



Counting Songs

Introduction

This is a very simple compilation of counting songs, drawn from a variety of sources including publications and the staff of Oldham Music Service Early Years Music team.

The resource has been organised into themes/topics. Some songs are “counting up” and some are “counting down”.

You can use these songs and rhymes as a starting-point for composing your own and to act as a stimulus for the children making up their own songs.

Using props helps the children to fully understand the concept of counting. You can use pictures or actual objects (shells, leaves, balloons etc.) To make it a fully interactive experience, sit the children in a circle and invite them to come into the middle of the circle to “act out” the song/rhyme (e.g. being a frog, a person catching the bus etc.).

We hope that you enjoy exploring these song with your children.

Seasons

One little daffodil

A spoken rhyme

One little daffodil had nothing much to do,
Out popped another one, then there were two.

Two little daffodils were smiling at a bee,
Out popped another one, then there were three.

Three little daffodils were growing by the door,
Out popped another one, then there were four.

Four little daffodils were glad to be alive,
Out popped another one, then there were five.

Five little daffodils were wearing golden crowns,
They danced in the breeze in green satin gowns.

1 little raindrop went plop!

A spoken rhyme

1 little raindrop went plop!
And along came another and the rain didn't stop
So 2 little raindrops went plop, plop

2 little raindrops went plop, plop!
And along came another and the rain didn't stop
So 3 little raindrops went plop, plop, plop!

3 little raindrops went plop, plop, plop!
And along came another and the rain didn't stop
So 4 little raindrops went plop, plop, plop, plop!

4 little raindrops...

5 little raindrops went plop, plop, plop, plop, plop!
No more came along and the rain did stop.
So no little raindrops went plop!

1 little seashell lying on the floor

A spoken rhyme

1 little seashell lying on the floor,
swish went the waves and brought one more.

2 little seashells....

3...4...5...

The waves on the beach

Melody: 5 little ducks went swimming one day

The waves on the beach went in and out
Sloshing the shells and sand about
A big wave came along and then
1 lovely shell came back again.

2 lovely shells...
3...4...5...

One friend went to play

Melody: One man went to mow

1 friend went to play, went to play outside.
"Friend come and play, come and play outside"

2 friends went to play....

5 Pirates

A spoken rhyme

5 pirates heading out to shore
One jumped overboard and now there are 4.

4 Pirates heading out to sea.
One stole the Captain's gold and now there are 3.

3 Pirates with not a lot to do.
One was made to walk the plank and now there are 2.

2 pirates having lots of fun.
One drank the first mate's juice
And now there is 1.

1 pirate sitting in the sun.
He decides to abandon ship and now there are none.

5 little leaves

Melody: 1 elephant came out one day upon a spider's web to play

5 little leaves that I could see,
were dancing about one day on a tree
The wind came blowing through the town
and 1 little leaf came fluttering down.

4 little leaves....
3...2...1

5 autumn leaves,

Melody: 10 Green Bottles

5 autumn leaves fluttering on the tree
5 autumn leaves fluttering on the tree
And if one autumn leaf should fall down to the ground
There'll be 4...
...3...2...1...0...

1 little leaf lying on the ground

A spoken rhyme

1 little leaf lying on the ground.
Whoosh went the wind and brought one more

2 little leaves...
3....4.....5....

Five shiny conkers

A spoken rhyme

Five shiny conkers on a conker tree
Beautiful and brown, don't you all agree?
Along came the wind,
And down one fell,
And a squirrel came to find it in its green spiky shell.

Four shiny conkers....
Three...two...one...
No shiny conkers on a conker tree. No shiny conkers for the squirrel to come and find.

One, two leaves fell down

A spoken rhyme

One, two leaves fell down.
Three, four they hit the ground.
Five, six they fell so quick.
Seven, eight they lay so straight.
Nine, ten, let's start again

1 little snowflake soft and white

Melody: The Wheels on the Bus

1 little snowflake soft and white,
Soft and white, soft and white.
Another one came so that makes two
And they gently floated down to the ground
23....4....5....

5 happy snowmen riding on a sledge

Melody: 5 Little Monkeys Bouncing on the Bed

5 happy snowmen riding on the sledge
1 fell off and bumped his head.
Olaf called the doctor and the doctor said,
“No more snowmen riding on the sledge!”

4...3...2...1...
No happy snowmen riding on the sledge.
They’re all throwing snowballs instead.

Animals

Bear/going on a Bear Hunt

Melody: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 once I saw a fish alive

1 2 3 4 5 once I saw a bear alive
6 7 8 9 10 then I ran away again.
Why did you run away?
I was scared, I could not stay.
Where did you run and hide?
Under the covers, right inside!

