

Counting on Calico

by Phyllis Tildes



The main character of this book, by Phyllis Limbacher Tildes, is a mouse, Willie Whiskers. He explains fascinating facts of feline anatomy and the behavior of his friend, Calico, while counting from 1 to 20. After reading, children will enjoy pretending to be Calico, Willie, and their friends.

Gone Fishing: Prepare the following materials to help Calico catch fish. Use pencils, rulers, or yardsticks for fishing poles. To each pole, attach a string with a magnet on the end. Cut out 20 construction paper fish and mark each with a number of dots between 1 and 20. Attach a paper clip to each fish. Make a deck of number cards with the numerals 1 to 20. To play the game, children spread the fish out on a table “pond,” take a card from the deck, and try to “catch” the fish with the corresponding number of dots. Older children might add the numbers on the fish they catch.

Counting on Critters: With children sitting in a circle, ask them to choose 5 different animals: cat, dog, horse, etc. Write the list on the chalkboard. Have each child choose one animal, for example, cat. The children who chose that animal go into the circle and act out the animal’s typical behaviors. The rest of the students count the “animals.” Record the number on the chalkboard. When all the animals have been counted, compare and add the numbers with the students. Older children might make a bar graph of this data.

