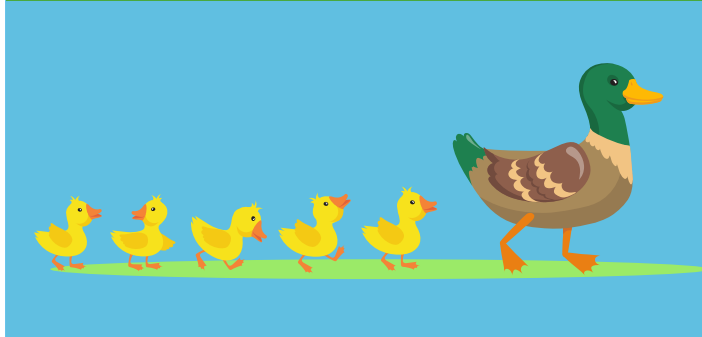


Math Song Guide Based on “Five Little Ducks”

Topic: Numbers & Counting

Five little ducks went out to play. What could go wrong?

Age Level: Preschoolers & Early Elementary



Song Lyrics

Five little ducks went out to play,
Over the hill and far away,
Mother duck said, “Quack, quack, quack.”
But only four little ducks came back.

Four little ducks went out to play...
But only three little ducks came back.

Three little ducks went out to play...
But only two little ducks came back.

Two little ducks went out to play...
But only one little duck came back.

One little duck went out to play...
But no little ducks came back.

No little ducks went out to play...
Over the hill and far away,
Mother duck said, “QUACK! QUACK! QUACK!” (loudly)
And all the five little ducks came back.



Listen to
the Song

“Five Little Ducks” song lyrics
are in the Public Domain.
Author unknown.

About the Math

This song can help children learn about numbers. Your child can learn how to:

Count backward from five.

- The number of little ducks is 5, then 4, 3, 2, 1, 0. Your child can use their fingers to show the number of ducks.

Subtract one.

- The number of ducks decreases by one each stanza. Your child can fold down one finger each time the number changes.

Math Sing and Play

Act out the song with your fingers and hands. Here are some ideas:

- Spread your fingers out to represent five ducks. Then bounce your hand away from you to show five little ducks going out to play. Use four fingers to show that only four ducks came back.
- Show “over the hill and far away” by tracing a hill with your hand. This can help your child understand the meaning of over and far.
- To show “no little ducks,” make a circle with your hand for zero.
- The final time Mother duck quacks, make loud quacking sounds to show that she means it! Speed up the last line showing five fingers coming back quickly.



Activity After the Song

You can keep the learning going by making duck handprint art.

- Using yellow finger paint, make a handprint on a piece of paper. If you prefer, trace your hand on white paper and color it yellow. Draw a beak and legs for the duck. Make five duck handprints in all. Act out the song with the pictures, removing one duck each time.
- Make five different handprints, one for each number 1-5 (use only four fingers for 4, three fingers for 3, etc.). Write zero on a blank piece of paper. Tape the handprints and piece of paper to a piece of string to show counting backwards from 5 to 0.