

Example of number talks in practice 2:

Who can throw the highest number? With 4 to 5-year-olds



In the outdoor environment of the Reception class, there was a huge vertical number track on the wall from the ground to the roof, 1-20. One day, three children showed an interest in the number track and started to spontaneously throw beanbags, balls and quoits at it. They began by throwing them at any number, saying the numbers that they hit but soon got really excited about being able to hit the biggest number.

Jamal: "I'm going to get 15!"

Oliver: "I've got 12", "You got 13, you got one more than me!"

Carter: "Ohhh I only got 9".

They began predicting which number they would hit, adjusting their throwing technique to try to reach the larger numbers, which were higher up and nearer the roof. Some began trying overarm throws to see if that would help and adjusting their standing position to see which was most effective. The children remembered which numbers they had already hit and compared their number to their friends' or to their previous throw. The adult gently encouraged this, asking questions such as "Can anyone get 13?" and "Did you get more or less than your last go?"