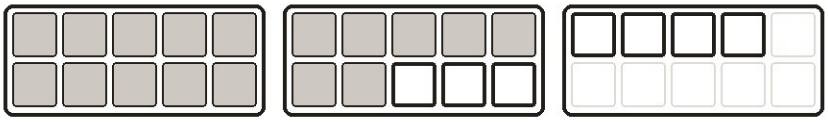
How many more? Helping your child count up to the number they want

Parent page · ages 7–8 · goes with the video "Understand the concept"

An understandable reaction

Does your child answer 44 to "18 plus what equals 26?" In short word problems, a word like "more" makes you think of adding, and sometimes that works. It isn't necessarily carelessness. But the two numbers don't say the same thing: 18 is what we have; 26 is what we want to have.

The key idea



24 The slip: 24 (the whole)

Already there: 17 (one part)

Missing: 7 (the other part)

To find what's missing, we start from what we have and fill in up to the number we want, in steps: from 18 to 20 (2), then from 20 to 26 (6), so 8. We can also take away: 26 − 18 = 8. This is always true: 18 + ? = 26 and 26 − 18 = ? look for the same number; let your child see it with several examples.

Always true, and two traps

What's missing is never more than the number we want (17 + 24 = 41 is too much). Traps: swapping "more means plus" for "missing means minus" (filling in is just as right, and what we're looking for decides, not the word); counting the starting point as a step (from 18 to 26 there are 8 steps, not 9).

Questions instead of corrections

- "What are we looking for?"
- "How many do we already have, and how many do we want?"
- "Can your answer be bigger than the number we want?"

That last one helps catch a mistake, but doesn't prove the calculation. Then: "Tell me how you know."

The activities

About thirty pieces of pasta in two shapes (for example 20 penne and 10 small shells), an opaque cup, two colored pencils, and scissors for the adult (cut-out). Keep the pasta out of reach of toddlers. Give your child only page 2: keep this parent page out of sight while they work.

A few days later, without warning (cut out)

To fill the page: 32 stickers

Already in: 27 stickers

How many more do you need? How do you know?

I need: _____

Read after your child has worked it out

- Activity 1: 17 and a slip of 24. Fill in 3 (up to 20), then 4: 7 pieces added. 17 + 7 = 24 and 24 − 17 = 7.
- Activity 2: 25 pieces in all, 16 in view: 9 hidden (16 + 9 = 25; 25 − 16 = 9). Variation: 8 hidden and 15 in view, looking for the whole: 23.
- Trap: 17 + 24 = 41, bigger than 24, so it isn't what's missing.
- Challenge: from 27 to 45, 18 are missing, for example 3 up to 30, then 10, then 5; or 10, then 8.
- Cut-out: from 27 to 32, 5 are missing (3 up to 30, then 2).

A good sign: they say where they start and where they want to end up, or they check by adding. If not, do the cup or the crates again with other numbers: it often takes several tries.

How many more?



More means plus!

Do you agree with Mina?

1. I predict

The slip asks for 24 pieces of pasta. There are already 17 in the crates.
We need ..... more pieces.
Is that smaller or bigger than 24?
☐ smaller ☐ bigger

Why? _____

2. I fill in

a. Put 17 pieces of pasta in the crates: one full crate, 7 in the second. No pasta? Shade 17 boxes.
b. How many empty spaces in the second crate? .....
c. Fill it with pasta of another shape, or shade those boxes another color. You are at ..... .
d. Keep going up to 24, in the third crate: ..... more.
e. Write your two steps: from 17 to 20, I add ..... ; from 20 to 24, I add ..... .

3. I check

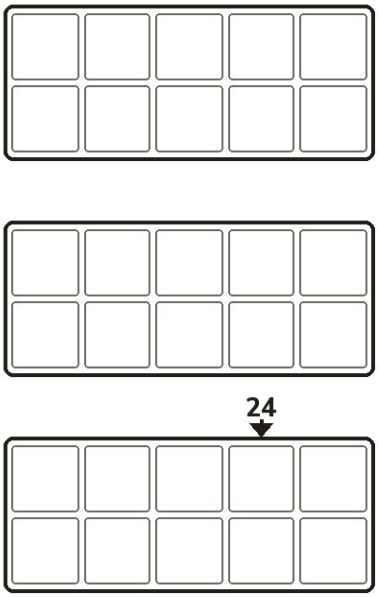
I added ..... pieces (both steps together).
17 + ... = ...
My prediction: ☐ was right ☐ needs changing

Changed your prediction? Great: you checked it yourself.

4. Another way

Take your 24 pieces and set aside the 17 from the start (the first shape). On your sheet, cover the first 17 boxes with your hand. How many are left? ..... 24 – 17 = ...

My crates



The slip: 24

One box = one piece of pasta. One crate = 10 boxes.

5. The mystery cup (with an adult)

A. There were 25 pieces in all. You can see 16. How many are hidden under the cup? ..... Lift the cup to check.
B. Under the cup, 8 pieces; next to it, 15. How many in all? .....

What are we looking for?
Write A or B in the right box.
the whole ☐ what's missing ☐

6. I explain

A friend says: "41 pieces are missing, because 17 plus 24 makes 41." Is the friend right? Explain why to an adult.

_____

_____

7. Family challenge

How many more to go from 27 to 45? Find two different paths.
Missing: .....
Path 1: .....
Path 2: .....