



Lost in Math

Grade: K-2 (can be used as a warm-up for older students)

Competency Goals: Number sense, estimation
Items Needed: A blindfold or bandana, a dry erase board, markers. Optional: WhichWatch.

Lost in Math is a very simple introductory activity that helps students visualize the number line. This is generally very popular, even with older students, and can be used as a warm-up or a reward for completing other activities.

Procedure

Choose one student to be blindfolded, and two more to be “ushers.” Only the ushers can touch the blindfolded student. Once the selected student is blindfolded, choose a random number. This can be done by spinning the WhichWatch (you may select students to flick the hand of the WhichWatch – the first number is the tens place, and the second number is the ones place), or by simply picking a number at random. Either way, write the number on the dry erase board. **DO NOT** allow anyone to speak the number out loud!



ENHANCEMENT: Instead of giving the student the number directly, write an equation on the board, like “ $23 + 3 = ?$ ”

Once everyone knows the secret number, have the two ushers escort the blindfolded student along the number line to the proper row. The whole group of students should tag along.

TIP: Since sometimes students can “peek” and see straight down, it’s best to walk along the right side of the Runway, along the 9 or 10 column. That way the student can’t possibly see the number on the ground.

Prompt the student to **ESTIMATE** (be sure to use that term) his position based on how far he thinks he walked. When he guesses, have the entire group shout “**HIGHER**” or “**LOWER**”. Have the student continue to guess until he gets the right answer.