

# Big Fish Story

Visible Ocean

Whole Group

Hidden Ocean

Small Group

Center Time

Provide each child with fish counters, a picture of the ocean, and a small pond (plate). Children take turns drawing a number card to determine how many fish to bring into the ocean (addition) or how many will be eaten by the shark (subtraction). After drawing a card, children move the fish to their checking plate, then their partner checks to make sure they moved the correct number. Both children then move the fish from their checking plate to the ocean or shark. Children figure out how many fish are in their oceans now. The other child draws a card and play continues.

## Primary Objectives

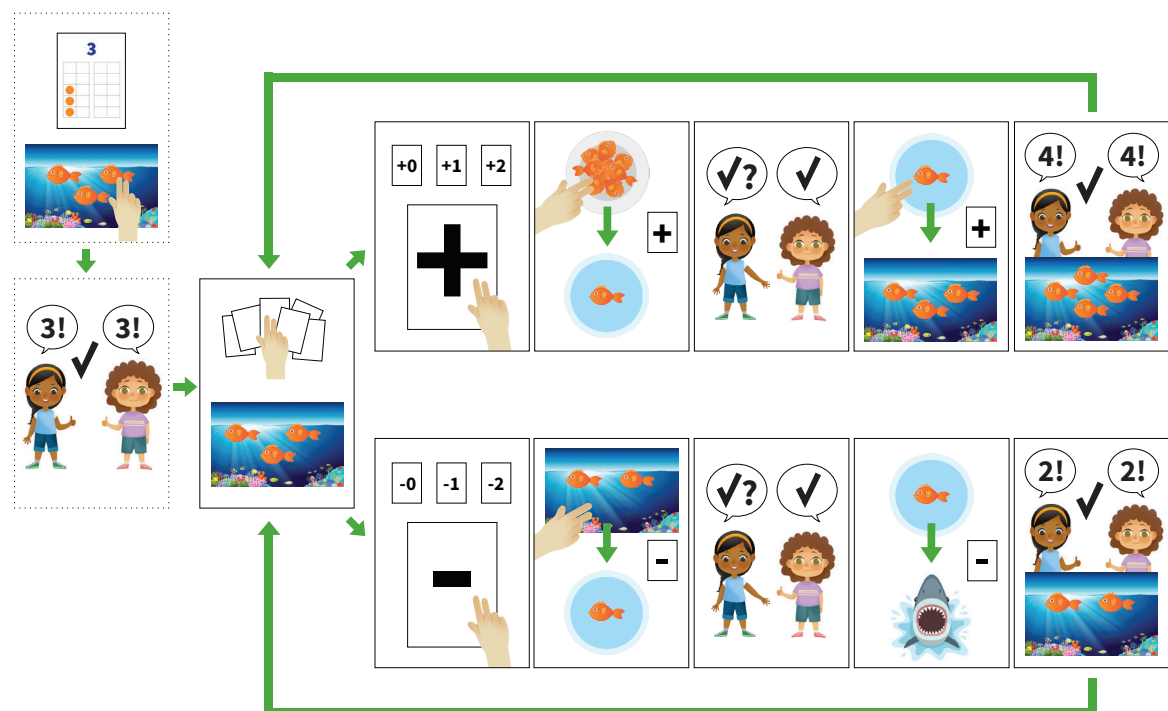
- Counting on from a number other than 1 (e.g., counting on from 3 to 5).
- Counting backward from any number (e.g., counting down from 6 to 4).
- Developing a beginning understanding of the connection between counting and addition/subtraction.

## Materials

- Ocean picture (1 for the teacher modeling the activity)
- Checking plate (to serve as the pond; 1 for the teacher modeling the activity)
- Small bowl (1 for the teacher modeling the activity)
- Fish counters (15 for the teacher modeling the activity)
- Shark box (instructions to make the box)
- Think-Pair-Share cards
- Counting cards (one set)
  - 0-10 numeral and dot
- Plus/Minus cards (one set; see Summary of Activity Adaptations for other counting card options)
- Number Path (one; see Summary of Activity Adaptations for other number path options)
  - 0-5, 0-10, or 0-20 path
- Step Icons

## How to Play the Activity

The activity steps icons below outline the steps of the activity. Print these icons as cards and share them to help children remember the steps. They're also a helpful scaffold for children!



# Big Fish Story

Visible Ocean

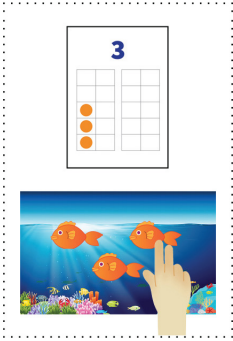
Hidden Ocean

Whole Group

Small Group

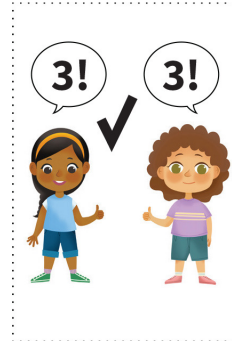
Center Time

## Setup



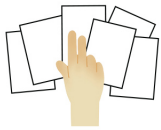
### Step 1

Teacher chooses a starting number of fish from the bowl and shows the corresponding Counting Card and places that many fish in their ocean.



### Step 2

Teacher asks child, "Am I right?"  
Child checks.

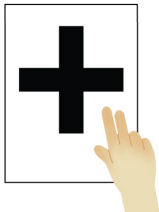
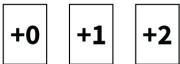


### Step 3

Plus/Minus cards are placed facedown and a child selects one card.

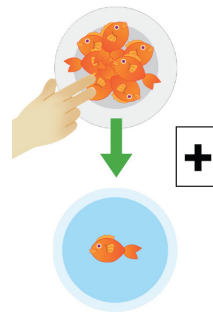


## Addition



### Step 1

Children state how many fish are to be added based on the Plus/Minus card selected (e.g., +1).



