Spotlight 5: a learning check

Is not confident about when to stop counting when taking away (subtracting) in answer to the question 'How many are left?'

Opportunity for: explaining and discussing

• •

Two-minute dice dash   **Time** 5–15 minutes

Resources	_Check: does the child use key vocabulary?_	
● Cubes	how many left?	minus
● At least two children	count	subtract
● Dice	count on	makes
● Number line or track	count back	leaves
● Two-minute timer	take away	

Teaching activity

'This game, **Two-minute dice dash**, will help you with learning about subtracting.'

How to play

1. Two players cooperate to count out twenty cubes.

2. They take turns to throw the dice and take away the number of cubes on the dice.

   So if 5 is thrown, the children must take away five cubes and say how many are left. In this case, 'we have fifteen left'. They can use the number line or track to help with this.

3. They keep throwing the dice, racing to get rid of all the cubes in two minutes.

Variations

● If the children are still unclear about which cubes show how many are left, you can play the game slowly without the time limit.

● Two players or more can play against each other, each with a dice, racing to see who can get rid of their cubes first.

● If you can play in a space where noise doesn't matter, you might want to let children shout 'none left' at the end of their game.

? **Which cubes are the ones you have left?**

? **Which cubes did you take away this time?**

? **How many are left?**

Encourage children to count back on a number line or track rather than counting the cubes from one each time.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this set of activities, children should be able to:

● tackle related learning tasks with increased motivation and confidence;

● use and understand connected mathematical vocabulary;

● confidently identify during a subtraction activity the starting number and the amount taken away and know which is the number left;

● understand that the '−' symbol indicates taking away or subtraction.