

THE COUNTING BEE

Everything You Need to Play

MATERIALS

Counting Bee Score Sheets

- 1 score sheet per student—these should be given to the designated score keeper which can be the club leader or a student(s).
- Using a paper copy of the score sheet is fine, but you could also make a laminated copy for multiple uses or write on a whiteboard to save paper!

Stopwatch or Timer

- 1 per group—students can compete as an entire club or break into smaller groups for competition.

Calculator

- 1 per group—this will be used to verify competitors answers during scoring, in lieu of a calculator students can work together to check the answers by hand.



RULES

Help club members learn to see patterns in numbers and boost their mental-math skills. The Counting Bee challenges students to count as quickly as they can, but with a catch. Instead of starting at 0 and counting by 1, they will start with a larger number (for example, 13) and count by a more difficult number (for example, 6).

- Decide what order the students will compete, who will be score keeper and who will be the timer. Score keeper and timer can be the same throughout or can alternate.
- Each player will start at level 3 (counting by 3). To begin the round, the score keeper gives the player a random number to start counting by. Note: this number cannot be a multiple of the number the player is counting by. For example, the score keeper might say “Start at 4, Count by 3, GO!”
- Once the score keeper says “GO”, the time starts and the player has 15 seconds to count as far as she can. The score keeper should record each of her responses on the score sheet until the timer calls “STOP.”
- The score keeper should check all of the player’s answers once time is called. The calculator can be used to verify quickly. For this example, the score keeper can type “4 + 3” and then hit “=” repeatedly to continue adding 3 to each previous number.
- The score is calculated by subtracting the starting number from the last correct number the player said. For example, if the player started at 4 and counted by 3 ending with the last correct answer of 34, their score would be $34 - 4 = 30$. (Figure 1)

THE COUNTING BEE SCORE SHEET

Counter: Player Name

Scorekeeper: Scorekeeper Name

Level 3: Starting #: 4

Numbers Said: 4, 7, 10, 13,
16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31,
34

Level Score: 34 - 4 = 30
(final correct #) (starting #) (level score)

Figure 1: Completed Score Sheet

- 🟦 If the player reached a minimum of 7 correct answers, they continue on to the next level. Each level the counting number increases by one: level 4 count by 4, level 5 count by 5, etc.
- 🟦 Once the player fails to give 7 correct answers, their turn is over. Their cumulative total for all the levels is their final score. The next player in the order can take their turn, following the same process. The winner is the player with the highest cumulative score.

The Counting Bee was created by Scott Flansburg, known as The Human Calculator®. If you enjoyed playing with your club, go to www.countingbee.org to officially register your club to participate in The Counting Bee Competition and submit your students' scores!



DIFFERENTIATION, SCALING & EXTENSIONS

Change the Rules

Make things interesting by allowing students to vary the rules. Some rule changes can change the difficulty level and some will just make the approach to the game different. A few examples for possible rule changes are:

- 🟦 Change how long the students have to count. For example, there could be a lightning round for 10 seconds, or a longer round that takes 30 seconds.
- 🟦 Have students play in pairs and alternate saying the numbers in a sequence.
- 🟦 Have students race each other to a final number, with each student writing the numbers in the sequence as quickly as possible. For example, have students start at 16 and count by 8 trying to reach 112 first.
- 🟦 Try subtraction instead of addition or start at a negative number. Make it even more challenging by trying multiplication!

THE COUNTING BEE

THE COUNTING BEE SCORE SHEET



Counter: _____

Scorekeeper: _____

Level ____: Starting #: _____

Numbers Said: _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

Level Score: _____ - _____ = _____
(final correct #) (starting #) (level score)

Level ____: Starting #: _____

Numbers Said: _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

Level Score: _____ - _____ = _____
(final correct #) (starting #) (level score)

Level ____: Starting #: _____

Numbers Said: _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

Level Score: _____ - _____ = _____
(final correct #) (starting #) (level score)

Overall Score: _____
(sum of all levels)

THE COUNTING BEE SCORE SHEET



Counter: _____

Scorekeeper: _____

Level ____: Starting #: _____

Numbers Said: _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

Level Score: _____ - _____ = _____
(final correct #) (starting #) (level score)

Level ____: Starting #: _____

Numbers Said: _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

Level Score: _____ - _____ = _____
(final correct #) (starting #) (level score)

Level ____: Starting #: _____

Numbers Said: _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____,

Level Score: _____ - _____ = _____
(final correct #) (starting #) (level score)

Overall Score: _____
(sum of all levels)