

STEM starts now

Number Trail Mix

Recommended Age: 31–36 Months

STEM concepts: Math (counting, one-to-one correspondence), Science

Materials: Cupcake tin, cupcake liners, a marker, various different snack foods that your child enjoys (such as Cheerios, pretzels, raisins, dried fruit, popcorn, etc)

What to do: Write different numbers at the bottom of the cupcake liners and place each one in a cupcake tin. Set out your child's favorite snacks that would mix well into a trail mix. After she washes her hands, tell her that the two of you will be making trail mix today! But there's a twist: you can only fill up each cupcake liner with the number of snacks written on the bottom. Then, let her count out the various types of snack and place them in the liners. Once everything has been counted out, combine all the snacks into a bag. There you have it, number trail mix!

Language and Communication: As your child sorts through his chosen snacks, encourage him to count out loud as he places each pretzel or piece of popcorn into a liner. Counting out loud will help to reinforce one-to-one correspondence, which is a basic math skill that he will encounter at school.

Expand the Activity: You can choose which numbers to write in the cupcake liners. If your child has grasped the concept of counting from 1–10, you can use the numbers 11–20. Another way to expand this activity is when she is done, have her write out each of the numbers out on a piece of paper.

