

Hide the ladybirds

Learning opportunities

- * Counting skills
- * Simple addition and subtraction
- * Developing an awareness of multiplication through repeated addition

Links to the Early Learning Goals

- * Mathematics – Numbers

Equipment and resources

A flower pot, card, scissors, black felt-tipped pen, red crayons.

Activity

Talk about ladybirds with the children and make sure that they all know what they look like, how small they are and where they can be found. Then suggest making some for a game. Cut small ovals from card, draw a black dividing line down the centre of each oval and colour one tip of each oval black. Draw black spots on both sides of the centre lines. Invite children to colour the ladybirds' bodies with the red crayons.

To play the game, spread the ladybirds out beside the upturned flower pot and count them together. Ask the children to close their eyes and hide some ladybirds under the flower pot while they are not looking. When they open their eyes again, ask them to count how many ladybirds are left.

Extension

Count the spots on the ladybirds instead of just counting each creature as one. Ask the children to work out how many ladybirds must be under the flower pot by counting how many are left and taking the number away from the original total.

Discussion

Introduce the idea of working out how many spots would be on three ladybirds if each had two spots. Support them while they think of ways to work out the answer and try them out. They could just count them all, if they were physically available, or they could count the correct one three times, or they could use their fingers or other aids to help.

