

# SPACE COUNTING MATS

## addition & subtraction



### PREPARING YOUR SPACE COUNTING MATS

- Print off each page. Use card stock for the planets for durability.
- Laminate the 2 space counting mats. This way kids can write their answers using dry erase markers, or use little balls of play dough as counters without damaging the mats.
- Cut out the planets and laminate if you wish.
- Gather some counters to use. I used non-stick gold stars and puffed corn, but black beans would make great meteorites!
- How to learn with these space counting mats

I hope you and your children enjoy using these space counting mats! If you have any questions or concerns regarding this product please contact me at [lizearlylearningspot@gmail.com](mailto:lizearlylearningspot@gmail.com)

I wish you happy teaching and learning!

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Teachers Pay Teachers

Teacher's Notebook

# HAPPY TEACHING!

## PLANET NAMES

Lay out all the planets (plus the sun and moon) and go through each one, checking pronunciation. Please make sure your kids realise that the pictures are NOT to scale. It would be good to show a picture of the planets revolving around the sun with correct relative sizing... you can easily find some good ones with a google search.

## PLANET DISTANCES FROM THE SUN

If you've shown a picture of the planets revolving around the sun (and explained how the moon goes around earth) they will understand that each planet is a different distance from the sun, on its own orbit. Normally they're spread around in every direction, but if they were one day to line up, you could easily tell which planets were closer to the sun and which were further away.

Line up the planets in numerical order from the sun to neptune and compare it with the googled picture to see their order by distance. Please note, I made the sun number 1 although it's actually a star, not a planet. And I included earth's moon as number 5 for the simple reason that it's good to have 10 objects when we're practicing addition and subtraction. Make sure you have a little discussion about this with your child if you don't want them to mistakenly believe the sun and moon are planets.

## ADDITION

Depending on ability you can limit the difficulty by only using smaller numbers. Just make 2 sets of planets if you wish to be able to use the same number twice, for eg. 3+3. Choose 2 numbers and place them on the circles. For mental math, simply add the two together and write the answer in the third circle, or use the planet that has that number on it.

To use counters, place the 2 numbers down and then count out the correct number of objects for each. To use a 'count all' strategy the counters can be placed all together. To use a more advanced 'count on' strategy, make sure the counters are placed so that the 2 groups of objects are separated. Then, the child starts with the bigger number and counts on from there to add the second number.

## SUBTRACTION

In addition it doesn't matter what order the 2 numbers are placed on the mat. However, with subtraction the larger number needs to be first so that's a good place to start before asking children to work independently with the subtraction mat.

When using counters, children place the first number of objects on the mat and then separate out the second number of objects to get to the answer. They can take that second number off the mat completely or push them down to the bottom of the rectangle so the remaining objects are easy to count.

Liz

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