



Back to school means new beginnings, fresh school supplies, and a whole year of learning

ahead! This August, we're kicking things off with a special time capsule!

In these activities, you'll capture who you are right now, including your favorite things and your dreams for the year ahead. You'll get to set goals, practice some calming techniques, and create a time capsule to open again at the end of the school year. Get ready to look back and see how much you've grown!

This packet includes...

- "Time Capsules" Reading Activity
- "Create Your Own Time Capsule" Activity
- "Pieces of Me" Activity
- "Letter to My Future Self" Writing Activity
- "Self-Portrait" Creative Activity
- "Solve a Back-to-School Joke" Activity
- "Build Your Calm Kit" Creative Activity
- "Motto Paper Chain" Activity
- "Back-to-School Word Find" Activity
- "Math About Me" Activity

Explore More

Keep the time capsule fun going with these activities that help you connect with the people and memories that make you, *you*!



Start a family time capsule by gathering photos, notes, and small keepsakes with a family member. Pick a date to open the time capsule together and see how things have changed.



Interview a trusted adult, like a parent, grandparent, or neighbor, about what they were like at your age. Ask about their favorite things and what they wanted to be when they grew up, then compare their answers to yours!



Take a trip down memory lane by looking through old photos or asking a family member about your favorite things as a baby or toddler. See how much your favorites have changed since then!



Directions: Read about time capsules, then design and fill your own using the template and planning table on the following pages!

Time Capsule Basics

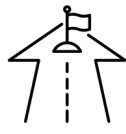


What Is a Time Capsule?

A time capsule is a container you fill with special things.

Then you seal it up and save it.

Someone opens it later — maybe in five or 10 years!



Why Make One?

People have made time capsules for a long time. They help us look back and see how much things have changed. Making your own is a fun way to see how much you grow in just one year!

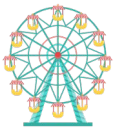
Spotlight: America's Time Capsule



"NIST-A250-Time-Capsule-003," National Institute of Standards and Technology, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NIST-A250-Time-Capsule-003.jpg>

On July 4, 2026, an organization called America250 sealed a brand new time capsule on America's 250th birthday. It celebrates 250 years since America signed the Declaration of Independence. The capsule is a special metal tube, built by scientists to keep everything safe and dry underground for 250 years. Inside are letters and items from government leaders, people from every state, and everyday Americans. It also has art and letters from students. Everything inside shows what life is like in America today. The capsule is buried in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It won't be opened again until the year 2276, when America turns 500 years old!

Fun Facts About Time Capsules!



People first used the words "time capsule" at the 1939 New York World's Fair. Inside it, they placed everyday items, like a spool of thread, a doll, and even a letter written by the scientist Albert Einstein.



Not every time capsule stays on Earth! NASA sent golden records, or disks, into space on two spacecraft with sounds and pictures of life on Earth, in case someone finds them.



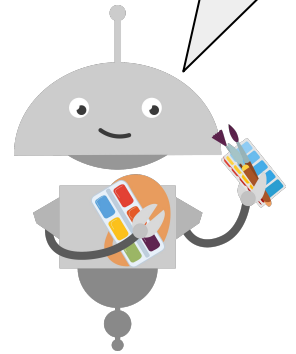
In 1940, Oglethorpe University built a huge time capsule inside an old swimming pool! It's the biggest time capsule ever made, and it won't open until the year 8113.



Directions:

1. Choose a container you can seal shut, like a can, jar, or shoebox.
2. Color your template on the next page.
3. Choose a date one year in the future to open your capsule and write it on the middle seal of the template.
4. Cut out your template, then glue or tape it onto your capsule. You might wrap it around the capsule or put it on the lid.
5. Use the planning table below to decide what you want to include, then collect those items. No food — it can spoil!
6. Put your items inside.
7. Close it up! Put it somewhere safe.

Check with a trusted adult to make sure your items are OK to use!



Planning Table:

Draw or write one thing for each box!

