

Hippos Go Berserk by Sandra Boynton

AGE LEVEL 2–5 years

About the Story

Hippos Go Berserk is about one lonely hippo who invites his friends over for a party. The hippos fill the house, go berserk, and then leave in groups until the first hippo is lonely again, missing his 44 friends. Children will enjoy counting the hippos and guessing how many friends will show up next.



Three hippos at the door

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Words to Learn

NUMBER WORDS AND SYMBOLS

one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

OTHER WORDS

hippo, berserk, alone, guest

About the Math

Hippos Go Berserk is a counting book. While reading the story and counting the hippos that come and go, children can learn:

- How to say the counting words from one through nine forward and backward.
- How to count the total number of hippos.
- How to carefully count each hippo only once, even when some hippos are partially covering one another.



bring along another four.

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Math Talk During Reading

PRACTICE CAREFULLY COUNTING THE NUMBER OF HIPPOS:

How many hippos do you see? Let's point to each hippo as we count it.

ESTIMATE THE NUMBER OF HIPPOS IN ALL

We started with one lonely hippo, and then groups of two and three hippos arrived. About how many hippos do you think we have now? How do you know?

NOTICE THAT THE NUMBER IN THE CORNER OF THE PAGE MAY NOT MATCH THE TOTAL NUMBER OF HIPPOS

The number 3 means three more hippos just arrived. We already had three hippos, so how many do we see now altogether on the page?

Try to come up with some of your own questions and comments, too!

Activity After Reading

PRACTICE RECITING THE NUMBERS IN THE STORY FORWARD AND BACKWARD

Let's count together! One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine. Now backwards: nine, eight, seven, six, five...