Frog Friends Counting Game

Age: Preschool-age (3–4 years)

This activity helps your child's development in this domain: Cognitive

What You Need:

• Four pieces of celery or another green vegetable such as cucumber
• Bowl of lightly salted water

What To Do:

1. Invite your child to pretend that a piece of celery is a frog and the bowl of salted water is a pond.
2. As your child holds a piece of the celery on the rim of the bowl, tell a story about a lonesome frog beside a pond that wanted a friend to play with him.
3. Explain that some frog friends come to visit. Add one friend, then two friends, and finally three friends, holding up an additional piece of celery each time. Ask, “How many frogs are there now?” and count the celery sticks with him.
4. Continue your story by saying “There was a big noise and all the frogs jumped into the pond.” Drop all the pieces of celery in the bowl. Ask your child how many frogs are left on land (outside the bowl). If he needs help answering, use terms like “none” or “zero.”
5. Add more actions to your story such as, “The frogs came out of the pond, one by one, and disappeared.” Show him how to make one frog disappear by eating the celery.
6. Ask, “How many are left now?” Together, count the number of celery pieces
that are left. Then describe how you get a different number when you subtract (take away) one from the total. For example, “If you subtract (take away) one frog, you have three left. One subtracted from four is three.”

7. Sing a frog song to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.”

Catch, catch, catch a frog
Chase him ’round the yard.
Under leaves and hidden streams
Catching frogs is hard.