

Mathematical moments with 2,3 & 4 year olds

Number and measures

The cooking station



Containers with the ingredients for making cookies, (flour, sugar, beaten egg, milk, etc.) are arranged in a line, each with a large photo showing a number of spoons. Children take a mug and go along the line, putting the right number of spoonfuls of each ingredient in their mug. They stir up the mixture and pour it into a silicone cake case with their name on (upturned on a tray). At the end of the session, these are baked and later children collect their case and eat the contents. A range of cookies, cakes and even bread are made in this way, as a weekly activity.

Two year olds can collect the ingredients independently, recognising whether one or two spoonfuls are needed, although some need help pouring the mixture. Three year olds come to realise that more careful attention to number and spooning affects the result. And those who do not make time to come to the station learn that they get nothing to eat!

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Photograph: Ruth Edwards