



# Supporting early numeracy with Bookbug Sessions

Scottish Book Trust and the Bookbug programme are supporting **Maths Week Scotland** with this special template for a maths and numeracy themed Bookbug Session. Maths Week Scotland takes place from September 30-October 6, 2019.

[Maths Week Scotland](#) is a wonderful way to experience the fun and relevance of the maths all around us. Established in 2016, the initiative seeks to transform Scotland into maths-positive nation where we all appreciate the value and importance of numeracy and maths as well as its vital role in all aspects of our lives.

Parents and family have a huge role to play in early learning and development. Early maths is much more than counting - it's shapes, measure, estimating, building and problem solving, spatial awareness and the logical thinking that lays the foundations for developing numeracy and maths skills as education progresses. Parent and family attitudes to maths can have a significant impact on children's confidence in the subject so it's great to be positive about it, and to regard lots of pursuits like spotting patterns, counting things and board games and digital games as a fun way of building understanding.

A range of family learning and parental engagement sessions are already planned during Maths Week for parents with children at all ages.– showcasing the children's learning, enjoying maths trails, treasure hunts, challenges and outdoor games.

Any feedback would be hugely welcome and please tag @mathsweekscot in any tweets.

## **How can songs and rhymes help to develop numeracy skills?**

One of the simplest ways to support children's numeracy skills is to include a range of counting songs and rhymes. Songs and rhymes help them to learn and understand the sequence of numbers e.g. from 1 to 5 or up to 10. Try to include some songs where you count up, and others where you count down. Children need lots of opportunities to practise counting.

Simple actions and using fingers to count will help to reinforce children's awareness of numbers. At the start of a song or rhyme, ask adults and children to show you the number



of fingers they will need to join in with the counting. Choose different songs to vary the numbers you start with e.g. Five Little Ducks, Ten Fat Sausages.

Counting props will help children understand that the number you are saying corresponds to the physical number of items. For example, bounce five puppets on Lycra and sing Five Little Monkeys. After each verse count how many are left, holding up or touching each puppet as you say the number.

### Counting songs and rhymes

Five Little Monkeys	Five Little Ducks	One Little Teddy
Hickory Dickory Dock	Ten Red Apples	Ten Fat Sausages
Three Little Speckled Frogs	One Potato, Two Potato	Five Currant Buns
One, Two, Buckle My Shoe	When I Was One	Zoom Zoom Zoom
One, Two, Three, Four, Five	Alice the Camel	Ten in the Bed
Three Little Men in a Flying Saucer	Five Fat Peas	I Have Ten Little Fingers

**Look for more suggestions on the Bookbug App or in the Song and Rhyme Library.**

### Finger Rhymes

Songs and rhymes which encourage awareness and use of fingers can support children's early learning. Include songs where you count on each finger, but also songs or rhymes which include finger play e.g. Two Little Dickybirds, Tommy Thumb.

### Size, shape and position

Action songs and rhymes featuring size, direction or position will support children's awareness of these concepts. Examples include:

Size	Direction/position	
Five Fat Peas	Roly Poly Up, Up, Up	Forwards and Backwards
A Big Red Bus	The Grand Old Duke of York	Hokey Cokey or
	Here We Go Round The	Shooglie Wooglie
	Mulberry Bush	



## Choosing a book for your Bookbug Session

There are lots of books which feature counting, numbers, shapes, sizes and other mathematical concepts. We've included a few suggestions on the Bookbug Session template. For other ideas, have a look at the *Books About Numbers* booklist on our website: [scottishbooktrust.com/book-lists/books-about-numbers](http://scottishbooktrust.com/book-lists/books-about-numbers)

## Messages for parents

We want families to have fun and to build songs, rhymes and stories into their daily life. Bookbug Sessions are a great way to share simple information about how doing this has a positive impact on children's learning and development. Remind parents that they are already introducing maths and numeracy to their children. Here are simple key messages to include in your Bookbug Session:

- Action songs such as 'A Big Red Bus' and 'Forwards and Backwards' are a great way to introduce to children to children to the concepts of shape, size and direction. Joining in with the actions helps children to grasp these concepts and introduces them to early maths language.
- Finger rhymes help children see numbers represented. This will help them learn to recognise numbers by sight so they will know what 3 looks like and they won't have to count each time.
- Children need lots of opportunity to practise counting. Include a range of songs and rhymes that count forwards and backwards.