

FAMILY MATH

Make Easier Problems with Three Addends

Dear Family,

Your student is practicing strategies for adding three numbers. They learn that the numbers or parts being added in an addition problem are called addends. In previous work, your student used the strategy of counting on to find totals. Now, they transition to a new strategy called make ten. With this approach, your student looks for two addends that make 10, then adds the third addend to find the total. When they are not able to make ten with the addends, they can use other strategies to make the problem easier. Your student notices that numbers can be added or grouped in any order and still produce the same total.

Key Term
addend

When two addends make ten

$$\begin{array}{c} 3 + 4 + 7 \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ 10 \\ 10 + 4 = 14 \end{array}$$

3 and 7 can be grouped together first to make 10. The problem now becomes $10 + 4$, making it easier to add.

When two addends do not make ten

$$\begin{array}{c} 2 + 4 + 3 = 9 \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ 5 + 4 \end{array}$$

3 and 2 make 5. Making a 5 first creates an easier problem, $5 + 4$.

$$\begin{array}{c} 5 + 3 + 3 = 11 \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ 5 + 6 \end{array}$$

Add doubles first to make an easier problem.

$$\begin{array}{c} 5 + 3 + 5 = 10 + 3 \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \quad \quad \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ 13 \quad \quad = \quad 13 \end{array}$$

$5 + 3 + 5$ is the same as $10 + 3$ because 5 and 5 make ten. Both expressions are 13.

At-Home Activities

Don't Peek!

Place 10 items, such as coins, pieces of pasta, or beads, on a table. Say, "Don't peek," and slide some under a napkin. Then ask your student to count how many are left and find how many are hiding. Encourage your student to think about partners to 10 to help them ($1 + 9$, $2 + 8$, $3 + 7$, etc.). Repeat the activity, hiding a different amount each time. Consider switching roles with your student.

Shuffle the Stuff

Gather 11 to 19 small items, such as blocks or pennies. Arrange them into three groups so that the number of objects in two of the groups total to 10, such as 2, 5, and 8. Ask your student to find the total by asking the following questions.

- “Which two groups make 10? Push them together.”
- “What is the total number of all the blocks?”

Try the activity again, changing the total number of items and the way they are grouped. Consider taking turns, letting your student regroup the items for you to add.