

## Incorporating Early Counting Books, Songs, and Fingerplays to Develop Math Awareness

Young children love reading and singing numbered songs and fingerplays! Through physical and verbal engagement and interactions, small children will become aware of numbers and eventually are ready to work on number recognition activities.



### 5 Little Fishes Book and Wikki Stix Created Fish

**Materials needed:** Assorted Wikki Stix and one booklet (the 5 Little Fishes Booklet is a separate download).

Print the book for the children and laminate for durability (clear contact paper will work if laminating supplies are not available).

#### Read the text to the children:

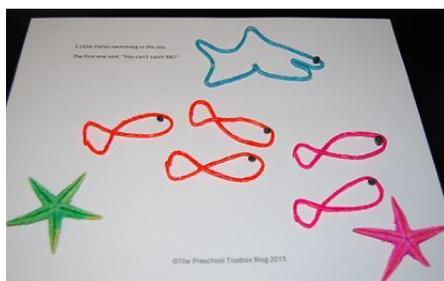
5 Little Fishes, swimming in the sea.  
The 1<sup>st</sup> one said, "You can't catch me!"  
Along came Mr. Shark as HUNGRY as could be,  
And ATE that fish right out of the sea!

4 Little Fishes, swimming in the sea.  
The 1<sup>st</sup> one said, "You can't catch me!"  
Along came Mr. Shark as HUNGRY as could be,  
And ATE that fish right out of the sea!

Repeat for the numbers 3, 2, 1 and then,

NO (0) Little Fishes swimming in the sea.  
None to tell the shark, YOU CAN'T CATCH ME!

When HUNGRY Mr. Shark came looking for his LUNCH...  
There were no more fishes left to MUNCH and CRUNCH!



After reading the story, invite the children to make the fish for each of the pages (and Mr. Shark) from different colored strands of Wikki Stix.

**To make the fish:** have the children form an "X" from the two ends of each Wikki Stix strand. Fold the two ends toward the center to complete the fish (see photo above). The children can add black eyes or other fish features, if desired. There is no wrong or right way to create with Wikki Stix! To create the shark shape, the children can create a basic fish shape (as above) from Wikki Stix or be creative with their own shark design!

As the children add their Wikki Stix creations to the booklet pages, have them repeat the text and count the number of fish that correspond with the text on the pages of the booklet. The Wikki Stix will adhere to the pages of the booklet and can be easily removed for future play and "fishy counting!"

**Counting Fish Stick Puppets:** Invite the children make craft stick puppets with the Wikki Stix fish/shark (see photo above). Number the craft sticks and have the children hold up the corresponding numbered stick as the story is read!

**More seasonal Wikki Stix counting rhymes are available in the ADDITIONAL RESOURCES section (see separate download for the entire early math lessons).**