1 caterpillar

Melody: One man went to mow

1 caterpillar found a tasty leaf.
“Friend, come and eat! Eat this tasty leaf.”

2 caterpillars...
3 caterpillars...
4 caterpillars...

5 caterpillars found a tasty leaf.
Ate up all the leaf. No more leaf to eat!

5 little worms

A spoken rhyme

Five little worms wriggling on the floor
One wriggled off and then there were four.

Four little worms wriggling on your knee
One wriggled off and then there were three.

Three little worms wriggling to hear you
One wriggled off and then there were two.

Two little worms wriggling on your tum.
One wriggled off and then there was one.

One little worm, all alone.
He wriggled off to his little worm home.

The ants came marching two by two

Traditional song

The ants came marching two by two,
Hurrah! Hurrah!
The ants came marching two by two,
Hurrah! Hurrah!
The ants came marching two by two,
The little one stopped to tie up his shoe.
And they all went marching down to the end of the lane.

The ants came marching three by three....the little one stopped to climb up a tree.
4 by 4....stopped to shut the door
5 by 5...stopped to take a dive
6 by 6...pick up sticks.

5 little speckled frogs

Traditional song

5 little speckled frogs
Sat on a speckled log
Eating some most delicious bugs
Yum yum!
One jumped into the pool, where it was nice and cool
Now there are 4 more speckled frogs
Glub glub!

4 little speckled frogs....
3....2....1...

5 little frogs

Melody: The Wheels on the Bus

The children choose the hungry animal and pretend to be it.

5 little frogs were down at the pond, down at the pond, down at the pond,
along came a hungry _____ and 1 frog jumped away.

It's time for my piggies to go to bed

A spoken rhyme: fingerplay

Use fingers or toes for counting

"It's time for my piggies to go to bed," the great big Mummy piggy said,
"so I will count them first to see - if all my piggies come to me.
1 little piggy, 2 little piggies, 3 little piggies all dear
4 little piggies, 5 little piggies. Yes they are all here!"

6 Buzzing bumble bees

Melody: Row, row, row your boat

6 buzzing bumblebees flying round the hive.

1 bee buzzes off and then there were 5.

5 buzzing bumble bees flying round my door,

1 bee buzzes off and then there were 4.

4 buzzing bumble bees flying round a tree,

1 bee buzzes off and then there were 3

3 buzzing bumble bees in the sky so blue,

1 bee buzzes off and then there were 2

2 buzzing bumble bees flying in the sun,

1 bee buzzes off and then there was 1

1 buzzing bumble bees looking for some fun,

1 bee buzzed off and then there were none.

Here is the beehive

A so-mi melody

Here is the beehive, where are the bees? *smmsm slls*

Hidden away where nobody sees. *smmsmslls*

Here come the bees now out of the hive. *smmsmslls*

1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *smsmd*

5 little piggies

Melody: 5 little ducks went swimming one day

5 little piggies rolled in the mud, (hold up 5 fingers)

Squishy, squashy it felt good (roll hands around each other)

The farmer took one piggy out, (wave one thumb over your shoulder)

Oink, oink, oink! that piggy did shout! (open and close fingers and thumbs on oinks)

(repeat the verse counting down from 4 – 1)

No little piggies rolled in the mud, (hold out hands to gesture none)

They all looked so clean and good, (frame face with hands and smile virtuously)

The farmer turned his back and then, (wag finger in warning)

Those piggies rolled in the mud again! (wave arms around madly!!)

5 little monkeys bouncing on the bed

Well-known melody

5 little monkeys bouncing on the bed.
One fell off and bumped his head.
Mummy called the doctor and the doctor said,
"No more monkeys bouncing on the bed!"

4 little...

3 little...

2 little...

1 little...

No little monkeys bouncing on the bed.
They're all bouncing on the sofa instead!

One roaring lion

Melody: John Brown's Body/Little Peter Rabbit had a fly upon his nose

1 roaring lion went marching into town
1 roaring lion went marching into town
1 roaring lion went marching into town
Then along came another lion marching into town.

2 roaring lions...

3 roaring lions...

4 roaring lions...

5 roaring lions...then no more lions marched into town.

