The Story of

Math

Winter 2025

More Than Just 1, 2, 3!

Building Math Minds Through Play

When we "do math" in our preschool classrooms, you won't see worksheets or flashcards. That's because true mathematical understanding for young children isn't built with a pencil. It's built with our **hands, eyes, and minds**.

Preschool math is all about exploration. It’s about discovering relationships, recognizing patterns, and making sense of the world. By focusing on hands-on experiences, we help children build a strong, flexible foundation for the complexities of math learning in the future. Our goal is to build **number sense**, not just memorization.



Math in Our Classroom: What You'll See

Math is woven into every part of our day, from the block area to the snack table.

Number Sense & Counting

This is the ability to understand what numbers *mean*. It’s about counting with purpose and connecting a number to a quantity.

- **You'll see:** Children counting how many friends are here today, passing out *one* napkin for *each* child at snack, or counting the blocks in a tower as they build it.
- **At the sensory table:** Children sorting items by color, size, or type (like all the farm animals in one bin and ocean animals in another). This teaches classification.



Shapes & Spatial Sense (Geometry) This is about recognizing shapes and understanding how objects relate to each other in space.

- **You'll see:** Building with blocks, magna-tiles, and LEGO. This is a powerful, child-led geometry lesson.
- **During play:** We use "math talk" like, "You put the red block *on top of* the blue one," or "Let's crawl *through* the tunnel." Children work with puzzles, figuring out how shapes fit together to make a whole.



- **Through Art**: We create drawings of people or houses out of shapes, curves, and lines. Spatial awareness and sequencing are being practiced while we work.

Patterns & Sequencing

Identifying patterns helps children make predictions and understand order, which is a foundation for algebra.

- **You'll see:** Creating patterns with colorful beads, blocks, or buttons (red, blue, red, blue).
- **In our routine:** Our daily schedule is a sequence! Children learn what comes *first* (Meeting), *next* (Roof or Garden), and *last* (Story).
- **During Meeting or Music:** We create sound patterns, like *clap, stomp, clap, stomp*.





Measurement & Comparison

This involves comparing objects by size, weight, or quantity.

- **You'll see:** At the playdough table, children roll *long* and *short* snakes. We'll ask, "Which one do you think is *heavier*?"
- **In the sand/water table:** Children scoop, pour, and fill containers. They discover it takes *many* small scoops to fill one *big* bucket.

How to Be a "Math Partner" at Home

You can support these same skills at home by highlighting the math in your everyday routines. Enjoy it, Math is fun!

- **Count everything.** Count the stairs as you go up, the blueberries at snack time, or the shoes in the closet. Set the table and match the number of plates to the number of people coming to dinner. Use your fingers- they are always available and working up to 10 is just the right amount.
- **Sort the laundry.** Ask your child to find all the socks or make a pile of shirts. This is real-life sorting.
- **Go on a "Shape Hunt."** Look for shapes on your walk or in the grocery store. "That stop sign is an octagon! Look, the wheel on the car is a circle."
- **Cook together.** Let your child help scoop the flour or pour the water. Following a recipe is a perfect lesson in measurement and sequence.
- **Use "Math Talk."** Use words of comparison and position: "Your cup is *empty*," "That bag looks *heavy*," or "Please put the book *next to* your bed."

The Big Idea

The goal isn't to get the "right answer" right away. The goal is to **encourage thinking, questioning, and problem-solving. Be playful and enjoy the interactions with your child.**

When you ask, "How many plates do we need for dinner?" or "Can you find a building block that is shaped like a square?" you are teaching powerful math concepts.