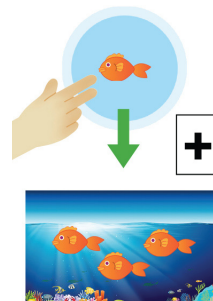
### Step 2

Teacher "jumps" that many fish from the bowl and into the checking pond (small plate).



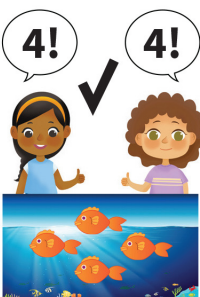
### Step 3

Teacher asks child, "Am I right?"  
Child checks.



### Step 4

Teacher "jumps" their fish from the checking pond into the ocean.



### Step 5

Children think-pair-share with a partner about how many fish are in the ocean now and how they know.

# Big Fish Story

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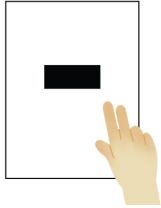
Whole Group

Small Group

Center Time

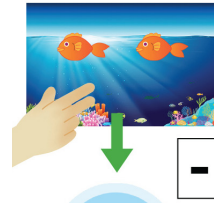
## Subtraction

-0   -1   -2



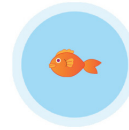
### Step 1

Children state how many fish are to be subtracted based on the Plus/Minus card selected (e.g., -1).



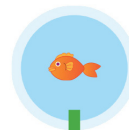
### Step 2

Teacher “jumps” that many fish from the ocean and into the checking pond.



### Step 3

Teacher asks child, “Am I right?” Child checks.



### Step 4

Teacher “jumps” their fish from the checking pond into the shark’s mouth.



### Step 5

Children think-pair-share with a partner about how many fish are in the ocean now and how they know.

## Teacher’s Guide

Instructions for introducing the activity to the **Whole Group**.

### Introduce the Activity

- ***We are going to pretend to be sharks that eat the little fish! Okay, let’s all pretend to be BIG sharks and swim in the water.***
- ***Here is our shark that we’ll use for this game!***
- Have children move their arms to pretend they’re swimming, or something similar.
- Show children the shark box.

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- **Now, these fish are so little they can't swim very far. So, when they want to go in the ocean or leave the ocean, they have to go into the pond first.**

- Have the ocean image visible to children. Put the fish into the small bowl; show the fish as you talk about them. The small plate serves as the "pond"; model moving one fish from the bowl to the "pond".

## Model the Activity

- **Let's try it!**

- **First, let's see how many fish are going to be in our ocean to start.**

- Point to the first step icon card.
- Show a counting card indicating the number of starting fish (3).
- **To make the math easier**, if children struggle starting the game with 3 fish, start with a smaller number.
- **To make the executive function (EF) easier**, use the Step Icon cards.
- **To make the math harder**, start the game with a larger number (>3) of fish.
- **To make the executive function (EF) harder**, omit the Step Icon cards.

- **Three! We'll put three fish in our ocean. Count with me. 1, 2, 3. 3!**

- Count as you put three fish onto the ocean board.
- **To make the executive function (EF) easier**, use a counting card to label the number of fish children have in their ocean to help them remember.

- **Am I right?**

- Point to the second step icon card.
- Point to each fish in the ocean while children count, "1, 2, 3... 3!"

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Center Time

- **Now, we pick a card to find out if more fish are going to swim into our ocean or be eaten by the shark!**

- Point to the third step icon card.
- Pick a Plus/Minus card from the stack. You can decide on an operation (addition or subtraction) and a number ahead of time based on children’s skills.
- Go to the addition steps or subtraction steps section depending on what card was picked.
- **To make the math and the executive function (EF) easier,** focus on addition only (include only addition cards).
- **To make the math and executive function (EF) harder,** focus on addition and subtraction (include both addition and subtracting cards).

## Addition Steps

- **Plus 2! That means two more fish swim into our ocean. But remember, these fish are so little they can’t swim very far. So they have to swim into the pond first.**

- Point to the fourth ADDITION step icon card.
  - Show the +2 Plus/Minus card.
  - **To make the math easier,** add only one fish at a time.
  - **To make the math harder,** add more fish, for example, 2, 3, or more fish.
- Introduce terms such as *sum* and *plus* and *minus*.

- **Two fish swam into our pond.**

- Point to the fifth ADDITION step icon card.
- Put two fish on the checking plate (“pond”).

- **Let’s count to make sure we have two. Count with me!**
- **Am I right?**

- Point to the sixth ADDITION step icon card.
- Point to each fish on the checking plate while children count, “1, 2... 2!”

- **Now our fish are going to jump into our ocean!**

- Point to the seventh ADDITION step icon card.
- Move the two fish from the plate to the ocean.

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Center Time

- **Now we figure out—How many fish are in our ocean now? Think-Pair-Share with your partner.**

- Point to the eighth ADDITION step icon card.
- Children Think-Pair-Share with a partner to determine how many fish are in the ocean now.
- **To make the executive function (EF) easier,** use the Think-Pair-Share cards.
- **To make the executive function (EF) harder,** omit the Think-Pair-Share cards.
- **To make the math and executive function (EF) harder,** have children articulate exactly what mathematics they performed—including what they started with, what they added, and the result.

- **We started with three fish, then two more swam into the ocean, so now we have five fish in our ocean!**

- Verbalize the starting number and the number added.
- **To make the math easier,** if the starting number gets too high for children after play has begun, simply remove all the fish and restart with zero.
- **To make the math and executive function (EF) easier,** use a number path (0-5, 0-10, or 0-20, depending on children). Mark the initial number with a chip. “Jump” your finger to visually demonstrate adding.  
  
