



Counting Pennies and Dimes to Answer “How Many?”

Grade Level: K–1

Duration: 30–40 minutes

Objective:

Students will use counting strategies to determine *how many objects* (coins) they have, and answer questions such as “How many in all?” using pennies and dimes.

Materials:

- Pennies (10–20 per student or pair)
- Dimes (5–10 per student or pair)
- Small coin cups or trays
- Counting mats or paper labeled “Pennies” and “Dimes”
- Chart paper or whiteboard
- Recording sheet (optional)

Lesson Steps

1. Warm-Up (5 minutes): Quick Counting Review

- Show 5 random objects (markers, blocks, etc.)



- Ask: “How can we figure out how many we have?”
- Highlight strategies:
 - Counting one-by-one
 - Grouping things to count more efficiently

Tell students that today they will count *coins*—pennies and dimes.

2. Introduce and Review Coins (5 minutes)

Show a **penny** and a **dime**.

Ask:

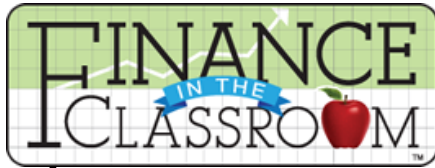
- “What do you notice about these two coins?”
- “How are they the same? How are they different?”

Emphasize:

- A **penny** = 1
 - A **dime** = 10
 - *Today we will count how many coins we have — NOT how much money they are worth.*
(You can mention value briefly, but the focus is on quantity.)
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3. Model Counting with Coins (5–7 minutes)

Place **3 dimes** and **4 pennies** on a counting mat.



Ask:

“How many coins are here altogether?”

Model two strategies:

Strategy A: Count everything one-by-one

Point and count aloud:

“1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7”

Strategy B: Count groups (fast counting)

- Count the dimes first: “1, 2, 3”
- Count the pennies: “4, 5, 6, 7”

Say:

“Both strategies help us answer the question: How many coins in all?”

Write the equation:

$$3 + 4 = 7$$

4. Guided Practice (10 minutes)

Give each pair of students:

- 5 dimes
- 10 pennies

Call out counting problems:

Prompt Examples

1. **“Put 2 dimes and 3 pennies on your mat. How many coins in all?”**



2. "Put **4 pennies** and **1 dime**.
How many?"
3. "Choose any **5 coins** from your cup.
Count them and tell your partner how many."

Circulate and listen for counting strategies.
Prompt students who need help:

- "Try touching each coin as you count."
- "Did you count your pennies too?"
- "Can you check your counting one more time?"

5. Independent Practice (7–10 minutes)

Give each student a small cup of mixed coins.
Have them:

1. **Sort** pennies and dimes
2. **Count** each group
3. **Count the total number of coins**
4. **Record** on a sheet:
 - Pennies: ____
 - Dimes: ____
 - Total coins: ____

Optional challenge:

"Can you make two different combinations of coins that equal the same total number?"

6. Closing Discussion (3–5 minutes)

Ask students:

- “What helped you figure out *how many* coins you had?”
- “Did you count everything one-by-one or did you group them?”
- “Which way was easier?”

Reinforce the big idea:

We use counting to answer the question: “How many?”

Assessment

- Observe students’ counting during guided and independent practice
- Check recording sheets
- Listen for accuracy in answers and strategy explanations