Counting Rods (Introduction to Number)
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Materials
Ten wooden rods with numbers 1-10 at the top, the first being two inches long and increasing in size by one inch until the "10" rod which is 11 inches long. Each rod has shallow holes corresponding with the number of the rod.
Fifty-five counters that will rest in the shallow holes (small stones, beads, etc.)

Aims
Direct
Ordering 1-10
Association of numeral with quantity 1-10
Counting separate (loose) units with fixed quantity

Indirect
Order rods 1-10 and then counting out stones for each numeral to fill out the rod.

Presentation

1) Invite child
2) Carry the tray with the rods and counters to a mat.
3) Remove the rods from the tray and place at random on the mat.
4) Place the 1 rod in the upper left corner of the mat and say "one".
5) Place one counter in the hole on the 1 rod.
6) Place the 2 rod alongside the 1 rod so the lines under the numbers align, place two counters in the two holes on the 2 rod, counting them out as you go.
7) Continue placing the 3-10 rods and filling them with counters as you go.
8) Return the counters to the bowl, the rods to the tray, and return work to the shelf.

Control of Error
The visual order of rods placed incorrectly is interrupted.
There is only one hole for each stone.

Points of Interest
Ordering the rods
Placing small stones in the holes
Seeing the numerals correspond with length and with amount.

Variations/Extensions
For children first learning their numbers, use one rod at a time.

Language

Age
3-5