



MathStart®

The Penny Pot
Counting Coins
Level 3 Ages 7+

Activity Ideas

Learning what different coins are worth and adding up change are important life skills.

Art teacher Fran is painting kids' faces at the school fair for 50 cents each. But Jessie has only three dimes, a nickel and four pennies, which is just 39 cents. So Fran puts out a "penny pot" for spare change. Miguel has a quarter, a nickel, two dimes and three pennies: 53 cents. He adds three cents to the penny pot. All the other kids contribute, too. Soon there's more than enough for Jessie. Illustrated by Lynne Cravath.

- Place a handful of coins on the table and talk about the value of each. Ask questions such as: "Which coin is a dime?" "How many pennies equal a dime?" "How many nickels?" "Can you combine pennies and nickels to make a dime?"
- Reread the story together and ask your child or class to identify the different coins in the story and tell how much each is worth.
- Practice using coins in everyday situations: Help your child or students choose the coins needed to buy a magazine or a toy. Find the correct change needed to ride the bus, buy a stamp, or purchase a gumball from a machine.
- **TEACHER IDEA!** Before we read *The Penny Pot*, I ask my kids, "How many different combinations can you make using 25 cents?" The answer is 13 different ways. The kids can use money if they choose to and write out how they came to the answer. A lot of them can do it in their heads. When I read the book, they can see the computations. Thanks Richard Callan, Bunker Hill Elementary School, Indianapolis, IN!

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