

# SD38 K-2 Numeracy Assessment Support Document

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**RICHMOND**  
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.38

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on behalf of the SD38 Learning Services Numeracy Assessment Committee*

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## **Overview**

The following materials were developed in collaboration with the Learning Services Numeracy Assessment Committee from 2017-2019. From our work together, a SD38 K-2 Numeracy Assessment Tool was developed, drawing upon the BC Early Numeracy Project and current research regarding assessment of early numeracy. Thirty Richmond primary teachers piloted the assessment with their students in the fall of 2018 and their findings and feedback contributed to edits and revisions to the assessment tool. A further field test was done in the fall of 2019, again with thirty Richmond primary teachers using the assessment tool with their students.

As of November 2019, the assessment tool and recording sheets are approved to use in K-2 Richmond classrooms.

Further resources to support this assessment tool and related instruction were further developed in 2021 and are included in this updated resource. As the SD38 Numeracy Vision and Framework are developed, another update will be made.

# Literacy and Numeracy Assessment in the Early Years

*“Literacy is the ability to understand, critically analyze, and create a variety of forms of communication, including oral, written, visual, digital, and multimedia, in order to accomplish one’s goals.*

*Numeracy is the ability to understand and apply mathematical concepts, processes, and skills to solve problems in a variety of contexts.*

*Literacy and numeracy are fundamental to all learning. While they are commonly associated with language learning and mathematics, literacy and numeracy are applied in all areas of learning.”*

<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/overview>

The purpose of this section of this document is to outline the purposes of and provide guidelines and recommendations for Level A assessments in Richmond for Literacy and Numeracy.

## **What is assessment?**

Assessment is the systematic process of gathering information about individual students which may assist in understanding their needs and learning profile so that necessary planning for learning and services can be provided. It begins with the classroom teacher and may expand to include other individuals both within and beyond the school system. While both formal and informal assessment procedures may be useful, assessment should generally begin with observation of the student by the teacher or others in the classroom context. Assessment may then proceed to more formal or clinical measures and contexts in an incremental manner as required to design effective programs and supports for the student.

## Levels of Assessment

Since assessment includes more than formal testing, it is important to keep the various types of assessment in mind. The first source of support for all students is the classroom teacher, who has already obtained information through observation, work samples, student and parent interviews, screening tests, etc.. These can be described as **Level A** assessments. When a teacher has questions about a particular student's needs or abilities, the teacher can turn to members of the **School Based Team (SBT)** for further advice, support and assistance. Actions from the School Based Team meeting may result in collecting additional data to supplement the information the teacher has already collected. This is where **Level B** or **Level C** assessment tools may be of assistance. **Level B** tests require specific training for administration, scoring and interpretation. These tests are more complex than Level A assessments and should only be administered by someone who is trained. **Level C** tests require advanced (graduate level) training for interpretation, and in the school setting are generally administered by the school psychologist. Level A and B assessment data should guide the School Based Team in determining whether additional Level C testing is required to answer questions about a student's learning profile and how to best support learning.

Please note that most Level B and C tests are not aligned to our BC mathematics curriculum. Bridging formal testing results and suggested instructional practices and supports for student learning need to take the BC mathematics curriculum learning standards in mind.

# K-2 NUMERACY ASSESSMENT

## **Focus of project:**

The focus of this district project was the development of district language and supports around early assessment in the area of numeracy. The range of grades of focus are K-2, but may also be supportive for educators working with older students with a beginning level of numeracy development. Whole class and individual student profiles maybe be created beginning at the end of Kindergarten.

## **What is numeracy?**

Numeracy is the application and transfer of mathematical understanding to contextualized situations and problems. For our purposes, we are looking at one aspect of mathematical understanding – number sense.

From a cognitive science perspective, particularly in the area of early numeracy, numeracy is focused on awareness of quantity, numbers and operations and the relationship between concrete, pictorial and symbolic forms.

*Numeracy is a student's number sense as demonstrated through cardinality, ordinality, meaning of symbols, being able to link symbols to sets and understanding arithmetic operations.*

from Dr. Ansari, Number Cognition Lab, Western University

In mathematics education, and as defined in the BC Curriculum framework, numeracy is an application of mathematical understanding.

