Add & Sub – Fingers I

Math Concepts: Add / Subtract numbers 1 - 10
Materials: None
Players: 1+

– FINGER ADDITION TO 10 –

Use 4 + 2 to see two methods for doing beginning addition on your fingers..
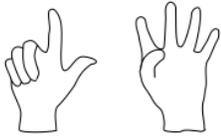
Method 1: Use this method if both numbers are 5 or less. Put up 4 fingers on one hand and 2 fingers on the other. Bring the two hands together. Tada! Your student sees that 4 and 2 brought together becomes 6.

Method 2: Use "counting on" from one of the numbers to reach any sum up to 10.

To add 4 and 2, put up 4 fingers on one hand, and count aloud from 0 to 2. For each spoken number after 0, put up one more finger. When 2 is reached, there should be 6 fingers raised.

This method allows addition of numbers bigger than 5. It's easier to start with the larger number of fingers raised and count on using the smaller number.
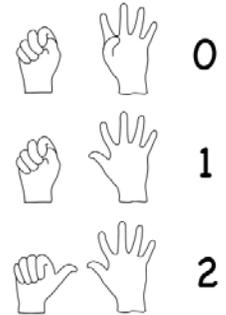
– FINGER SUBTRACTION TO 10 –

There are two mental models for subtraction – "take away" and "difference." Your student should be comfortable with both models. Here is 8 – 5 calculated both ways:

Take away (on the left): Think of 8 – 5 as what is left after you start with 8 things and take 5 of them away. Start with 8 fingers raised. Next, count aloud from 0 to 5, and for each number after 0 put one finger down. When 5 is reached in the count, there will be three fingers left up.

Difference (on the right): This model views 8 – 5 as finding the difference or distance between the two numbers. Start with 5 fingers raised. Then count the new fingers being raised, and when there are 8 fingers raised the difference of 3 will have been counted.

This method uses the "counting on" addition method to find the number to add to 5 to get 8.
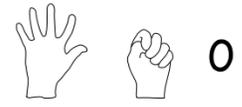
Mix in problems where a number is subtracted from itself, and where 0 is being subtracted.