Model counting (with fish, counters, or fingers), keeping the two parts separate (the starting set and the part added).
- **To make the math and executive function (EF) harder,** ask prompting questions throughout the activity (e.g., “You have 3 fish, but want 6. How many more do you need? Or how many more do you need to add?”).

## Subtraction Steps

- **Oh no! The shark is hungry! Let’s find out how many fish it’s going to eat...**

- Point to the third step icon card.
- Select one card from the Plus/Minus cards.
- REMEMBER... if children are not yet ready for subtraction, stick with addition only.

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Center Time

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>He gets to eat one fish! Show me your shark mouths!</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Point to the fourth SUBTRACTION step icon card.</li> <li>■ Flip over the -1 Plus/Minus card. You can decide on the number ahead of time based on children’s counting skills.</li> <li>■ Have children move their arms to pretend they’re sharks.</li> </ul> <p>NOTE: If the number being subtracted is too large for the number of fish left in the ocean, choose another plus/minus card, saying something such, “Oh, no! Our card says the shark is going to eat three fish, but we only have two fish left. We don’t have that many fish in our ocean. Let’s pick another card.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>To make the math easier</b>, subtract only one fish at a time.</li> <li>■ <b>To make the math harder</b>, subtract more fish, for example, 2, 3, or more fish.</li> </ul> <p>Introduce terms such as <i>minus</i> and <i>difference</i>.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Let’s take one fish from the ocean and put it in the pond.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Point to the fifth SUBTRACTION step icon card.</li> <li>■ Move one fish from the ocean to the checking plate.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Let’s make sure we have only one.</b></li> <li>■ <b>Am I right?</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Point to the sixth SUBTRACTION step icon card.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Watch! One fish jumps into the shark’s mouth! Count with me. 1...1. The shark is so happy!</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Point to the seventh SUBTRACTION step icon card.</li> <li>■ Move the fish from the checking plate to the shark’s mouth. Encourage children to count with you.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Now we figure out—How many fish are in our ocean now? Think-Pair-Share with your partner.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Point to the eighth SUBTRACTION step icon card.</li> <li>■ Children Think-Pair-Share with a partner to determine how many fish are in the ocean now.</li> <li>■ <b>To make the math and executive function (EF) harder</b>, have children articulate exactly what mathematics they performed—including what they started with, what they subtracted, and the result.</li> </ul>

# Big Fish Story

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Hidden Ocean

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Center Time

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b><i>We had five fish, then the hungry shark ate one. Now, we have four fish in our ocean!</i></b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Verbalize the starting number and the number subtracted.</li> <li>■ <b>To make the math and executive function (EF) easier</b>, use a number path (0-5, 0-10, or 0-20, depending on children). Mark the initial number with a chip. “Jump” your finger to visually demonstrate subtracting.  Model counting (with fish, counters, or fingers), keeping the two parts separate (the starting set and the part removed).</li> <li>■ <b>To make the math harder</b>, ask prompting questions throughout the activity (e.g., “You have 4 fish, but want 2. How many more do you need to take away (or subtract)?”</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b><i>Let’s play some more!</i></b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Keep playing, adding and subtracting fish as time allows.</li> </ul>

## Summary of Activity Adaptations

This is a summary of all the available adaptations to make Cookie Game easier or harder to accommodate the needs of your students. Whether the adaptation is easier or harder depends on each student’s math or executive function (EF) skills.

	Make It Easier	Make It Harder
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ If children struggle starting the game with 3 fish, start with a smaller number.</li> <li>■ Add only one fish at a time.</li> <li>■ If the starting number gets too high for children after play has begun, simply remove all the fish and restart with zero.</li> <li>■ Subtract only one fish at a time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Start the game with a larger number (&gt;3) of fish.</li> <li>■ Add more fish, for example, 2, 3, or more fish.</li> <li>■ Subtract more fish, for example, 2, 3, or more fish.</li> </ul>
EF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use the Step Icon cards.</li> <li>■ Use a counting card to label the number of fish children have in their ocean to help them remember.</li> <li>■ Use the Think-Pair-Share cards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Omit the Step Icon cards.</li> <li>■ Omit the Think-Pair-Share cards.</li> </ul>



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Center Time

	Make It Easier	Make It Harder
Math & EF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Focus on addition only (include only addition cards).</li><li>Use a number path (0-5, 0-10, or 0-20, depending on children). Mark the initial number with a chip. “Jump” your finger to visually demonstrate adding.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Focus on addition <i>and</i> subtraction (include both addition and subtracting cards).</li><li>Have children articulate exactly what mathematics they performed—including what they started with, what they added, and the result.</li><li>Ask prompting questions throughout the activity (e.g., “You have 3 fish, but want 6. How many more do you need? Or how many more do you need to add?”).</li><li>Have children articulate exactly what mathematics they performed—including what they started with, what they subtracted, and the result.</li><li>Ask prompting questions throughout the activity (e.g., “You have 4 fish, but want 2. How many more do you need to take away (or subtract)?”)</li></ul>

## Explore The Executive Function And Math Skills In This Activity

Visit the website for resources to support teaching this activity.

## What to Do Next

On a future day, do the activity in **Small Group**.

Are some students ready for more challenge? Try the adaptations provided above. Want even more challenge? For children who are able to count forward or back from a number other than one without support and demonstrate a knowledge of number combinations to five or more, introduce the **Hidden Ocean** version.

# Big Fish Story

Visible Ocean

Hidden Ocean

Whole Group

Small Group

Center Time

Provide each child with fish counters, a picture of the ocean, and a small pond (plate). Children take turns drawing a number card to determine how many fish to bring into the ocean (addition) or how many will be eaten by the shark (subtraction). After drawing a card, children move the fish to their checking plate, then their partner checks to make sure they moved the correct number. Both children then move the fish from their checking plate to the ocean or shark. Children figure out how many fish are in their oceans now. The other child draws a card and play continues.