*Numeracy is the willingness and ability to interpret and apply mathematical understanding to solve problems in complex situations, and the perseverance to analyze and communicate these solutions in ways that are relevant to the given context.*

from Dr. Peter Liljedahl (SFU) from the BC curriculum website

**In Kindergarten through grade 2, the focus is on developing young children’s number sense. Numeracy development occurs with opportunities to connect, apply and transfer this number sense to contextual situations or problems.**

**Foundational concepts/skills connected to the development of number sense:**

- Counting including one-to-one, cardinality and conservation
- Symbolic and Visual Magnitude
- Subitizing
- Linking sets to numerals
- Decomposition of quantities

### **Spatial Reasoning**

It is important to note that spatial reasoning is foundational to overall mathematics development. When considering developing an understanding of number, concrete and visual materials and tools such as ten frames and dot patterns utilize spatial reasoning and understanding to support and enhance number sense. Concepts assessed in the included tasks such as comparing quantities and subitizing involve spatial reasoning.

### **What are indicators of numeracy development?**

- Understanding of number (number sense, fluency, flexibility)
- Application and transfer of mathematical understanding to contextual situations (e.g. stories, problems, play, investigations)
- Making connections (math to self, math to world, math to math)
- Development of mathematical vocabulary and language (e.g. comparative language such as more/less, before/after, greater than/less than)

For Kindergarten-grade 2, here are some recommendations for assessments that can be used by school teams:

**Suggestions for Assessments:**

<b>BC Based Assessments</b>	<b>Norm-Referenced Assessments</b>
SD22 Grade One Screener <a href="https://sites.google.com/view/bc-numeracy-network/assessment/how-do-i-know-what-my-students-know-can-do-and-understand/grade-1?authuser=0">https://sites.google.com/view/bc-numeracy-network/assessment/how-do-i-know-what-my-students-know-can-do-and-understand/grade-1?authuser=0</a>	Numeracy Screener <a href="http://www.numeracyscreener.org">http://www.numeracyscreener.org</a>
BC Early Numeracy Assessment <a href="https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/teach/teaching-tools/math">https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/teach/teaching-tools/math</a> Hardcopy available in schools	Number Sense Screener Maryland, Brookes Publishing
	Give a Number Task (Ansari)

Compilation of resources to support assessment and interpret results can be found on the BC Numeracy Network website:

<https://sites.google.com/view/bc-numeracy-network/assessment?authuser=0>

The SD38 Numeracy Assessment Committee has developed a K-2 Assessment Tool and monitoring forms which are included in this package.

Two suggested numeracy tasks are also provided.



## SD38 K-2 Numeracy Assessment Tool

The SD38 K-2 Numeracy Assessment Tool focuses on foundational concepts and skills that contribute to the development of number sense. The SD38 K-2 Numeracy Assessment Tool is intended to be used from the end of Kindergarten through grade 2 with a whole class of students to create a class profile and to reveal students that we might want to further assess for more information. It can also be used with students over time to monitor progress.

This assessment is focused on performance-based assessment with an interview aspect. No more than three students can be assessed at the same time, in order to get reliable information through observation and listening. Ideally, each student is assessed individually and this takes about 10-12 minutes a student.

**Materials needed:** counters that students can easily pick up/grab such as Unifix cubes (for some students having the cubes all one/same colour is helpful), numeral cards, a square of cardstock or cardboard (about 10x10cm), group/class or individual recording sheet

Recording sheets can be used to record dates, range or limit of quantities/numbers, Yes/No or your own coding system.

**Task 1:** Place a collection of 16 counters on the table and ask student to count them: Please count all the cubes. After counting, ask: How many are there?

**Observe and listen for:** one-to-one correspondence, cardinality and sequence of number names. If count is incorrect, note where error is made.

*For grade 2 students, first have them count 16 and then provide another collection of 34 to count to bridge over two decades.*

**Task 2:** After the student has counted the 16 counters, rearrange them in another configuration and ask: How many are there? How do you know? (if they tell you 16). If student recounts counters, note this. If student says “I don’t know” or responds with an incorrect answer, note this.

**Observe and listen for:** conservation (“It’s still 16 because you didn’t add any or take any away.”)

Note: Tasks 1 and 2 can be “combined” and flow from one to another when focused on the quantity of 16.

**Task 3:** Place a small collection of counters in front of the child. Ask: Can you please grab three and show me? (Gesture a grab motion). If necessary, explain to student to grab the required amount without counting them. Put the cubes back in the collection and then repeat with quantities of 5 then 4.