5 elephants

A spoken rhyme

As 5 little elephants marched through the grass
They decided to come to our music class,
The first elephant banged on the floor.
The second went to sleep and started to snore!
The third and fourth elephants sang a song,
And the last little elephant just followed along,
They clapped and they clapped and they started to sway
And had a big smile for the rest of the day

I saw a little ladybird

A spoken rhyme

I saw a little lady bird flying in the air,
But when I tried to catch her, two ladybirds were there.
Two little lady birds flew up in a tree. I tiptoed very quietly, and then I saw three.
Three little lady birds--I looked for one more.
I saw one sitting on the ground, that made four.
Four little lady birds--another one arrived. I saw her sitting on a flower, and that made five.
Five little lady birds, all red and black --
I clapped my hands and shouted, and they all flew back!

One big hippo

Melody: One elephant went out to play

One big hippo balancing,
Step by step on a slippery rock,
He thought it was such tremendous fun
He called for another hippo to come.

Two big hippos balancing,
Step by step on a slippery rock,
They thought it was such tremendous fun
They called for another hippo to come.

Three big hippos balancing,
Step by step on a slippery rock,
They thought it was such tremendous fun
They called for another hippo to come.

Four big hippos balancing,
Step by step on a slippery rock,
They thought it was such tremendous fun
They called for another hippo to come.

Five big hippos balancing,
Step by step on a slippery rock,
But all of a sudden they fell into the mud,
And down came the hippos with a great, big thud!

One elephant went out one day

Well-known melody

1 elephant went out one day upon a spider's web to play.
He had such enormous fun,
That he called for another elephant to come.

2 elephants...

3 elephants...

4 elephants...

5 elephants went out one day upon a spider's web to play.
They had such enormous fun
But the spider's web broke
And then there were none!

12345, once I caught a fish alive

Traditional melody

1 2 3 4 5, once I caught a fish alive
6 7 8 9 10 then I let it go again.
"Why did you let it go?"
"Because it bit my finger so."
"Which finger did it bite?"
"This little finger on my right."

5 little monkeys sitting in a tree

A so-mi melody

5 little monkeys sitting in a tree *smmsmssmlsm*
Along came a crocodile as quiet as can me (whispered)
“Hey, Mr Crocodile, you can’t catch me!” *smssmmsmsm*
Snap!
4 little monkeys...
3 little monkeys
2 little monkeys...
1 little monkey...

Five little chicks

Melody: Ten Green Bottles

5 little chicks running round the farm
5 little chicks running round the farm.
And if one little chick should stop and fall asleep,
There’ll be 4 little chicks running round the farm...

One brown Teddy

Melody: Ten green bottles

1 brown teddy sitting on a wall x2
And if one more teddy should come along to play,
There’ll be 2 brown teddies...

Vehicles

The Big Red Bus

Melody: 5 little ducks went swimming one day

The big red bus drove along the street
Looking for people he could meet
A man at the bus stop flagged him down
So the bus took 1 person into town

.....2 people...
...3 people...
...4 people...
...5 people into town.

The big red bus drove along the street.
No more people for him to meet.
No-one there to flag him down.
And all 5 people got into town.

1 Shiny Bicycle

Melody: John Brown's body/Little Peter Rabbit

1 shiny bicycle was riding round the town
1 shiny bicycle was riding round the town
1 shiny bicycle was riding round the town
Then along came another bike to ride around
2...3...4...

5 shiny bicycles were riding round the town
but no more shiny bikes came to ride around

Five little trains

Melody: Ten Green Bottles

5 little trains chugging down the track
5 little trains chugging down the track
And if one little train should accidentally stop,
There'll be 4
(Repeat to "no little trains")

Food & at home

One sausage sizzling

Melody: John Brown's body/Little Peter Rabbit

1 sausage sizzling in the frying pan
1 sausage sizzling in the frying pan
1 sausage sizzling in the frying pan
Along came my brother so I cooked another one

2 sausages...

3 sausages...

4 sausages...

5 sausages sizzling in the frying pan.
5 sausages sizzling in the frying pan.
5 sausages sizzling in the frying pan.
Along came my brother and I said they'd all gone!

5 wooden spoons

Melody: Five Currant Buns

5 wooden spoons in the kitchen drawer
Long and straight and they tap for sure
Along came mummy to stir some more,
So 1 wooden spoon came out of the drawer.
4....3...2...1

One Potato

A spoken rhyme. Emphasis/strong beat on the underlined words.

One potato, two potato, three potato, four
I like mashed potato, can I have some more?
Pleeeeeease!

*Try chanting other types of potato – roast, boiled, new, jacket
or other types of food- I like juicy apples etc*

One little cork

Melody: Ten Green Bottles

1 little cork, bobbing in a bowl
1 little cork bobbing in a bowl
And if another little cork should come and bob along
There'll be 2 little corks...