## Primary Objectives

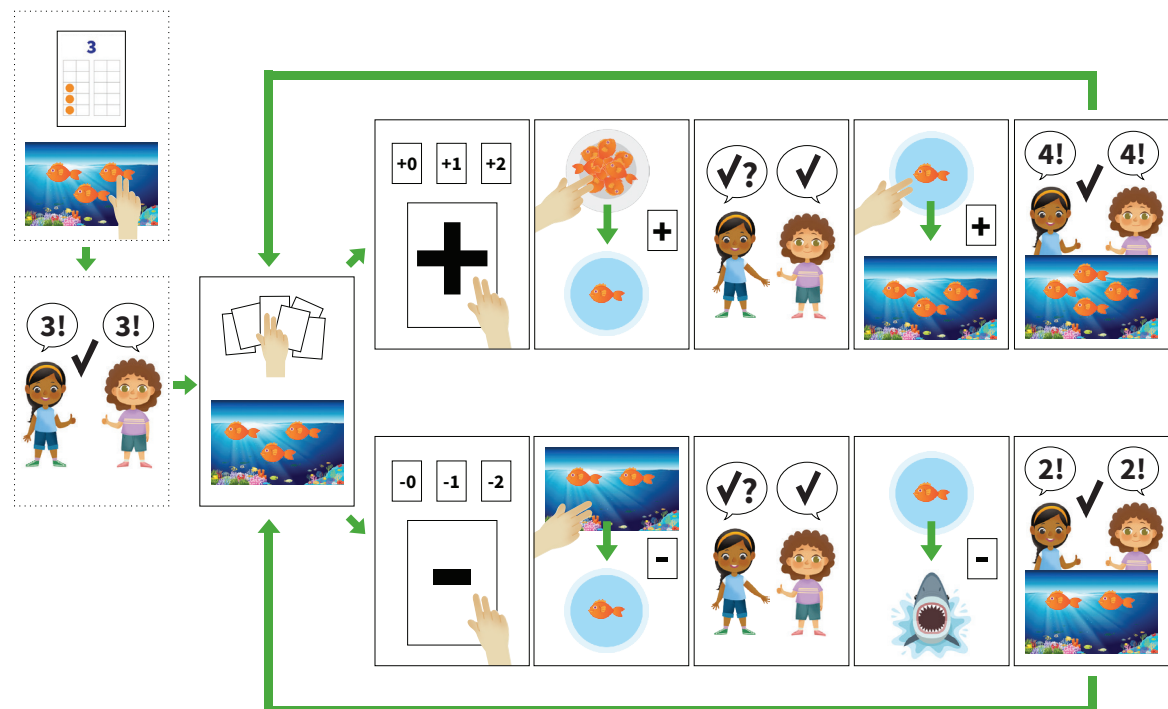
- Counting on from a number other than 1 (e.g., counting on from 3 to 5).
- Counting backward from any number (e.g., counting down from 6 to 4).
- Developing a beginning understanding of the connection between counting and addition/subtraction.

## Materials

- Ocean picture (1 for each child)
- Checking plate ("pond"; 1 for each child)
- Small bowl (1 for each child)
- Fish counters (~10 for each child)
- Shark box (instructions to make the box)
- Think-Pair-Share cards
- Counting cards (one set; see Summary of Activity Adaptations for other counting card options)
  - 0-10 numeral and dot
- Plus/Minus cards (one set)
- Number Path (one; see Summary of Activity Adaptations for other number path options)
  - 0-5, 0-10, or 0-20 path
- Step Icons

## How to Play the Activity

For small groups, we suggest four children arranged in pairs of two with a teacher present to provide guidance. The activity steps icons below outline the steps of the activity. Print these icons as cards and share them to help children remember the steps. They're also a helpful scaffold for children!



# Big Fish Story

Visible Ocean

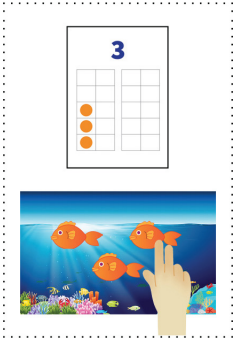
Hidden Ocean

Whole Group

Small Group

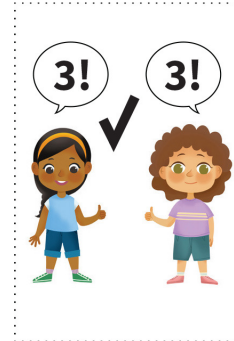
Center Time

## Setup



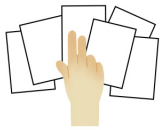
### Step 1

Teacher chooses a starting number of fish and shows the corresponding Counting Card and all children place that many fish in their oceans.



### Step 2

Children ask their partners, "Am I right?" Children check one another.

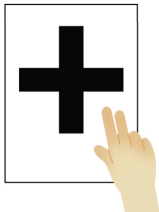


### Step 3

Plus/Minus cards are placed facedown and a child selects one card (choose different children to select a card for each round). All children add/subtract the same number of fish based on the plus/minus card drawn.

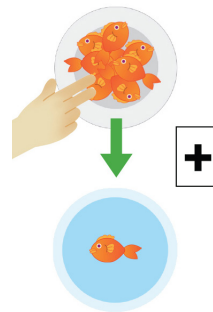


## Addition



### Step 1

Children state how many fish are to be added or subtracted based on the Plus/Minus card selected (e.g., +1).



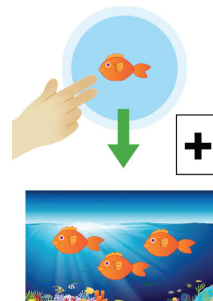
### Step 2

Children "jump" that many fish from their bowl and into their checking pond (small plate).



