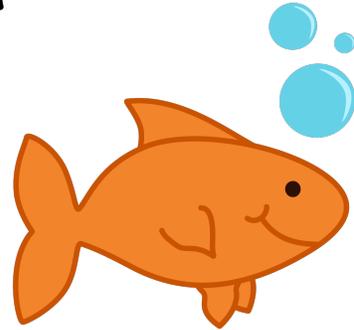


Snack Time Math

Materials

Goldfish crackers (or other fish-shaped crackers)
One sheet of blue paper (8½" x 11") per child
One paper cup (5 oz.) per child



Getting Ready

Fill a cup with fish crackers for each child and yourself.

Snack Time Math Game

1. Give each child a sheet of blue paper. Have the children pretend that the blue paper is a pond or ocean. What animals might like to eat fish? (Penguins, sharks, raccoons, bears, birds, whales, dolphins, sea lions, etc.)
2. Distribute the cups of fish crackers. Ask the children to pretend they are hungry animals and their crackers are fish. They can pretend to be any of the animals they came up with.
3. Tell the children a story similar to the one that follows. As you tell the story, invite the children to follow along and be hungry animals.
 - One day there were two fish swimming in the water. (Put two crackers on the blue paper to represent the two fish. Have the children each place two fish crackers in their "water".)
 - As the fish were swimming, two more fish joined them. (Add two more crackers to the water.) Ask, "How many fish are in the water now?" [four]
 - As the fish were swimming, a hungry animal dove into the water and ate one of the fish. (Model being a hungry animal and eat one of the fish crackers. Have the children do the same.) Ask, "How many fish are left?" [three]
 - Two more fish joined the three fish that were left. (Add two more fish crackers.) Ask, "How many fish are there in the water?" [five]

Another idea is to have all of the children pretend to all be the same animal (e.g. penguins). This could tie in to a larger exploration of a particular topic or animal.

- A very hungry animal dove into the water and ate four fish. (Have all the children eat four fish from their pond or ocean.) Ask, "How many fish are left?" [one]
 - That one little fish joined three other fish. Ask, "How many fish are in the water?" [four]
 - A hungry animal dove into the water to eat some fish. The fish got away! Ask, "How many fish are left?" [four]
4. The story continues with everyone adding and taking away - by eating - the fish. As you model the story, try to have the hungry animal eat various numbers of the fish, but not all of them. You can increase or decrease the numbers of fish depending on the abilities of your children. After the children are familiar with the way the game is played, they can take turns continuing the story, which helps develop their language and mathematical skills.

This activity idea could be used with different snack items as well. For example, use popcorn and pretend to be hungry birds! Be creative!

