

Spindle Boxes

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to help a child learn about quantities and symbols 1-9 and to introduce the concept of 0. This activity will also deepen the sensorial experience of sequenced quantities as well as show the child the position of zero in the sequence of quantities and symbols.

Directions: For this activity, you will need the Spindle Boxes, 45 spindles in a basket or container and the sandpaper number for 0. The child will place the Spindle Boxes side by side with the numbers in sequence. The child will then identify the numbers in sequence and then randomly as the educator points to each number – leaving 0 out. The child will start by pointing at the number 1, saying its name, picking up one spindle, counting it as they do so and closing their hand around it. This will give the child a muscular impression of its size and weight. The child will then place the spindle in the number 1 compartment. They will repeat this process with the remaining spindles. Once the child has placed the correct amount of spindles in the compartments, he/she will already know that 0 means none. If this is the child's first lesson, you will point to 0 and say its name, followed by asking the child how many spindles remain to put into the 0 compartment. When the child answers with "none", the educator will begin explaining the concept of 0, stating that there are 0 spindles left to put into the 0 compartment which means that 0 means "none". Next, the educator will place the Sandpaper Number 0 in front of the child and demonstrate tracing and naming 0 followed by asking the child to do the same. The educator will show the child that the sandpaper number 0 is the same as the number written on the first compartment. The educator will finish this lesson by pointing out that there are 2 spindles in the number 2 compartment, 1 spindle in the number 1 compartment, etc. and that there are 0 spindles in the 0 compartment. Once the activity has been completed, the child will remove the spindles from the compartments and place them back in the basket or container.



Extensions: Some extensions that could be done are inviting the child to fill the compartments randomly or changing the objects that the child uses to put into the compartments such as beads, pencils, marbles or buttons.

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