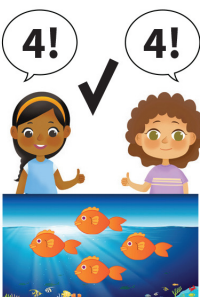
### Step 3

Children ask their partners, "Am I right?" Children check one another.



### Step 4

Children "jump" their fish from their checking pond into their ocean.



### Step 5

Children think-pair-share with their partner about how many fish are in the ocean now and how they know.

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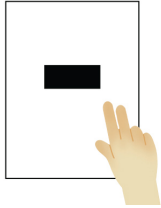
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Center Time

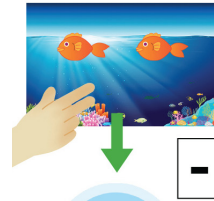
## Subtraction

-0   -1   -2



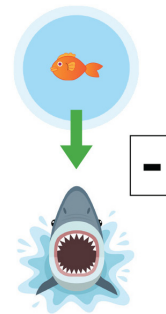
### Step 1

Children state how many fish are to be added or subtracted based on the Plus/Minus card selected (e.g., +1).



### Step 2

Children “jump” that many fish from their ocean and into their checking pond.



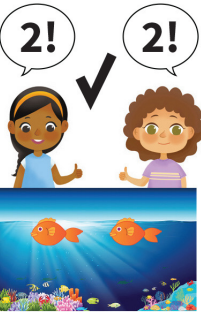
### Step 4

Children “jump” their fish from the checking pond into the shark’s mouth.



### Step 3

Children ask their partners, “Am I right?” Children check one another.



### Step 5

Children think-pair-share with their partner about how many fish are in the ocean now and how they know.

## Teacher’s Guide

Instructions for introducing the activity to the **Small Group**.

### Introduce the Activity

- ***We are going to pretend to be sharks that eat the little fish! Okay, let’s all pretend to be BIG sharks and swim in the water.***
- ***Here is our shark that we’ll use for this game!***
- Have children move their arms to pretend they’re swimming, or something similar.
- Show children the shark box.

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- **Remember, these fish are so little they can't swim very far. So, when they want to go in the ocean or leave the ocean, they have to go into the pond first.**

- Provide each child with a bowl with approximately 10 fish, 1 small plate ("pond"), and 1 ocean board. Have one shark box in the middle of the table for all children to share.

## Model the Activity

- **Let's give it a try with your own oceans! How many fish are in your oceans now?**

- Allow children to say out loud or echo back, "zero". Correct children as needed.

- **First, let's see how many fish are going to be in our ocean to start.**

- Point to the first step icon card.
- Show a counting card indicating the number of starting fish (3).
- **To make the math easier**, if children struggle starting the game with three fish, start with a smaller number.
- **To make the executive function (EF) easier**, use the Step Icon cards.
- **To make the math harder**, start the game with a larger number (>3) of fish.
- **To make the executive function (EF) harder**, omit the Step Icon cards.

- **Three! Everyone put three fish into your oceans.**

- Have all children place 3 fish in their oceans. Check to make sure all children have the correct number before continuing.
- **To make the executive function (EF) easier**, use a counting card to label the number of fish children have in their ocean to help them remember.

- **Now, everyone ask your partner, "Am I right?" Partners, you check to make sure your friend has the right number of fish in their ocean.**

- Point to the second step icon card.
- Encourage children to check each other, correcting as necessary.

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Center Time

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many fish are in your oceans now?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage children to respond.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remember, you are big sharks and we are going to use these cards to help us find out if more fish are going to swim into the ocean or into the shark's belly!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point to the third and fourth ADDITION and SUBTRACTION step icon cards as you mention fish going into the ocean or being eaten by the shark, respectively.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>But remember, these fish are so little they can't swim very far. So they have to swim into the pond first, then our partner helps us check to make sure we have the right number.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point to the fifth and sixth ADDITION &amp; SUBTRACTION step icon cards as you describe each step.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Then, we'll put the fish into the pond and then into the ocean or the shark.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point to the seventh ADDITION &amp; SUBTRACTION step icon cards as you describe this step.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Then, we'll check to figure out how many fish we have left in our oceans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point to the eighth ADDITION &amp; SUBTRACTION step icon cards as you describe this step.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finally, we'll pick another card and start again.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point to the third step icon cards as you describe this step.</li> </ul>
<h2>Time to Play!</h2>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Okay, everyone has three fish in your oceans. Let's pick a card to figure out how many fish we'll put into your oceans or feed to the shark!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point to the fourth step icon card.</li> <li>Pick a Plus/Minus card.</li> <li>Go to the addition steps or subtraction steps depending on which card was picked.</li> <li><b>To make the math and executive function (EF) easier,</b> focus on addition only (include only addition cards).</li> <li><b>To make the math and executive function (EF) harder,</b> focus on addition <i>and</i> subtraction (include both addition and subtracting cards).</li> </ul>

# Big Fish Story

Visible Ocean

Hidden Ocean

Whole Group

Small Group

Center Time

## Addition Steps

- **Plus 1! That means one more fish is going to swim into your ocean. But remember, these fish are so little they can't swim very far. So they have to swim into the pond first.**
- **Everyone put one fish in your pond.**

- Point to the fifth ADDITION step icon card.
- Show the +1 Plus/Minus card.
- **To make the math easier**, add only one fish at a time.
- **To make the math harder**, add more (for example, two, three, or more) fish.  
Or introduce terms such as *sum* and *plus*.

- **Now, everyone ask your partner, "Am I right?" Partners, you check to make sure your friend has the right number of fish in their pond.**

- Point to the sixth ADDITION step icon card.
- Encourage children to check each other, correcting as necessary.

- **Now your fish are going to jump into your oceans!**

- Point to the seventh ADDITION step icon card.
- Have children move the fish from their plates to their oceans.

