**Putting things in order**

**You will need**
A big teddy and a small teddy, different sized books, different sized bowls and spoons, Numicon Shapes and Feely Bag. Also ordering puzzles where objects are sorted by size, nesting toys like Russian Dolls, nesting boxes and stacking cups.

6. Introduce language of big and small by putting out pairs of objects of different sizes, like a big doll and a small doll, a big teddy and a small teddy, a big Numicon Shape and a small Numicon Shape.

Ask children to find the big ones, and the small ones. Move on to using the words ‘bigger’ and ‘smaller’. Ask children to find the bigger of two teddies, and the smaller of two teddies.

7. Put two different sized Numicon Shapes in the Feely Bag.
Let children take turns to find the big Shape or the small Shape in the Feely Bag (make sure that the Shapes are very different in size to start with).

8. As children play with ordering puzzles, ask questions such as:
- “Can you find the small teddy’’?
- “Which one comes next?’’
- “Can you find the biggest?’’

Point to one character in the puzzle and ask:
- “Which one comes after this one?’’

When the puzzle is completed, point to two characters in the puzzle and ask:
- “Which ... comes in between these?’’
- “Which one came before?’’
- “Which one was first?’’, “Which one was last?’’

9. Put out the first four Numicon Shapes and ask children to find the smallest Shape, then the next and the next until they have put the Shapes in order of size.

Over several sessions gradually increase the number of Shapes until children can put all the Shapes in order.

Extension
Give children all the Numicon Shapes to put in order independently and ask them:
- “Can you put these in order of size?’’

**Copying and creating patterns**

**You will need**
Baseboards and Pegs, beads and threading laces, cotton reels, small world toys, and counters.

Make a simple repeating pattern using any of the apparatus listed above while the children are watching and talk about what you are doing.

For example, “I have chosen two colours of Pegs to make a repeating pattern. Look – I am putting down a green one, a red one, a green one, a red one.” Model different patterns like this and ask questions such as:
- “Which colour will come next?’’

Extension
Invite children to copy a pattern that you have made, and also to continue a pattern that you have started. Some children might like to think up their own repeating patterns.

Patterns with Numicon – put out Baseboards and Pegs. Make simple repeating patterns with the Pegs or Numicon Shapes on the Baseboard for children to copy.

Extension
Give children Numicon Pegs and bootlaces. Show them how to make a necklace with a repeating pattern by threading Pegs of yellow, green, yellow, green, etc. Invite the children to make up their own patterns.
### Counting and recognising numerals

**You will need**

Activity 12: Number puzzles, number lotto, dominoes, collections of objects like small toys, shells, buttons, counters, pine cones, baskets or dishes and counting books.

Activity 13: Numicon Shapes, Pegs and Baseboards, plastic numerals.

Encourage the children to play with counting puzzles, read counting books and count small collections of objects.

Show them how you count by pointing to each object as you say each number word. If you are showing them how to count collections of objects, as you count you might sometimes arrange them in a line, one by one, or put them one by one into a basket. To help children remember the number names in order, invite the children to join in the counting.

**Counting with Numicon** – put out the Numicon Pegs and Shapes for children to explore freely. Listen and watch for them counting the holes and note what they call the Numicon Shapes. If you hear them calling the Numicon Shapes by their number names then you could give them the following extension activities.

**Extension 1**

Put out one Shape that you have filled with Pegs and invite children to choose Shapes they would like to fill. When children have filled their Shape ask them if they can find it on the Numicon Number Line. Ask children:

“**What would you call this Shape?**”

**Extension 2**

Some children might like to play with magnetic numerals and Numicon Shapes, matching the numerals to the corresponding Numicon Shape (use self-adhesive magnetic strip on the back of the Shapes).

**Extension 3**

Ask children to arrange Pegs into Numicon Patterns on the Baseboard. First, take a 2-shape, put two Pegs side by side on the Baseboard and ask the children:

“**Can you find a Shape that matches this Pattern?**”

“**Can you say how many Pegs there are from looking at the Pattern?**”

If the children can say how many there are without counting, repeat with other Numicon Patterns, working with the smaller Shapes until the children are confident, then introduce the larger Shapes. Invite the children to make their own Numicon Patterns with Pegs on the Baseboard, and each time ask the children:

“**Can you say how many you have in your Pattern without counting?**”

The children should check by matching the Numicon Shape on top of the Pattern and not by counting the Pegs.