

Over the next few days and weeks your child will be learning about subtraction where a 10 will need to be exchanged/swapped for 10 single units before subtraction can take place. Your child needs to know the language of subtraction – How many?, What’s the difference?, tens, units, rename, break, subtract, subtraction, take away, more, less, fewer, count, minus, number sentence/story, count back/forward, subtraction house, short way, estimate, exchange, swap, etc.

Subtracting playing cards

This game can be played by 2–5 players. You will need a pack of playing cards. Ask your child to remove all the court (picture) cards. The ace can be used as 1 and the joker can be used as zero. Ask each player to pick 10 cards randomly and to place them face down on a table in front of them. The players are not allowed to look at the cards. Player A turns over the top two cards and subtracts the smaller number from the bigger number. For example, if Player A turns over a 9 and a 4, s/he takes 4 from 9 to get 5. Player B does the same. Whichever player shows the lowest number each round wins a cube or a coin. When all the cards are turned over, the player with the most cubes/coins is the winner.

Subtracting on the hundred square

Ask your child to make a hundred square. Call out various numbers, for example, 59. Your child must put a counter on 59 on the hundred square. Now ask

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100

your child to put a counter on the number that is 20 more than 59/ the number that is between 87 and 89/ the number that is 20 less than 75/the number that is 30 less than 73, etc.

Let’s subtract 1!

Pose a problem such as the following for your child: *I had 24c. I spent 9c. How much have I left?* Make a digit card 9 by writing the numeral 9 on a piece of paper or on a Post-it note. We write the digit 9 to remind us of what we want to take away. Place 24c, or anything that

you have to hand, on the table. Use two 10c coins and four 1c coins. Ask your child: *How many cents are there?* (Yes! 24.) Now say: *I am now going to take away/subtract 9c from the 24c.* Ask your child to place the 9c on the digit card. It will become obvious to your child that s/he can’t remove 9c. Ask your child: *What should I do?* S/he might say: *You must exchange/swap a 10c coin for 10 single 1c coins.* Now ask: *How many 1c coins have I now?* (There are fourteen 1c coins.) Ask: *Can I now take the 9c away?* Ask your child to physically remove the 9c from the set and ask: *How many single cents have I now?* (Yes! Five.) *How many cents have I now left altogether?* (Yes! 15.) Ask your child to write down how many cents are left. Do similar type problems with your child where s/he must swap a 10c coin for 10 single 1c coins.

Let’s subtract 2!

Pose a problem such as the following for your child: *I had 32c. I bought a pencil for 18c. How much had I left?* Make two digit cards out of pieces of paper or Post-it notes. Write 1 on one and 8 on the other. We write the digits 1 and 8 to remind us of what we want to take away. Place 32c (three 10c coins and two 1c coins) on a table. Ask your child: *How many cents are there?* (Yes! 32.) Say: *I am now going to take away/subtract 18 cents.* Ask your child to place 8c on the digit card 8. It will become obvious to your child that s/he can’t remove 8c. Ask your child: *What should I do?* S/he might say: *You must exchange/swap a 10c coin for 10 single 1c coins.* Now ask: *How many 1c coins have I now?* (There are 10c + 2c = 12c.) Ask: *Can I now take the 8c away?* Ask your child to physically remove the 8c from the set and ask: *How many single cents have I now?* (Yes! Four.) *Can I take a 10c coin away?* (Yes! I can.) Ask your child to physically remove the 10c coin from the set and ask: *How many cents have I now left altogether?* (Yes! 14.) Discuss the value of the digits in the coins that are left. Ask: *What is the value of the 1?* (Yes! 10.) *What is the value of the 4?* (Yes! Four units.) Do similar type problems with your child where s/he must swap a 10c coin for 10 single 1c coins.