

story telling MATH

Storytelling Math celebrates children using math in their daily adventures as they play, build, and discover the world around them. Joyful stories and hands-on activities make it easy for kids and their grown-ups to explore everyday math together.

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CÉSAR'S CERULEAN SURPRISE

Math activities by Marlene Kliman



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About the Book

César wants to borrow his little sister's brand-new cerulean crayon. But Gabi doesn't know what color that is, and she won't let César show her! Instead, Gabi asks yes-no questions to rule out crayons. How can she speed up the process? And will César ever get that cerulean crayon?

About the Math

To figure out which crayon is cerulean, Gabi asks yes-no questions. At first she rules out one crayon at a time. Then she asks more efficient questions to eliminate groups. She continues until she has ruled out all but cerulean.

As Gabi narrows down the crayons, she explores the logic of yes-no questions. This type of logic plays a role in data science, computer science, and statistics.

Narrowing down with yes-no questions can help children build math and language skills. Children learn to express themselves clearly and to listen carefully for answers—important for successful communication throughout life!

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About the Author

Jenny Lacika is a children's writer who often explores themes of STEM, disability, and Chicanx culture in her work. Her picture book *Again, Essie?* won a Mathical Book Prize. Jenny lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. www.jennylacika.com

About the Illustrator

Laura Sandoval Herrera is a Mexican illustrator living in Brooklyn, New York. She received her MFA in illustration from the School of Visual Arts. This is her debut book. www.laurasanherr.com



Math Activities

Explore logic with these activities! Try these variations of the game Twenty Questions to engage children in using logic to explore letters, art, and numbers. In each game, players ask yes-no questions to narrow down the set.

Secret Letter

Lay out a set of plastic or foam letters of the alphabet. If you don't have ready-made letters, cut out a set or make them from clay.

One person secretly picks a letter. The others ask yes-no questions to identify it. (Does it have a hole you can put your finger through? Does it have a straight part and a round part?) As children handle the letters, talk together about letter shapes. (What does an A feel like? What about an O?) Try this with numbers, too!



Mystery Masterpiece

Got kids who love to draw? Invite them to lend their artwork for this game!

Spread out about a dozen of their drawings. One person secretly picks a drawing. The others ask yes-no questions to identify it. (Does it have any blue? Does it include a face?) Encourage children to look closely at the drawings to find questions that will rule out several at once.

What's My Card?

Lay out about a dozen playing cards face up. One person secretly picks a card. The others ask yes-no questions to identify it. (Does it have a black number? Does it have more than three hearts?) Encourage them to come up with questions that will rule out multiple cards at once.

If needed, help children count the hearts, diamonds, clubs, and spades on the cards. For more challenge, lay out at least half the deck.

