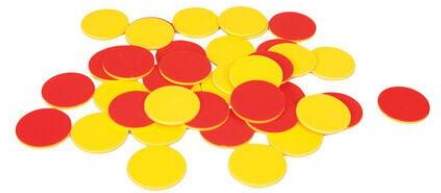


Activity Ideas: Two Colour Counters

Two-colour counters are versatile maths manipulatives perfect for sorting, counting and early pattern work. They can be used with different ages and can be used to represent numbers in a variety of ways.

They can give individuals a visual representation of maths concepts and can encourage collaboration and communication as they share and discuss strategies with their peers.

You will find many ways to use the counters but here are a few ideas to get you started. We hope you enjoy them.



Available in different colours

Counting and Comparing

Tip a number of counters out and count how many of each colour there are. It might be easier to create groups of counters to count in twos or fives. Compare the amounts and work out which colour has the most and by how many. Then count how many counters there are altogether and decide whether this number is odd or even. (This activity can be done many times and results can be collected and compared)

Odd or Even

Use the counters to show patterns of odds and evens on a hundred square. Show how all even numbers can be displayed in pairs and odd numbers always have an extra counter with no pair. Throw a dice and if it lands on a 1, 3, or 5 (an odd number) then a yellow counter is displayed and if it lands on a 2, 4, or 6 (an even number) then a red counter is displayed. At the end of the game work out whether there were more odd numbers revealed or more even numbers.

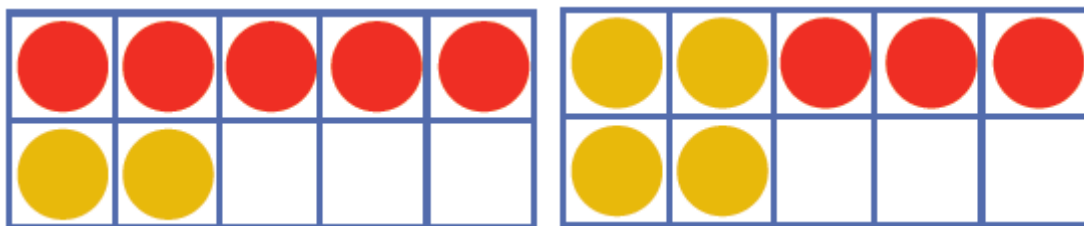
Basic Patterns

Use the two-colour counters to show different patterns for a partner to copy and continue. You could make it more challenging by showing the pattern for a few seconds and then hiding it. The others have to remember the picture and repeat the pattern to see if they can get the exact match. Alternatively, an image could be created for exploring symmetry and mirrored images.



Difference Between Numbers

Use the double-sided counters to show the difference between two numbers. Place a number of one colour counter in a row and the other colour below. Ask the children to turn the top counters over to match the counters below. The additional counters will show clearly the difference between the two numbers. For example, the difference between 5 and 2 is 3.



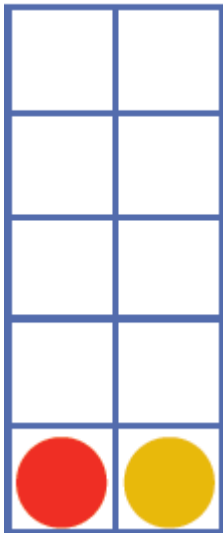
Pair Game

Invent and play games with the two-colour counters. For example, one child is red and the other is yellow. Shake the counters onto the table and count how many are red and how many are yellow. Compare the two amounts to see who has more and who has fewer. Keep a tally of who wins or add up the totals each time to see who can reach a chosen target the quickest.

