



Talking about the Math around Us

Talk About Two

Snack time, playtime, or when dressing are wonderful opportunities to talk about the concept of two. Two is an important mathematical building block.

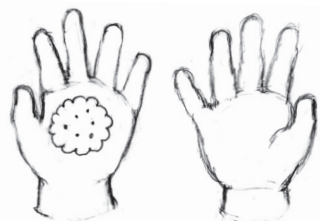
Talking about two helps children become more aware of the math around them. Even children who can't speak yet, listen and learn from you. Here are some ideas for talking about two at home with a child from birth to age 3.



from *Banana for Two*

Snack in Hand

Snack time is math time! As children hold a piece of a snack in each hand, they can connect the concept of two to the familiar idea of two hands. Use crackers, banana slices, or your child's favorite finger food.



Play and Talk

Place the snack pieces on a serving plate. Encourage your child to take one piece in each hand.

"One cracker for this hand...one cracker for that hand. Two!"

As your child continues to take and eat more pieces of food, look for opportunities to point out one, two, or empty hands. For instance:

"You have two empty hands."

"You have a cracker in one hand. The other hand is empty."

from *Red Socks*

Two Socks, Two Feet

Putting on socks and shoes is a perfect time to help children build their understanding of two. All you need is a pair of your child's socks and shoes.

Play and Talk

As you help your child get dressed, talk about the match between socks and feet.

"Look, two socks for two feet!"

After you've put on one sock, point out:

"One sock is on. One is off. Let's put the other sock on you."

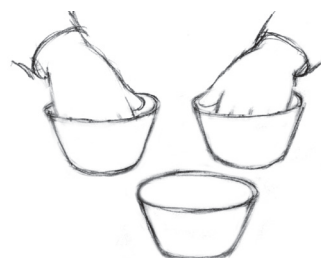
"Now each foot is wearing one sock! Two feet, two socks!"

Repeat with shoes.



Cool Containers

Use three small, clean plastic containers, such as wide-mouth yogurt cups or small storage containers.



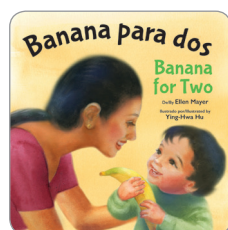
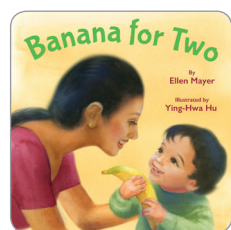
Play and Talk

Place three containers in front of your child and allow them to explore putting their hands inside them. As they play with the cups, look for opportunities to talk about one and two hands and cups.

"You have a hand in each cup. Two hands, two cups! The third cup is empty."

"One hand is in one cup. We have two empty cups."

"You are holding one cup with two hands. Two cups are empty. I can put my two hands in them!"



Banana for Two

By **Ellen Mayer**, Illustrated by **Ying-Hwa Hu**

Star Bright Books, 2017

Mama, her toddler, and two stuffed bunnies turn a grocery store outing into an opportunity to talk and learn a little math. As they fill their cart with items in quantities of one and two, Mama lets her baby hold them, connecting the familiar idea of one and two hands to the concepts of one and two. This book includes a note for parents and caregivers by Deborah Stipek, early math education scholar. This book is also available in Spanish/English.