**Observe and listen for:** counting vs subitizing and knowing small quantities

**Task 4:** Create a set of 8 counters and another set of 3 counters. Ask: Without touching or counting the counters, tell me which set has more. Repeat with 7 counters and 10 counters (opposite orientation from first part of task with smaller set first and greater set second).

**Observe and listen for:** visual magnitude comparison

Note: An additional task between Task 4 and Task 5 to bridge concrete to symbolic representations could be to compare quantities represented in a ten frame (pictorial representation).

**Task 5:** Place numeral cards for 9 and 2 on the table. Ask: Which is greater? (use larger, bigger, more if language seems to be a concern). Repeat with 6 and 8.

**Observe and listen for:** symbolic magnitude comparison

**Task 6:** Place 3 counters in a diagonal row on the table under a card. Lift the card for 1 second and then cover counters with a card. Ask: How many counters are there? How do you know?

Note: remind students not to try and count, to just say how many dots /counters they see.

Repeat with 4 counters in a regular dice pattern.

Repeat with 5 counters in regular dice pattern.

Repeat with 4 counters in irregular pattern.

**Observe and listen for:** instant recognition of dot patterns, connection to known dot patterns (dice, dominoes), conceptual subitizing ("I saw the five as a three and a two."), ability to subitize both regular and irregular dot patterns.

**Task 7:** Create separate sets of 3, 5 and 9 counters on the table. Lay out the numeral cards and ask: Can you match the numbers to the number of counters in each set? (rephrase as necessary for student understanding)  
*For grade 2 students, extend to 16 and 23 to see if they use the numeral cards as digits which suggests place value understanding.*

**Observe and listen for:** ability to match symbol to quantity

**Task 8:** Give the student 5 counters and ask: What different ways can you make five? What parts make up five? How can you decompose five into parts? (use phrasing that is most familiar to your students). Can you think of any more ways? (if student seems to need prompting to continue with task) As an extension: Have you found all the ways to make five?

Repeat for 10. Note: If student seems to not understand what to do, model one way to make five such as showing the counters as 2 and 3.

Note for grades 1 and 2 students: Some students may connect this task to thinking about addition and subtraction.

**Observe and listen for:** ability to decompose into parts, random vs systematic approach, using more than two parts sometimes, oral explanation such as "3 and 2 make 5."

# SD38 K-2 Assessment Tool

## Task and Concept/Skill Correlation

Task	Concepts/Skills
one	one-to-one, counting sequence, cardinality
two	conservation
three	subitizing, "give me" showing three-ness, four-ness, five-ness
four	visual magnitude comparison
five	symbolic magnitude comparison
six	subitizing both regular and irregular dot patterns
seven	matching numeric symbol to quantity
eight	decomposing quantities



0

1

4

7

2

5

8

3

6

9

## SD38 K-2 Numeracy Assessment Tool Individual Student Record

one-to-one correspondence	
counting sequence (correct order and stability)	
cardinality to _____	
conservation y/n (indicate quantity)	
"give me" task (ie having three-ness)	
visual magnitude	
symbolic magnitude	
subitizing (indicate quantity)	
match symbol to quantity	
decompose (indicate quantity and number of parts)	

\_\_\_\_\_ student name

\_\_\_\_\_ student birthdate, grade

\_\_\_\_\_ date of assessment

\_\_\_\_\_ completed by

notes

## SD38 K-2 Numeracy Tasks

The SD38 K-2 Numeracy Assessment Tool focuses on early learners' number sense and the development of foundational number concepts.

The following numeracy tasks are provided to be used in parallel with the assessment tool, to assess the ability of students to connect, apply and transfer their understanding of number concepts. The tasks are inspired by the problem-solving tasks from the BC Early Numeracy Project and the K-3 Numeracy Tasks on Peter Liljedahl's website.

### Sharing Cookies

***"There are four plates and there are two cookies on each plate. What different ways could you and two friends share the cookies? Which way do you think is the most fair and why?"***

Notes:

You may change to the context to two children instead of three.

You may choose to increase the quantity to 12 (four plates of three) or 24 (four plates of six) based on your knowledge of your students.

Have paper, pencils, crayons, small paper plates and Unifix cubes available for students to use if they choose.

### Planning and Designing a Pet Habitat

***"Design a habitat for a pet. What do you need to consider? What does this pet need? What size should it be? Make a plan and draw or build your habitat. Share your reasoning and thinking for your design."***

Notes:

You may change the context to connect to your students' interests, for example, designing a pen for a farm animal.

Some students may choose to use standard units such as centimetres.