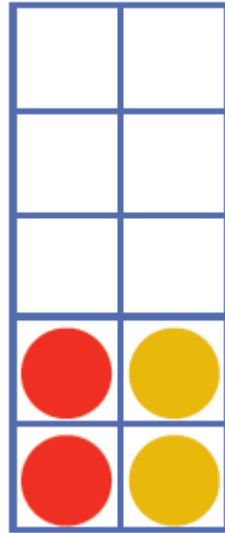
Doubling

Use the two colours to show doubles. Investigate to see if every number is even when doubled and use the knowledge of doubles to find near doubles. For example, I know $3+3=6$ so $4+3=7$

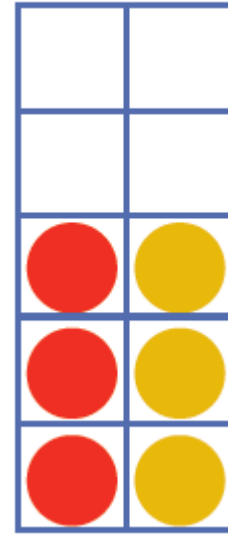
$$1 + 1 = 2$$



$$2 + 2 = 4$$



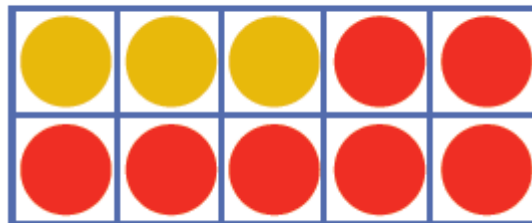
$$3 + 3 = 6$$



Number Bonds

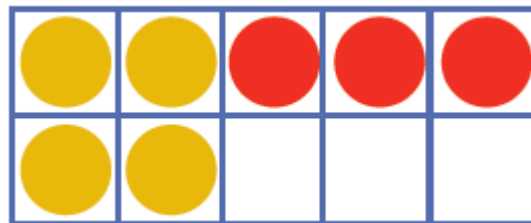
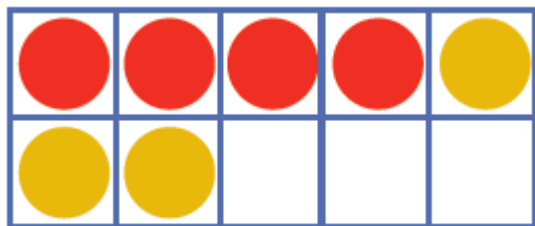
Count out the number of counters you want to find the pairs of. Either shake counters to see how many land on each colour or use a more systematic approach and start with all counters showing one colour and turn over one counter at a time recording the different combinations. You could use a tens frame for this to display the number bonds and make up your own rhymes to help the children to remember. For example, zero and ten make a den, one and nine all is fine, two and eight at the gate.

"3 and 7 – gone to Devon"

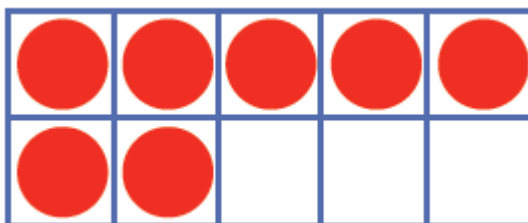


Model Equations

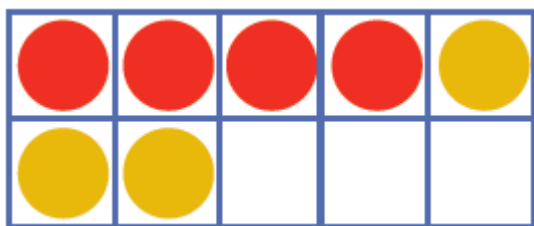
Use the two colours to represent the numbers in a number sentence. For example, $4+3=7$ and $3+4=7$



Use the two-colour counters to demonstrate subtraction. For example, $7-3=4$ by placing seven counters of the same colour.



Then asking the children to subtract 3 by turning three of the counters over.



How many are left in the original colour?

Keeping Scores

Use the two colours to keep track of scores in games. One colour can represent a team's points. Points can be totalled at the end of the game. Or if using a number frame see which team covers all the sections first to win the game.

If you have any brilliant ideas for using the Two-Colour Counters and would like to share them with us, we'd love to hear from you.