- **How many fish are in your ocean now? How do you know?**

- Point to the eighth ADDITION step icon card.
- Children Think-Pair-Share with a partner to determine how many fish are in their oceans now.
- **To make the executive function (EF) easier**, use the Think-Pair-Share cards.
- **To make the math harder**, have children articulate exactly what mathematics they performed—including what they started with, what they added, and the result.
- **To make the executive function (EF) harder**, omit the Think-Pair-Share cards.

# Big Fish Story

Visible Ocean

Hidden Ocean

Whole Group

Small Group

Center Time

- **You started with three fish, then one more swam into your ocean, so now you have four fish in our oceans!**

- Verbalize the starting number and the number added.
- **To make the math easier**, if the starting number gets too high for children after play has begun, simply remove all of the fish to restart with 0.
- **To make the math and executive function (EF) easier**, use a number path (0-5, 0-10, or 0-20 depending on children). Mark the initial number with a chip. “Jump” your finger to visually demonstrate adding.  
  
Model counting (with fish, counters, or fingers), keeping the two parts separate (the starting set and the part added).
- **To make the math and executive function (EF) harder**, ask prompting questions throughout the activity (e.g., “You have 3 fish, but want 6. How many more do you need? Or how many more do you need to add?”).

## Subtraction Steps

- **The big sharks are so happy to have four small fish. They’re so hungry! Let’s find out how many fish it’s going to eat...**

- Point to the third step icon card.
- Select one card from the Plus/Minus cards.
- REMEMBER... if children are not yet ready for subtraction, stick with addition only.

- **Minus two! That means we take away two fish from the ocean to feed to the shark!**

- Point to the fourth SUBTRACTION step icon card.
- Flip over the -2 Plus/Minus card.
- NOTE: If the number being subtracted is too large for the number of fish left in the ocean, choose another plus/minus card, saying something such, “Oh, no! Our card says the shark is going to eat three fish, but we only have two fish left. We don’t have that many fish in our ocean. Let’s pick another card.”



# Big Fish Story

Visible Ocean

Hidden Ocean

Whole Group

Small Group

Center Time

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ <b>Let's take two fish from your oceans and put it into your ponds.</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Point to the fifth SUBTRACTION step icon card.</li><li>■ Have children move two fish from their oceans to their checking plates.</li><li>■ <b>To make the math easier</b>, subtract only one fish at a time.</li><li>■ <b>To make the math harder</b>, subtract more fish, for example, 2, 3, or more fish.  Or introduce terms such as <i>minus</i> and <i>difference</i>.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ <b>Let's make sure everyone has two. Ask your partner, "Am I right?"</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Point to the sixth SUBTRACTION step icon card.</li><li>■ Encourage children to check each other, correcting as necessary.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ <b>Now, everyone feed the shark two fish from your ponds!</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Point to the seventh SUBTRACTION step icon card.</li><li>■ Have children move the fish from their checking plates to the shark's mouth.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ <b>How many fish are in your ocean now? How do you know?</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Point to the eighth SUBTRACTION step icon card.</li><li>■ Children Think-Pair-Share with a partner to determine how many fish are in the ocean now.</li><li>■ <b>To make the math harder</b>, have children articulate exactly what mathematics they performed—including what they started with, what they subtracted, and the result.</li></ul>

# Big Fish Story

Visible Ocean

Hidden Ocean

Whole Group

Small Group

Center Time

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b><i>You had four fish, then the hungry shark ate two. Now, you each have two fish in our ocean!</i></b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Verbalize the starting number and the number subtracted.</li> <li>■ <b>To make the math and executive function (EF) easier</b>, use a number path (0-5, 0-10, or 0-20, depending on children). Mark the initial number with a chip. “Jump” your finger to visually demonstrate subtracting.  Model counting (with fish, counters, or fingers), keeping the two parts separate (the starting set and the part removed).</li> <li>■ <b>To make the math and executive function (EF) harder</b>, ask prompting questions throughout the activity (for example, “You have four fish but want two. How many more do you need to take away [or subtract]?”).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b><i>Let’s play some more!</i></b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Keep playing, adding and subtracting fish as time allows.</li> </ul>

## Summary of Activity Adaptations

This is a summary of all the available adaptations to make Cookie Game easier or harder to accommodate the needs of your students. Whether the adaptation is easier or harder depends on each student’s math or executive function (EF) skills.

	Make It Easier	Make It Harder
<p><b>Math</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ If children struggle starting the game with three fish, start with a smaller number.</li> <li>■ Add only one fish at a time.</li> <li>■ Have children articulate exactly what mathematics they performed—including what they started with, what they added, and the result.</li> <li>■ If the starting number gets too high for children after play has begun, simply remove all of the fish to restart with 0.</li> <li>■ Subtract only one fish at a time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Start the game with a larger number (&gt;3) of fish.</li> <li>■ Add more (for example, two, three, or more) fish.</li> <li>■ Subtract more fish, for example, 2, 3, or more fish.  Or introduce terms such as minus and difference.</li> <li>■ Have children articulate exactly what mathematics they performed—including what they started with, what they subtracted, and the result.</li> </ul>

# Big Fish Story

Visible Ocean

Hidden Ocean

Whole Group

Small Group

Center Time

	Make It Easier	Make It Harder
EF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the Step Icon cards.</li> <li>Use a counting card to label the number of fish children have in their ocean to help them remember.</li> <li>Use the Think-Pair-Share cards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Omit the Step Icon cards.</li> <li>Omit the Think-Pair-Share cards.</li> </ul>
Math & EF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on addition only (include only addition cards).</li> <li>Use a number path (0-5, 0-10, or 0-20 depending on children). Mark the initial number with a chip. “Jump” your finger to visually demonstrate adding.</li> </ul> <p>Model counting (with fish, counters, or fingers), keeping the two parts separate (the starting set and the part added).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on addition <i>and</i> subtraction (include both addition <i>and</i> subtracting cards).</li> <li>Ask prompting questions throughout the activity (e.g., “You have 3 fish, but want 6. How many more do you need? Or how many more do you need to add?”).</li> <li>Ask prompting questions throughout the activity (for example, “You have four fish but want two. How many more do you need to take away [or subtract]?”).</li> </ul>

## Explore The Executive Function And Math Skills In This Activity

Visit the website for resources to support teaching this activity.

