

# HOW TO TEACH More & Less



## About this skill

The concepts of “more,” “less,” and “equal to” are important because they lay the foundation for future learning of addition and subtraction.

These concepts are difficult for students who don’t have a solid grasp of the order of the numbers 1-10. For this reason, it can be helpful to use a number line. For example, show your child that 4 comes after 3; therefore, 4 is more than 3.

Be sure to use physical objects rather than worksheets to teach these concepts. When your child is confident with these skills, h/she may enjoy worksheets; however, use them as review rather than a teaching tool.

## What your learner needs to know

Children should be able to compare two sets of objects (with up to 10 in each set) and describe the groups using the terms *more*, *fewer* (or *less*), and *the same*.

## Beyond the basics

Work with larger numbers. If it’s in your budget, purchase a pocket hundreds chart online. This makes it easy to see which numbers are more/less. Another benefit is that you can take out the number cards and have your child put them in their proper spaces.

## READ BOOKS ABOUT MORE & LESS

ACTIVITY  
121

**Supplies:** library books about more & less

Reserve a set of books that can teach the concept of more & less from your library.

- *More, Fewer, Less*, by Tana Hoban
- *More or Less*, by Stuart J. Murphy
- *Alfie the Alligator*, by Sandy Turley
- *Equal Shmequal*, by Virginia Kroll
- *Just Enough Carrots*, by Stuart J. Murphy

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## STUFFED ANIMAL MORE/LESS

ACTIVITY  
122

**Supplies:** two stuffed animals, paper plates, and toy “cookies” of the same size (color tiles, etc.)

In front of each stuffed animal, place a paper plate. Then put a particular number of “cookies” on each plate. Which animal has more?

When starting out, make the difference very obvious (10 versus 2, for example) so your child can tell you at a glance which animal has more.

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## LET'S COMPARE

ACTIVITY  
123

**Supplies:** piece of paper and marker (or printable, p. 93), bowl of small manipulatives

Draw two large circles side by side on a piece of paper (or use the printable, p. 93). Then have your learner take a small handful from the bowl of manipulatives and place the objects in one circle. Do the same for the other circle. Count; which circle holds more objects? You can use teddy bear counters, buttons, dried beans, etc.

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## STICKER CARD GAME

ACTIVITY  
124

**Supplies:** index cards, stickers

Make a set of 20-30 cards using stickers. On each card, put 1-6 stickers (or more for kids ready for a challenge). Divide the cards into two piles. Take turns flipping them over to see who has the higher number.

- Who has the higher number of stickers?
- How do you know that your card has more?

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## FLIP, BUILD & COMPARE

ACTIVITY  
125

**Supplies:** number cards from a set of playing cards or UNO game, linking cubes

Shuffle the cards and share them evenly. Together, say, “1, 2, 3, compare!” as each of you flips over your top card. Name your number and build it with linking cubes. Who has the longer tower? Be sure to express what you see with sentences such as, “Six is bigger than four,” or “Two is less than nine.”

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## FISH IN THE POND

ACTIVITY  
126

**Supplies:** paper & marker (or printable, p. 93), and small fish erasers or another manipulative such as goldfish crackers

Draw two large circles side by side on a piece of paper (or use the printable, p. 93). Pretend that each circle is a fish pond. Then place 1-5 counters in one pond. Ask your learner to put the same number in the other pond. Express that the numbers are *equal*. Clear the board and repeat. Make the activity more challenging by putting a number in one pond and asking your learner to put more or fewer fish in the adjoining pond.

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