Observation Notes
Counting – Section A

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| **1 Teddy Task**  
*Show the child the teddies and get the cup. Cup must be able to hold more than 20.*  
Please take a big scoop of teddies... Please put a few more teddies in to fill up the cup *(at least 20).*  
a) Hold them in front of you ... Tell me how many teddies you think are in the cup.  
b) Please check to find out.  |
| • There must be more than 20 teddies in the cup for the task to be valid.  
• Note if estimation is realistic.  
• Note if students tip the teddies out of the cup or if they remove them one by one?  
• If they tip them out - do they touch and move teddies so they know which ones they have counted?  
• Are they organised in their approach to the task?  
• Do they demonstrate 1:1 correspondence?  
• Note the first point of difficulty. |
| **2 Counting Forwards, Backwards and Breaking the Sequence**  
Please count for me by ones without the teddies. Start counting from ... I’ll tell you when to stop.  
a) 1 ... 32  
b) 53 ... 62  
c) 84 ... 113  
*(remember to note first difficulty)*  
d) Count backwards from 24. I’ll tell you when to stop *(24, 23 ... 15)*  
*(If child hesitates, say 'like 24, [pause] 23, ...' )*  
e) Count backwards from 10. I’ll tell you when to stop.  
*(If child hesitates, say 'like 10, [pause] 9, ...' )*  |
| • Do they understand the phrase “count for me by ones”?  
• Sometimes children do not realise that the regular counting sequence is actually counting by ones. For some students they link the “count by” phrase to counting by 2s or 5s or 10s.  
• Note the first point of difficulty, also any points of hesitation. Until students are confident with the number sequence they may hesitate at the decade transitions.  
• Many students stop at 100 and need to be prompted to continue or have difficulty counting beyond 109. They often say 109, 200.  
• Listen to the pronunciation of numbers – particularly the teen numbers  
• Counting backwards is more difficult than counting forwards - children may begin to count backwards and then start to count forwards.  
• Note if prompts were needed for counting backwards. |
### 3 Before and After Tasks

a) When you are counting forwards, tell me the number that comes after 56.
b) Tell me the number that comes before 56.

- Consider speed of response.
- Note: Number after is easier than number before.

### 4 Counting from 0 by 10s, 5s, and 2s

Count by 10s for me (then 5s, 2s) as far as you can go.

*Stop child after 110, 45 and 30, respectively.*

- Begin with 10s. Listen to pronunciation of numbers. Can they continue past 100?
- Counting by 5s often sounds like a song.
- Counting by 2s is more difficult because the pattern is longer. Students may be slow to respond because they might be actually counting by ones in their head and articulating every second number.
- Always note the point of error because being able to do some of the task indicates a beginning understanding and some skill at the task.

### 5 Counting from \(x\) by 10s and 5s

a) Start at 23 and count by 10s. *(Stop the child after 103.)*
b) Start at 24 and count by 5s. *(Stop the child after 44.)*

- Consider speed of response.
- When counting by 10s can students count pass 100?
- When counting by 5s an awareness of the final digit pattern will impact on the speed of response.
- Note the point of error.

### 6 Counting from \(x\) by a single digit number

a) Start at 11 and count by 3s. *(Stop the child after 35.)*
b) Start at 20 and count by 7s. *(Stop the child after 55.)*

- Consider speed of response.
- Note the point of error.

### 7 Counting Money

*Tip out the collection of money onto the table. (No recording allowed for this task.)*
a) Please count the money for me.
b) What did you find?
c) How much more money would you need to have $5? *(Any counting method yielding the correct answer is acceptable.)*

- Note how the student organises the money for counting.
- Do they start with largest denominations and moving to smaller ones?
- Do they make to dollar amounts?
- What method do they use to calculate how much more money is needed to have $5?
- Do they think about how much more is needed to make $5 or do they think $5
| take away $2.85? |   |