Have paper, pencils, crayons, rulers, blocks, popsicle sticks, Unifix cubes and other creating materials available for students to use if they choose.

# Glossary

**Assessment:** Assessment is the systematic process of gathering information about individual students which may assist in understanding their needs and learning profile so that necessary planning for learning and services can be provided.

**Cardinality:** Cardinality is the understanding that the last number said while counting is the quantity counted.

**Conservation:** Conservation is an understanding is that a quantity stays the same whether they are in a line, spread out, re-arranged, etc.

**Contextualized Situation:** A task or problem embedded in a story, in play or an investigation.

**Counting Sequence:** The sequence of number names when counting is in a stable order.

**Decomposing:** Decomposing and composing quantities or numbers are related concepts. Decomposing is essentially “breaking” a quantity into parts, such as ten can be decomposed into five and four and one.

**Magnitude:** Magnitude looks at the relative size of a quantity in comparison to others and can be measured visually (with sets of objects or pictures) or symbolically (with number symbols).

**Number Sense:** A student with well-developed number sense is able to think fluently and flexibly about numbers and their relationships with each other.

**Numeracy:** Numeracy is the application and transfer of mathematical understanding to contextualized situations and problems.

**One-to-One Correspondence:** One-to-one correspondence involves saying one number name for each object counted, often accompanied by physically touching or visually tracking each object while counting.

**Quantity:** A quantity is an amount or number of a set, materials, objects, pictures, etc.

**Spatial Reasoning:** Spatial reasoning is based in dynamic processes with a focus on mental understanding and physical transformation.

**Subitizing:** Subitizing is the ability to see a small quantity of objects and know at a glance how many. There are two types of subitizing – perceptual and conceptual.

**Symbol:** The numeric symbol or number that represents the quantity/amount.

## BC Mathematics Curriculum Connections

The assessment tasks focus on number with the numeracy tasks focusing on application of number, measurement and spatial reasoning.

A BC Mathematics Curriculum Big Idea that is the overall focus for this assessment support document is: ***Number represent and describes quantity.***

BC Mathematics Curriculum	Curricular Competencies Learning Standards <i>(focused on in the task design)</i>	Curricular Content Learning Standards
Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use reasoning to explore and make connections</li> <li>• develop mental math strategies and abilities to make sense of quantities</li> <li>• develop, demonstrate, and apply mathematical understanding through play, inquiry, and problem solving</li> <li>• visualize to explore mathematical concepts</li> <li>• develop and use multiple strategies to engage in problem solving</li> <li>• communicate mathematical thinking in many ways</li> <li>• explain and justify mathematical ideas and decisions</li> <li>• represent mathematical ideas in concrete, pictorial and symbolic forms</li> <li>• reflect on mathematical thinking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• number concepts to 10</li> <li>• ways to make 5</li> <li>• decomposition of numbers to 10</li> </ul>
Grade One		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• number concepts to 20</li> <li>• ways to make 10</li> <li>• addition and subtraction to 20</li> </ul>
Grade Two		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• number concepts to 100</li> <li>• addition and subtraction facts to 20</li> </ul>

# Resources

## Pedagogical Content Knowledge Resources

How Children Learn Number Concepts: A Guide to the Critical Learning Phases by Kathy Richardson (available through didax.com)

Making Math Meaningful to Canadian Students K-8 by Marian Small

Teaching Student-Centered Mathematics: Grades K-3 by John A. Van de Walle & LouAnn H. Lovin

Children's Mathematics: Cognitively Guided Instruction by Thomas Carpenter, Elizabeth Fennema et al

How Many? by Christopher Danielson (picture book & teacher guide)

Choral Counting and Counting Collections: Transforming the PreK-5 Math Classroom by Megan Franke, Elham Kazemi et al

BC Numeracy Network foundations page

<https://bit.ly/BCNNfoundations>

BC Reggio-Inspired Mathematics pedagogical content knowledge support documents

<https://bit.ly/BCRIMsupportdocuments>

## Numeracy

BC Numeracy Network website

<http://bit.ly/bcnumeracynetwork>

Dr. Peter Liljedahl website

<https://www.peterliljedahl.com/teachers/numeracy-tasks>

SD38 Portal – Learn 38: Mathematics and Numeracy

<https://portal.sd38.bc.ca/learn38/Pages/default.aspx#/=>

SD38 District Mathematics Blog

<https://blogs.sd38.bc.ca/sd38mathandscience/>