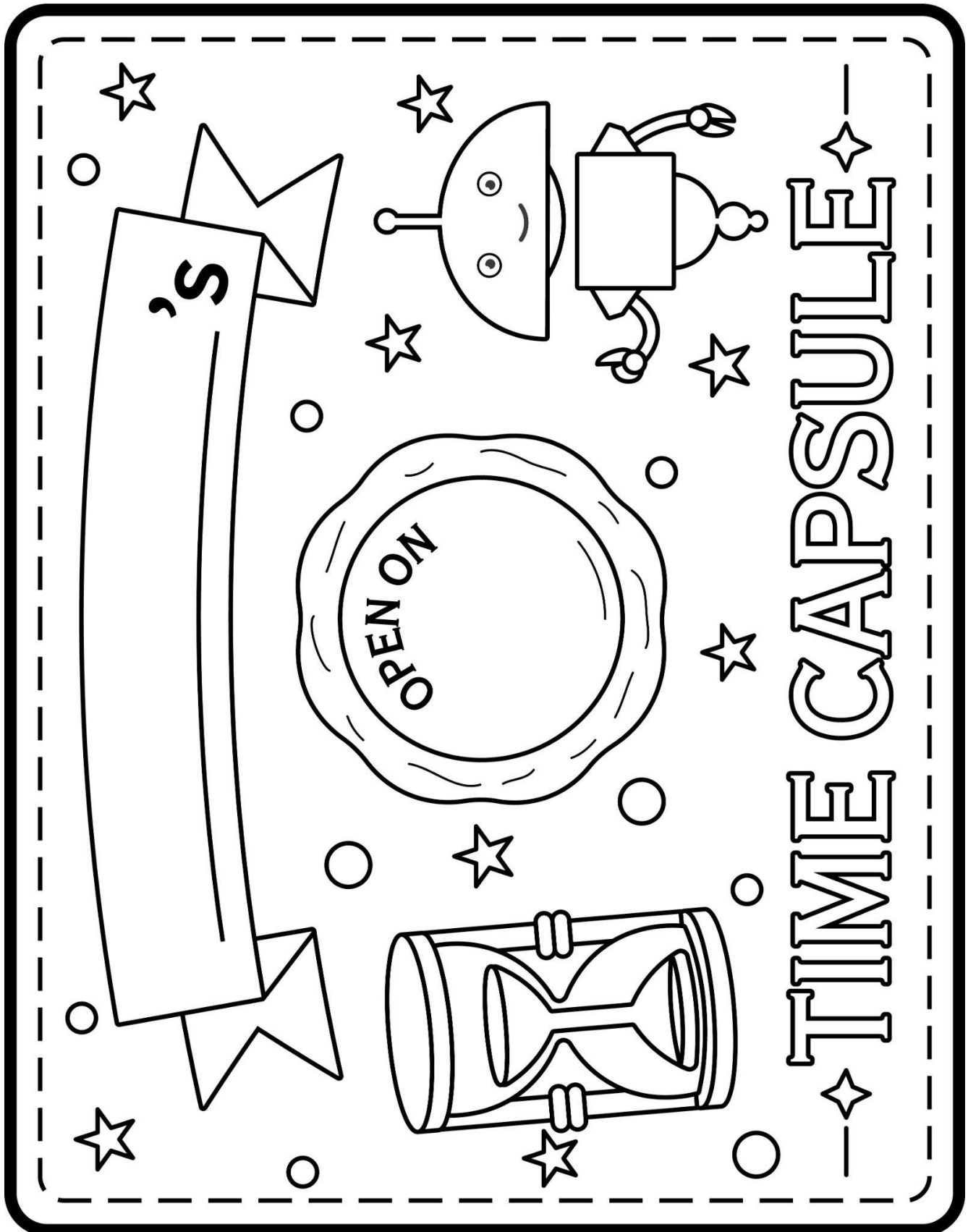
What Will You Include?

Something you're proud of
Example: A trophy or a drawing

Something about your family
Example: A family photo or a written recipe

Something you love right now
Example: A toy or a book

A note to your future self
Example: A wish, or "I hope you..."





Directions: Our favorites can tell a story about who we are, what makes us happy, and what we enjoy right now. This puzzle is made up of the pieces of **you**! Take your time and fill in each puzzle piece. You can draw, write, or do both!

Pieces of Me

 My Favorite Snack	My Favorite Game 
 My Favorite Color	My Favorite Animal 
 My Favorite Place	My Favorite Person 



Continue to page 7



Directions: Our favorites can tell a story about who we are, what makes us happy, and what we enjoy right now. This puzzle is made up of the pieces of **you**! Take your time and fill in each puzzle piece. You can draw, write, or do both!

Pieces of Me

1. My Favorite Snack	2. My Favorite Season	3. My Favorite Song
4. My Favorite Color	5. My Favorite Game 	6. My Favorite Animal
	8. My Favorite Place	
7. My Favorite Memory		9. My Favorite Person

You are amazing just the way you are. Keep being you!

Continue to next page



More About
Me

Directions: Everyone is unique! Think about what makes you, *you*. Write, draw, or circle your answers to share more about yourself.

