



Difference race

Time 15–20 minutes

4 Y2 +/–

Does not relate finding a difference and complementary addition to the operation of subtraction.

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Resources

- *Blank S-track* (Resource sheet 11b)
- Counters
- 1–4 spinner (Resource sheet 13)
- Rewards
- At least two children (two pairs make a good number of players for this game)

Check: does the child use key vocabulary?

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| count on | take away |
| count back | subtract |
| how many? | add |
| difference between | |

Teaching activity

‘Today we are going to play a game, **Difference race**, to help you understand more about what it means to find the difference between two numbers.’

Prepare the *Blank S-track* (Resource sheet 11b) by writing in each space a number of a size appropriate for the group of children, for example numbers 1–8 inclusive randomly around the track. Put a 4 on the starting space.

Players can cooperate in pairs, racing another pair.

How to play

1. Each pair or player puts their counter on the start.
2. The first pair or player spins the spinner and moves that many spaces.
3. That pair or player then declares the difference between their starting point and the number they have landed on.
4. If they are correct they can stay on the space, but if they are wrong they have to move back to where they started.
5. Race to get to the end first.

? Show me how you worked out that difference?

? What picture did you have in your head when you worked it out?

Variations

- ↑ ● Players can score the number of cubes representing their difference. The winner is the player to have the largest number of cubes.
- Play as in variation above, but the winner with the most cubes only wins if they can work out the difference between their number of cubes and those of the other players.
- ↑ ● Play with larger numbers on the track, for example numbers 3–15.

Learning outcomes

By the end of a set of related activities, children should be able to:

- tackle related learning tasks with increased motivation and confidence;
- use and understand connected mathematical vocabulary;
- explain how to find the difference between two numbers.