



Stuart J. Murphy's
MathStart[®]

The Penny Pot
Level 3 / Ages 7+
Counting Coins



Learning what different coins are worth and adding up change are important life skills.

Story Description

Art teacher Fran is painting kids' faces at the school fair for 50 cents each. But Jessie has only three dimes, a nickel and four pennies, which is just 39 cents. So Fran puts out a "penny pot" for spare change. Miguel has a quarter, a nickel, two dimes and three pennies: 53 cents. He adds three cents to the penny pot. All the other kids contribute, too. Soon there's more than enough for Jessie. Learning what different coins are worth and adding up change are important life skills.

Illustrated by Lynne Cravath.

Activities

Place a handful of coins on the table and talk about the value of each. Ask questions such as: "Which coin is a dime?" "How many pennies equal a dime?" "How many nickels?" "Can you combine pennies and nickels to make a dime?"

Reread the story with your child (or class) and identify the different coins in the story. How much each is worth?

Practice using coins in everyday situations: Help your child (or students) choose the coins needed to buy a magazine or a healthy snack. What is the correct change needed to ride the bus? Or buy a stamp?

Teacher Idea: Before we read "The Penny Pot," I ask my kids, "How many different combinations can you make using 25 cents?" The answer is 13 different ways. The kids can use money to help them figure it out and can write out how they came to the answer. A lot of them can do it in their heads! When I read the book, they can see the computations.

—Richard Callan, Bunker Hill Elementary School, Indianapolis, IN



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