### What to Do Next

Do some students need more support or more challenge? Try the adaptations provided above for Small Group. Continue working in small groups with teacher support until students can comfortably play with minimal teacher guidance. Then have students practice the activity independently in **Center**. For children who are able to count forward or back from a number other than one without support and demonstrate a knowledge of number combinations to five or more, introduce the **Hidden Ocean** version.

# Big Fish Story

Visible Ocean

Hidden Ocean

Whole Group

Small Group

Center Time

Provide each child with fish counters, a picture of the ocean, and a small pond (plate). Children take turns drawing a number card to determine how many fish to bring into the ocean (addition) or how many will be eaten by the shark (subtraction). After drawing a card, children move the fish to their checking plate, then their partner checks to make sure they moved the correct number. Both children then move the fish from their checking plate to the ocean or shark. Children figure out how many fish are in their oceans now. The other child draws a card and play continues.

## Primary Objectives

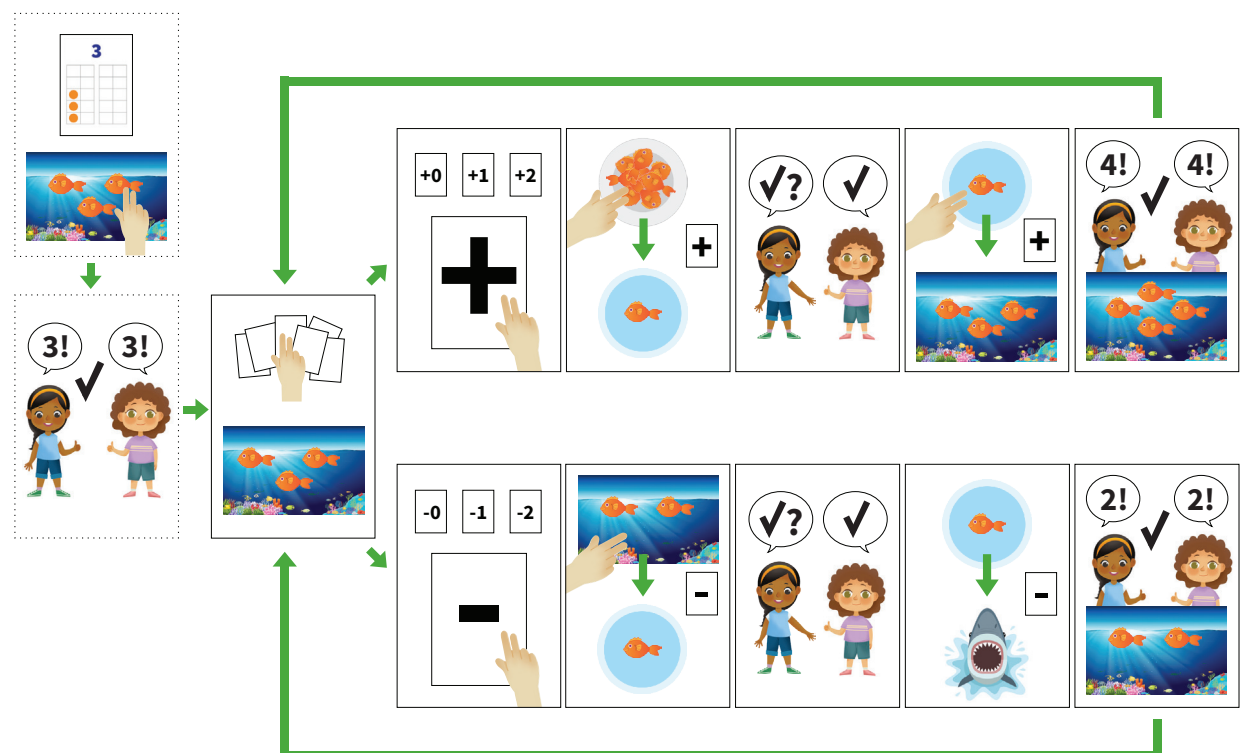
- Counting on from a number other than 1 (e.g., counting on from 3 to 5).
- Counting backward from any number (e.g., counting down from 6 to 4).
- Developing a beginning understanding of the connection between counting and addition/subtraction.

## Materials

- Ocean picture (1 for each child)
- Checking plate ("pond"; 1 for each child)
- Small bowl (1 for each child)
- Fish counters (~10 for each child)
- Shark box (instructions to make the box)
- Counting cards (1 set)
  - 0-10 numeral and dot
- Plus/Minus cards (1 set)
- Number Path (1; see Summary of Activity Adaptations for other number path options)
  - 0-5, 0-10, or 0-20 path
- Step Icons

## How to Play the Activity

The activity steps icons below outline the steps of the activity. Print these icons as cards and share them to help children remember the steps. They're also a helpful scaffold for children!



# Big Fish Story

Visible Ocean

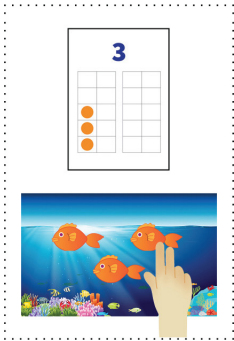
Hidden Ocean

Whole Group

Small Group

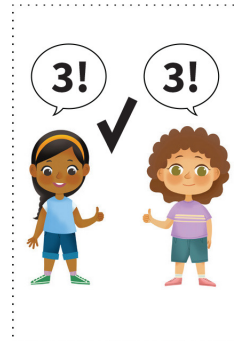
Center Time

## Setup



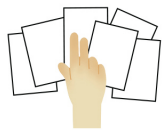
### Step 1

Children choose a counting card that determines the starting number of fish and all children place that many fish in their oceans.



