



Flower Pots in the Math Classroom – a fun way to reinforce math concepts through a hands-on project

This fun hands-on activity is a great way to reinforce counting and develop number sense in preschoolers, kindergartners, and first graders. It's best done in small groups of 4-5 students. The video, *Flower Pots – Reinforcing Math Skills*, is a great visual of this lesson and can be found at: <http://www.kidnexions.com/kidsmath/lessons/>

Materials Needed:

- 4" Flower pots, 1/student
- Blackboard spray paint
- Colored chalk
- Hairspray
- Wiggly eyes, 6/student
- Popsicle sticks, 4/student
- Die cut flowers, 3/student
- Glue
- Tape
- Beans (pinto beans work well)
- Flower pot placards, 1/student (see page 3-4 for the blackline masters)
- Construction paper cut to 4.5" x 3.5", 1/student
- Colored markers
- Glitter and other materials to decorate flowers(optional)
- Newspaper
- White board and pen, 1/student (optional)
- 1-20 number strips (optional)

Advanced Preparation: Spray paint flower pots with two coats of blackboard paint. Make one sample flower pot to share with students.

Day 1: The Flower Pot

1. Share your flower pot with the students and describe how they need to decorate their pot with math symbols and designs. Show them how the chalk can smear and tell them to be very careful when making their designs.
2. Have students write their names using a permanent pen on the bottom of the flower pot. (You can do this in advance, as well.) Pass out the chalk and have students begin decorating.
3. When all the pots are decorated, spread out the newspaper and use the hairspray to spray a coating over the chalk designs.

Day 2: Decorating the Flowers

1. Have students choose 3 flowers that they will decorate and write their names on the back. If you like, you can have them count the petals on each flower.
2. Tell the students that they will be gluing 2 eyes to each of their 3 flowers and ask if anyone can figure out how many eyes they will need all together for their flowers. Help students solve the problem.
3. You can decide to have students glue on the wiggly eyes first or decorate their flowers first. (Some students like to add designs like glasses around the eyes, so it's sometimes nice to have them glue the eyes on first.) Then students use colored markers, glitter, etc. to decorate all three of their flowers.

Day 3: The Flower Pot Placard

In advance: Make copies of the blackline master on page 3 (and page 4 if you are differentiating). Cut these apart and glue onto the construction paper.

1. If you have white boards and pens, pass one out to each student. (If you don't have white boards, paper and pencil works, as well.) On your white board, have the words of the placard written but do not fill in the answers.
2. Read each of the sentences and have the students help you fill in the answers:

My flower pot has 3 flowers.

Each flower has 2 eyes.

There are 6 eyes all together.

For the last sentence, have them help you problem solve: If each flower has 2 eyes, how many eyes to all three of your flowers have all together? Drawing a picture of the flowers and eyes helps.

3. Ask if anyone knows the equation that goes with the total number of eyes. Help students record the equation at the bottom: $2 + 2 + 2 = 6$. Students can use the 1-20 number strips to help them write the numbers.
4. Hand students their flowers from Day 2 and 4 popsicle sticks. Show them how to tape the sticks to the back of the flowers and placard. Students can fill their pots with beans and insert their sticks.

To keep posted on any new hands-on lessons and videos, simply sign up for our Elementary Math – Tips and Lessons e-mails: <http://bit.ly/u4B41A>



<p>My flower pot has _____ flowers.</p> <p>Each flower has _____ eyes.</p> <p>There are _____ eyes all together.</p>	<p>My flower pot has _____ flowers.</p> <p>Each flower has _____ eyes.</p> <p>There are _____ eyes all together.</p>
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<p>My flower pot has _____ flowers.</p> <p>Each flower has _____ petals.</p> <p>There are _____ petals all together.</p>	<p>My flower pot has _____ flowers.</p> <p>Each flower has _____ petals.</p> <p>There are _____ petals all together.</p>
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