# Math Moments that Matter
# KINDERGARTEN

## Place Value Foundations

Kindergartners work with the numbers 11–19 to understand that each is made of one ten and some ones (for example, 14 is made of one ten and four ones). This big idea helps students see how numbers are built and prepares them for adding, subtracting, and working with larger numbers in 1st grade.

Students use ten-frames (a box that shows numbers using ten spaces) and connecting cubes to show that teen numbers are really "a ten and some more." In the first image, students build 14 using a stack of ten cubes and four ones. In the second image, they fill a ten-frame and add four more counters to the right. These simple models help students see that teen numbers always have one full ten plus some ones, which sets them up for strong place-value understanding.

**EXAMPLE:** *Connecting cubes showing 14*

**14**
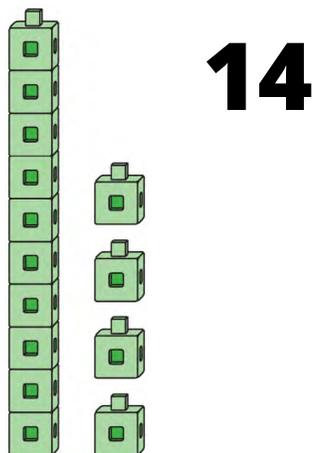
**EXAMPLE:** *Ten-frame showing 14 red round counters*

**14**
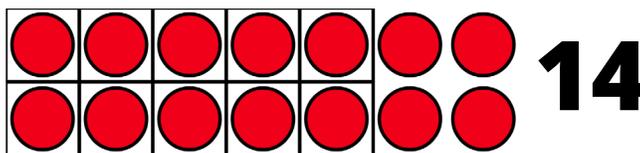
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## Talking & Listening in Math

When students explore teen numbers, they are also practicing important math talk. Discussing numbers helps them explain their thinking, listen to others, and learn new ways to show ideas. Students learn to:

- Explain how teen numbers are made from a ten and some ones
- Listen as classmates show different ways to model numbers
- Show numbers with drawings, words, or math tools like ten-frames or connecting cubes
- Use math language, such as "I see a ten and ___ ones."
- Justify their thinking: "It's 15 because I have a full ten-frame and five more."

Talking, showing, and listening help students make sense of numbers.

## What You Might See in the Classroom

Students using ten-frames, connecting cubes, or bundles of sticks to build teen numbers.

Teachers asking:
- "How do you know 13 is a ten and 3 more?"
- "Can you show it another way?"
- "Where is the ten?"

Students sharing models and listening to classmates.

Students drawing or building one ten and some ones and labeling: 10 + 7 = 17.

Quick partner talks: "I know 18 is bigger than 16 because both have a ten, and 18 has more ones."

## What You Can Do at Home

Use household objects: "Let's make 14 with 10 pennies and 4 pennies."

Ask: "How many tens and ones are in 18?"

Play: "Show me 12 with your fingers and then with cubes."

Build teen numbers with snacks or toys—make a group of 10, then add some ones.

Try a ten-frame at home using an egg carton.

Trade 10 for a dime: Swap 10 pennies for a dime to show a ten.

Ask your student to explain: "How do you know that's 14?"

## Make it a Math Moment!

Math is talk! When students explain that teen numbers are a ten and some ones, they build the language and structure of place value that powers all later math.

**Tap or Scan for Interactive Tools and More Resources!**