### Step 2

Children ask their partners, "Am I right?" Children check.

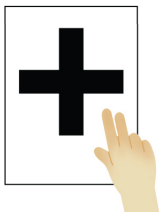
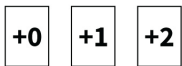


### Step 3

Plus/Minus cards are placed facedown and a child selects one card.

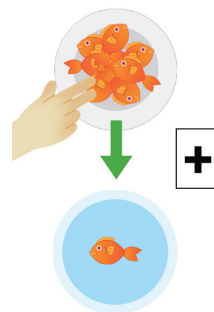


## Addition



### Step 1

Children state how many fish are to be added or subtracted based on the Plus/Minus card selected (e.g., +1).



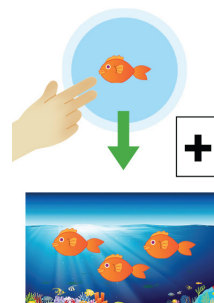
### Step 2

Children "jump" that many fish from their bowl and into their checking pond (small plate).



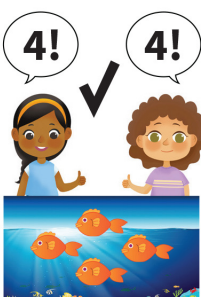
### Step 3

Children ask their partners, "Am I right?" Children check.



### Step 4

Children "jump" their fish from their checking pond into their ocean.



### Step 5

Children state/discuss how many fish are in the ocean now and how they know.

# Big Fish Story

Visible Ocean

Hidden Ocean

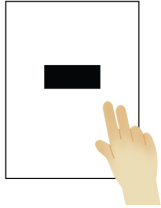
Whole Group

Small Group

Center Time

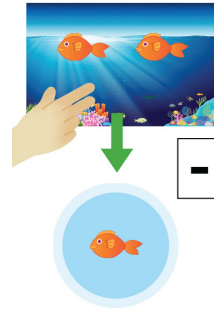
## Subtraction

-0   -1   -2



### Step 1

Children state how many fish are to be added or subtracted based on the Plus/Minus card selected (e.g., +1).



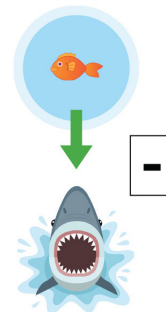
### Step 2

Children state/discuss how many fish are in the ocean now and how they know.



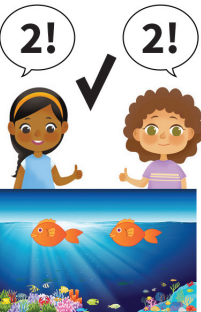
### Step 3

Children ask their partners, "Am I right?" Children check.



### Step 4

Children "jump" their fish from the checking pond into the shark's mouth.



### Step 5

Children state/discuss how many fish are in the ocean now and how they know.

# Big Fish Story

Visible Ocean

Hidden Ocean

Whole Group

Small Group

Center Time

## Introduce the Activity

■ **Today, the Big Fish Story game we've been playing together will be at [name] Center!**

- Tell students that the activity will be in Centers to play on their own. We recommend playing the activity in Small Groups at least once before introducing it in Centers.
- **To make the math easier**, start with a smaller number of fish – that is, only include counting cards with smaller numbers (e.g., 1 or 2).  
Include only +/- 1 cards so children add or subtract only one fish at a time.
- **To make the math and executive function (EF) easier**, focus on addition only (include only addition cards).
- **To make the math harder**, start with a larger number of fish – that is, include counting cards with larger numbers (e.g., 3 or more).  
Include only +/- cards with larger numbers (for example, +/- 2 or +/- 3).
- **To make the math and executive function (EF) harder**, focus on addition *and* subtraction (include both addition and subtraction cards).

■ **You will have picture cards to help you remember how to play.**

- Display the activity step icons.

## Time to Play!

■ **Let's remind ourselves how to play the game!**

- Review the steps of the activity while referencing the Step Icons.
- When reviewing the Step Icons, tell children that *they* will be choosing the counting card in Step #3 instead of the teacher (as it was done in whole group and small group previously).
- **To make the executive function (EF) easier**, use the Step Icons.
- **To make the executive function (EF) harder**, omit the Step Icons.

# Big Fish Story

Visible Ocean

Hidden Ocean

Whole Group

Small Group

Center Time

## Summary of Activity Adaptations

This is a summary of all the available adaptations to make Cookie Game easier or harder to accommodate the needs of your students. Whether the adaptation is easier or harder depends on each student's math or executive function (EF) skills.

	Make It Easier	Make It Harder
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Start with a smaller number of fish – that is, only include counting cards with smaller numbers (e.g., 1 or 2).</li></ul> <p>Include only +/- 1 cards so children add or subtract only one fish at a time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Start with a larger number of fish – that is, include counting cards with larger numbers (e.g., 3 or more).</li></ul> <p>Include only +/- cards with larger numbers (for example, +/- 2 or +/- 3).</p>
EF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Use the Step Icons.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Omit the Step Icons.</li></ul>
Math & EF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Focus on addition only (include only addition cards).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Focus on addition <i>and</i> subtraction (include both addition and subtraction cards).</li></ul>

## Explore The Executive Function And Math Skills In This Activity

Visit the website for resources to support teaching this activity.

## What to Do Next

Keep playing this activity in Centers throughout the year. Students who played the **Visible Ocean** version may switch to the **Hidden Ocean** version once they've been introduced to it in Small Group and can comfortably count forward or back from a number other than one without support and demonstrate a knowledge of number combinations to five or more. Do some students need more support or more challenge? Try the adaptations provided above for Centers.