

USING AN EMPTY NUMBER LINE WITH FOUNDATION PHASE LEARNERS

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TARGET AUDIENCE:	Foundation Phase
DURATION:	2 hours
MAXIMUM NO. OF PARTICIPANTS:	30

MOTIVATION FOR THE WORKSHOP:

Using number lines for calculations is encouraged in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Standards (CAPS) and was even assessed in the Annual National Assessment (2013). For many teachers this calculation approach is new, foreign and even threatening. We were not taught like this – why change? Why another method or strategy? In this workshop Tania will briefly share some of the benefits she has noticed from encouraging the use of an empty number line with her Grade 3 classes. Most of the session will be focused on teachers trying our different strategies on their own number lines and becoming comfortably themselves with this strategy. The workshop will start off with a focus on adding and subtracting on an empty number line, and (time permitting, and depending on the experience of the group) will shift to multiplying and dividing on empty number lines.

DESCRIPTION OF CONTENT OF WORKSHOP:

The workshop will open with some explanation of the empty number line and its benefits for recording mathematical thinking, as well as a mental tool for calculation. This will be followed by activities relating to adding and subtracting on the number-line where flexibility in approach (which depends on the numbers being used) will be encouraged. Attention will be drawn to the distinctions between using the number line with a “take-away” approach to subtraction, and using the number line with a “difference” approach to subtraction. Participants will be given time to work collectively and individually on using this technique. If time permits, then some discussion and similar activity will be conducted relating to multiplying and dividing on number lines.

The activities and worksheets to be used in the workshop (maximum 8 pages)

A power-point slide presentation will guide the introduction to the workshop and include examples of learner work using empty number lines. This will be followed by workshop task flow (the tasks given to participants to work on). A handout of the presentation will be provided as printed handouts to the participants.

An abstract describing the level, nature and content of the workshop (200 words)

Were your Foundation Phase learners able to correctly answer the ANA (2013) question which presented a number-line for them to show their calculation? Why does the CAPS encourage working on number lines? Is this just another fancy new method, you have to learn? Tania will share her experiences of shifting her teaching to encourage empty number line work with her Grade 3 classes. Come and spend time with her getting yourself comfortable, fluent and confident in using an empty number line for your own calculations. The focus will be on adding and subtracting, but if there is time and interest Tania can also share her experiences in using this for multiplying and dividing.
