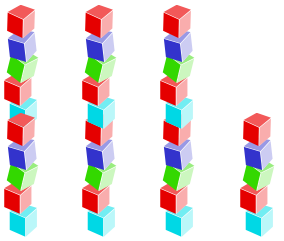
Computation Strategies in Second Grade

Children in second grade work on efficient strategies for addition and subtraction. Their work focuses on grouping numbers, not counting by ones.

Counting by Groups

Children in second grade count by groups of tens and ones:



10 20 30 35

Counting Strategies—Counting On or Counting Back

Children use quicker ways to solve problems using counting strategies. Often using a number line, hundreds chart, or mental math, children use tens to solve bigger problems:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50

16 + 23 = 39

16, 26, 36, 37, 38, 39

Addition and Subtraction Strategies

Children start breaking numbers apart into groups that are easier to add or subtract. They can use problems they know in order to solve more difficult problems without counting.

- **Starting with the Tens: 16 + 23 = ☐**
  10 + 6 + 20 + 3 = 10 + 20 + 6 + 3
  30 + 9 = 39

- **Rounding: 26 + 68 = ☐**
  26 + 70 = 96
  96 – 2 = 94

- **Solving Left to Right: 42 + 59 = ☐**
  40 + 50 = 90
  2 + 9 = 11
  90 + 11 = 101

- **Landmark Numbers: 38 + 38 = ☐**
  40 + 40 = 80
  80 – 4 = 76

46 – 24 = ☐
40 – 20 = 20
6 – 4 = 2
20 - 2 = 22

48 – 29 = ☐
48 – 30 = 18
18 + 1 = 19

64 – 36 = ☐
64 – 30 = 34
34 – 6 = 28

81 – 52 = ☐
81 – 50 = 31
31 – 2 = 29

Second Grade Computational Fluency

Second grade students work on addition and subtraction combinations to 20. By the end of second grade, they should know some of their facts. They should be able to use numbers and combinations they know to figure out problems they do not know.