

WHAT YOU NEED

- Jars or other transparent containers
- Small items like macaroni noodles, marshmallows or beans to fill the jars
- Scoop (ice cream scoop, small measuring cup or a powder drink mix scoop)
- Paper
- Pencil
- Buttons

WHAT TO DO

1. Guess how many noodles you can scoop with the scoop. (Write down your estimate so you can remember it.)
2. Scoop up some noodles.
3. Count the noodles you scooped to see how close your guess was to the actual number.
4. Choose one of the empty jars.
5. Estimate how many scoops of noodles would fit into the jar.
6. Write your estimate on a piece of paper.
7. Count how many scoops it really takes to fill your jar. Write this down.
8. Compare your estimate with the answer.
9. Continue with other jars and other items.
10. Talk about your estimates and write an “L” by the ones that were too low and an “H” by the ones that were too high.

WHAT TO ASK

- How would you figure out how many items are in the jar?
- How many scoops would you need to have one million items?
- How long would it take you to scoop one million items?

DID YOU KNOW?

Estimation is a math skill that we use not only in math class but every day in life. When your child first learns to estimate, they might say there are a thousand or even a million things. These really big numbers are hard to get a handle on, but over time, with practice, estimates will become more realistic and children will develop a better understanding of really big numbers.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Pull out a collection of measuring cups ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup and 1 cup) see how many of the $\frac{1}{2}$ cups are needed to fill up the 1 cup. Talk about the labeling of the $\frac{1}{2}$ cup. Repeat this activity with the $\frac{1}{4}$ cup measuring cup.