

# Math: Making an Abacus

**Description:** The children will create their own abacus to use in helping them do simple arithmetic.

**Time:** 15-20 minutes

## Materials

4 Craft sticks

50 Beads: 10 red, 10 green, 10 blue, 10 orange

5 Bamboo skewers

Wood glue

Set of cards with simple mathematical operations

## Vocabulary

- **Abacus** is a device used around the world as an aid to learn the numeral system and arithmetic.
- **Arithmetic** the act or process of calculating a number.
- **Count** to add together to find a total number.
- **Calculation** to find the total number using mathematical process.



## Math: Making an Abacus

Lesson

1. Start by showing the children the abacus and asking, "Do you know what this is? It is an abacus. A long, long time ago it was created by the Chinese to count. Today in many countries it is still used. Today you are going to make your own abacus.
2. Pass out a craft stick with 5 pre-marked lines, evenly spaced and centered across the length of the craft stick.
3. Let the children know they will need to add a small **quantity** of glue on each line.
4. Place the skewers on the glue and to secure the skewers we will add another craft stick on top...sandwiching the skewers.
5. While it dries, have the children assist you on counting 10 red beads. Repeat this process will with the reminding of bead. You will need a total of 50 beads; 10 of each color.
6. Ask the children, "Can you help me **count** 10 beads?"
7. Holding the skewers on an upright position, have the children thread the beads. Remember only 10 beads and they need to be the same color. Repeat this step with the reminding the beads.
8. Give the children another craft stick that has the 5 pre-marked lines. Assist the children on placing the skewers with the beads on top.
9. To secure the skewers add another craft stick on top, sandwiching the skewers.
10. Now that you have your own homemade abacus, you ready to do some arithmetic. Using the abacus and the index cards encourage the children to solve the math problems.
11. Remind the children the **abacus** is a great tool to visually help us do simple arithmetic.