*You can use a bowl filled with water and some actual corks as visual props for this one.
Then leave the corks in the water-tray area as a stimulus for recalling the song and making
up their own songs.*

Peter taps with one hammer

Traditional melody

Peter taps with one hammer, one hammer, one hammer.
Peter taps with one hammer all day long.

Peter taps with two...
...with three....etc

Six red apples

A spoken rhyme

Six red apples ready for my pies _____ ate one and then there were five
Five red apples in a grocery store _____ bought one & then there were 4
Four red apples on an apple tree _____ ate one & then there were 3
Three red apples. What did _____ do? Why she ate one & then there were 2
Two red apples ripening in the sun _____ ate one, & now there was one
One red apple & now we are done _____ ate the last one & now there are none!

One plate in the bowl

Melody: 1 man went to mow

1 plate in the bowl
Waiting to be washed
1 plate in the bowl
Wash it til it's clean - splosh!

2...3...4...5...
All the plates in the bowl...

5 little peas in a pea-pod pressed

A spoken rhyme

5 little peas in a pea-pod pressed.
One grew, two grew and so did all the rest.
They grew and they grew and they did not stop
Until, one day, the pod went “pop!”

Flying, space

1 little kite in the sky so blue

A spoken rhyme

1 little kite in the sky so blue, along came another and then there were 2
2 little kites flying high above me, along came another and then there were 3.
3 little kites, just watch them soar, along came another and then there were 4.
4 little kites so high and alive, along came another and then there were 5.
5 little kites flying in the sky – what a sight to see them way up high!

5 round red balloons, high up in the sky

A spoken rhyme

5 round red balloons, high up in the sky *(hold hand up, fingers spread out, moving around)*
I tried to catch 1 as the wind blew them by. *(motion “catching”)*
“STOP” I called “please, please stop” *(make “stop” sign with one hand)*
1 came slowly down *(Curl up four fingers and bring one down slowly)*
and then went POP! *(say it slowly then clap)*

4 round red balloons

3 round red balloons...

2...

1...

No round red balloons high up in the sky
They have all gone POP!

5 small stars that shone so bright

A spoken rhyme

5 small stars that shone so bright were dancing about in the sky one night
A cloud came slowly drifting by, then only 4 stars shone in the sky...

4 small stars...

3....

2...

1...

No small stars were shining bright, no little stars to dance in the night
But the cloud moved on and by and by,
those 5 small stars shone again in the sky!

5 little men in a flying saucer

Well-known melody

5 little men in a flying saucer flew round the earth one day
They looked left and right but they didn't like the sight
So one man flew away.
Repeat for 4, 3, 2, 1...

One Little Astronaut

Melody: 5 elephants went out one day

One little astronaut floating out from base,
Hooked to a hose, exploring space. (*pretend to float in space*)
She thought it was such an amazing trick,
She called another astronaut to join her quick. (*beckon with hand*)
Two...

Weather

5 umbrellas

A spoken rhyme

5 umbrellas stood by the back door the red one went outside and then there were 4
4 umbrellas as pretty as can be, blue one went outside and then there were 3
3 umbrellas with nothing much to do. The green one went outside and then there were 2
2 umbrellas waiting for the sun. The yellow one went outside and then there was 1
1 umbrella, alone in the hall, he went out in the rain and that was all!

1, 2 the West Wind blew

A spoken rhyme

1, 2 the west wind blew
3, 4 the thunders roar
5, 6, 7 rain from heaven
8, 9, 10 sunny again.

4 little flowers hiding from the snow

Spoken rhyme or so-mi or refer to "Singing Games for Tiny Tots" pg 18

4 little flowers hiding from the snow
Out came the sun and 1 began to grow
Along came the wind and what did flower say?
"please Mr Wind don't blow me away!"

(said in your best flower voice!)

Five Little Raindrops

A spoken rhyme

Five little raindrops plopping on the floor,
one plopped away and that left four.
Four little raindrops dripping on the trees,
one dripped away and that left three.
Three little raindrops splashing on my shoe,
one splashed away and that left two.
Two little raindrops starting to run,
one ran off and that left one.
One little raindrop drying in the sun,
it dried all up and then there were none!

5 little rainclouds

Melody: 5 little ducks

5 little rain clouds floating by
Right across the big blue sky
Out came the sun and made one dry
So 4 little rainclouds floated by.

4 little rainclouds...

3...

2...

1...

Traditional Songs you can easily adapt

10 green bottles: 5 little firemen standing in a row, 5 brown teddies, 5 little cars driving to the shops, 5 little engines chugging down the track, 5 little candles on a birthday cake

5 little ducks went swimming one day

5 currant buns: 5 Christmas puddings, 5 ice creams at the ice cream shop