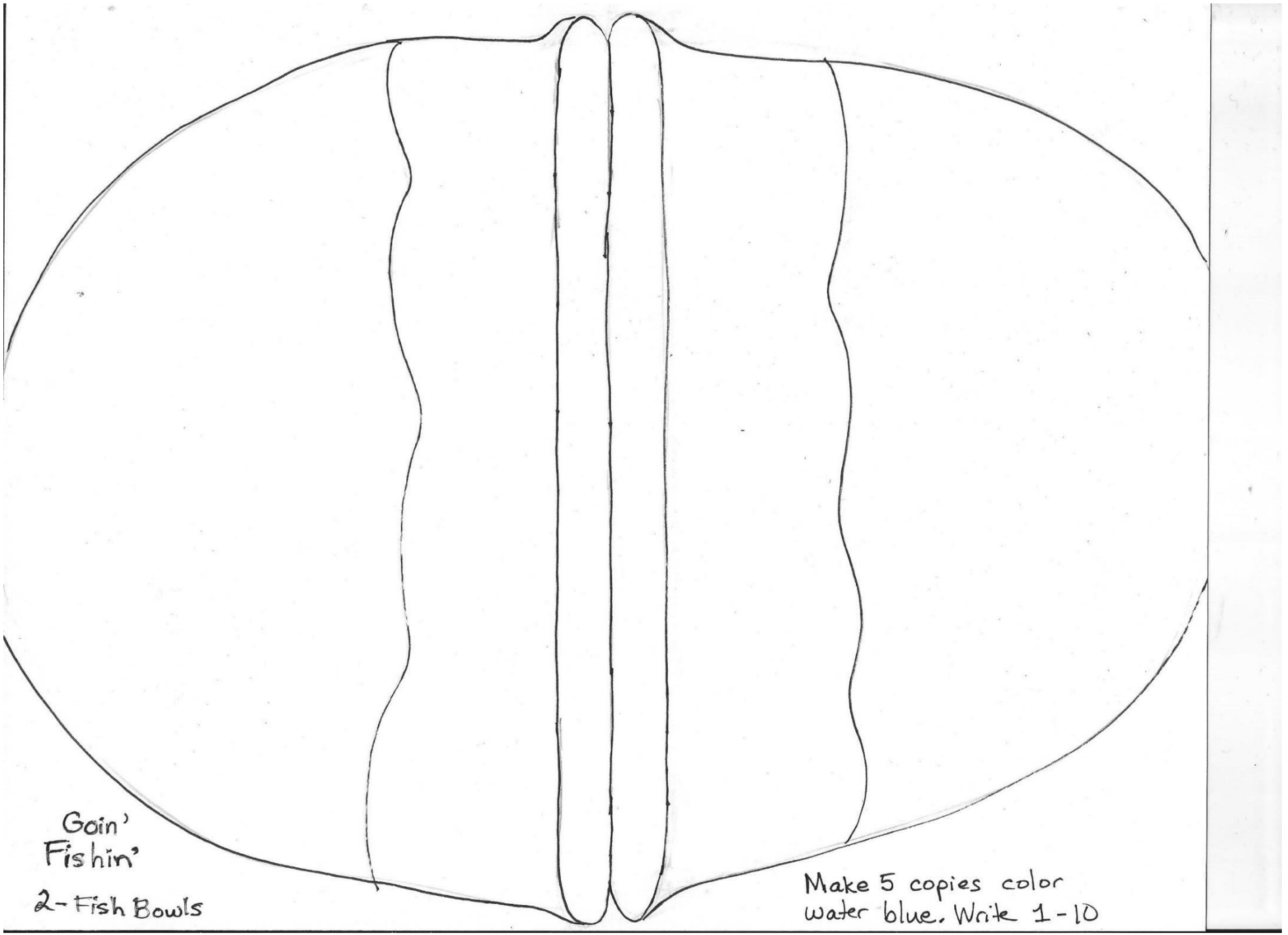
Turtles



Turtles






Goin'
Fishin'
2- Fish Bowls
Make 5 copies color
water blue. Write 1-10