

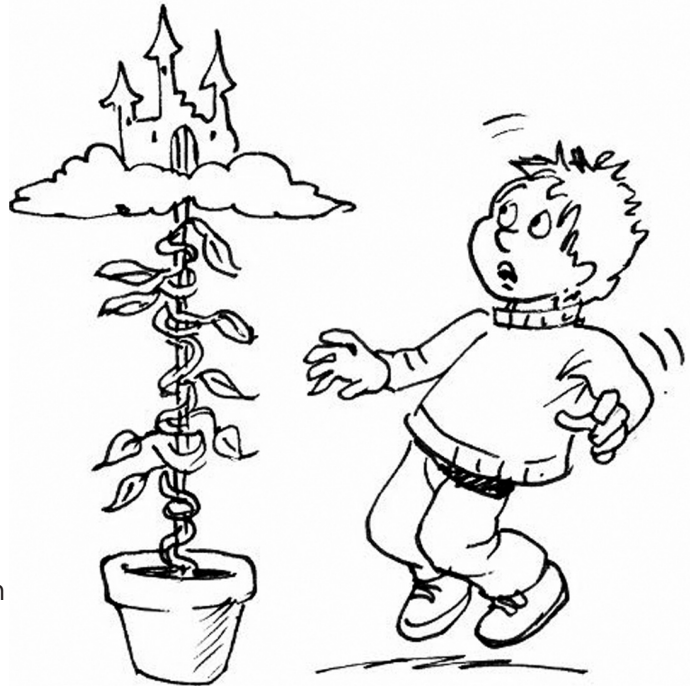
Hide and Count!

What you need:

- A variety of empty plant pots.
- Large seeds or planting beans, such as broad beans.

What you do:

- Choose a suitable number of beans for each child according to amounts they can confidently count. Count them together. Be clear that they are sure what the total is. Put the beans in a group on a table, in a tray, or so they can clearly be seen on the ground. Tell the children to close their eyes while you place an upturned plant pot over some of the beans to hide them. Get the children to talk about how many they can see and speculate about the number hidden. Let the children do the hiding while you close your eyes. Repeat the activity hiding a different number each time or with a different initial total.



Questions and prompts:

- How can we count this pile of beans?
- How can we keep track of how many we have counted?
- What a good idea to line them up so we know when we have counted them all. If we start counting from the other end of the line or move them around will the total change?
- How many can we see now we have placed the plant pot over some?
- How many do you think are hidden? How can we find out?

Extend the play:

- Use with other counting objects such as small world figures, ladybirds or bees. Or you could go on a nature hunt in your area and collect pine cones, stones, leaves, petals etc for the activity. For children who need larger objects to manipulate use a large bucket and beanbags.