



Fun with Sequencing: Putting Things in Order

Your child's day follows many routines. Routines are a way to help your child understand sequencing. Talking to your child about what happens next helps her understand order and feel secure because she knows what to expect. By helping your child understand order, through songs, daily routines and books, you are helping your child understand an important math skill. Try these suggestions.

INFANT:

- Sing "Head and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes, knees and toes, head and shoulders, knees and toes. This is baby's body! Eyes and mouth and ears and nose, ears and nose, ears and nose. Eyes and mouth and ears and nose." As you sing, be sure to gently touch each body part.
- Establish routines. By 3 months old, routines can help your baby make sense of the world, and feel safe in it. It is especially helpful to follow a bedtime routine that may include a bath, books, lullabies, kisses, and then bed. Follow the same order each night.
- Talk to your baby during everyday activities. When getting your infant dressed, say: "Let's put on your shirt. First, it goes over your head, now one arm goes through the hole and here comes the next arm. All done, your shirt is on." Or, when getting ready for a walk, say: "Let's put on your coat and your hat."

TODDLER:

- Sing songs like Rain, Rain Go Away and Itsy Bitsy Spider with your child. Teach your child the gestures that go with Itsy Bitsy Spider. Your child will soon know the order of the hand motions by heart.
- Cook with your child. Try making fruit salad. As you cook, talk about the steps: "First, let's put in the blueberries. Second, we'll add the grapes. Third, we'll add the strawberries." Have your child put the fruit in the bowl.

PRESCHOOLERS:

- Teach your preschooler musical games such as Hokey Pokey, Miss Mary Mack, and Musical Chairs.
- Help your child understand sequences. Talk about your daily routines. For example, "First we wake up, second we brush our teeth, and third we eat breakfast." Help your child talk about other routines. At bedtime say: "We just had our bath, what do we do next before bed?"
- Use musical instruments to play a sequence game. Have your child follow the sequence you do, for example: drum, tambourine, shaker. Let her make up a sequence for you to follow. Ask her if you did it correctly.
- Read the book *Going on a Bear Hunt* by Michael Rosen. See if your child can remember the sequence of events.