Three Words That Describe Me



A Goal I'm Working Toward



Something New I Want To Try



Something I'm Proud Of



Would You Rather...?

Circle your choice.



Mountains	or	Beach
Dogs	or	Cats
Pizza	or	Tacos
Book	or	Movie
Summer	or	Winter
Sweet	or	Salty
City	or	Nature



Writing Activity

Letter to My Future Self

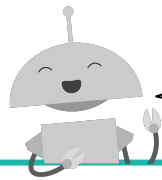
Back to School 2026
K-5 Activities

In this activity, you'll write a letter to your future self.

Save and come back to this letter at the end of the school year or when you open your time capsule.

Directions:

1. Read the letter below that Mia wrote to Mia's future self for inspiration.
2. Prepare your letter.
 - ☐ On the template on the next page, fill in the blanks by writing, drawing, or using another way that works best for you.
 - ☐ Fold your letter and seal it. You might use tape or an envelope.
 - ☐ Save it in a safe place, or add it to your time capsule.
 - ☐ Ask your trusted adult to set a reminder to read it on the last day of school or when you open your time capsule.
3. When you read it later, think about how much you've changed and how well you met your goal.



Ask a trusted adult if you'd like help reading.

Dear Future Me,

This school year, I am excited about meeting new friends.

I have a goal to read 10 chapter books.

This goal matters to me because I want to become a stronger reader.

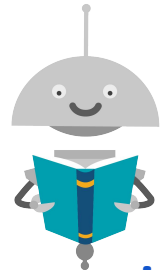
I'm going to work toward this goal by (What will you do? How often?) reading every school day for 20 minutes.

If I need help, I can ask Justin or Caroline.

I think that by the end of the year, I will be able to read hard books.

Love,

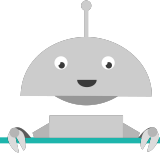
Me





Writing Activity Letter to My Future Self

Back to School 2026
K-5 Activities



Dear Future Me,

This school year, I am excited about _____

_____.

I have a goal to _____

_____.

This goal matters to me because _____

_____.

I'm going to work toward this goal by (What will you do? How often?) _____

_____.

If I need help, I can ask _____.

I think that by the end of the year, I will _____

_____.

Love,

Me



Directions: A self-portrait is when you draw a picture of yourself! Use the space below to draw a self-portrait that represents the characteristics that make you special. Fill in the prompts to highlight things you like and are good at!

A large rectangular frame with a thick black border. Inside the frame, at the bottom center, is a simple line drawing of a person's head and shoulders. The head is a large circle with two small circles for ears. The shoulders are represented by two curved lines. Above the head, there are three speech bubbles. The left speech bubble contains the text "I like my" followed by a horizontal line. The middle speech bubble contains the text "My friends say I'm" followed by a horizontal line. The right speech bubble contains the text "I'm really good at" followed by a horizontal line.

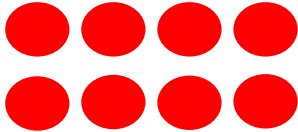


K-2 Activity Solve a Back-to-School Joke

Back to School 2026
K-5 Activities

Directions: August 16th is National Joke Day! Answer the questions below and use the key to find the answer to the joke!

How many circles are here?



I

What number comes right **before** 7?

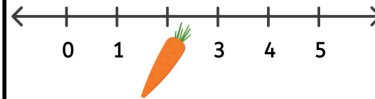
S

What number comes right **after** 2?

O

What number is hiding under the carrot?

R



Solve

$$\begin{array}{r} 11 \\ + \quad 6 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

T

How many lizards are here?

H



Solve.

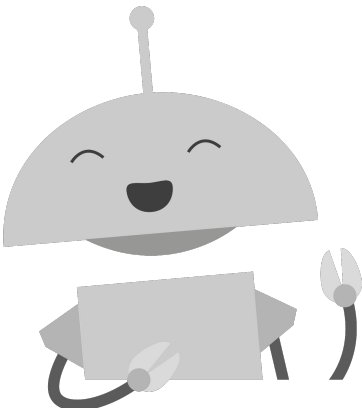
$$17 - 2 =$$

S

What number comes next?

Y

19, 20, 21, _____



What is a snake's favorite subject?

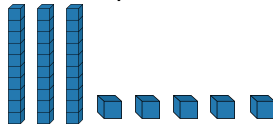
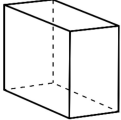
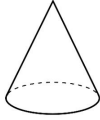
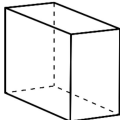
4 8 6 15 _____ 17 3 2 22

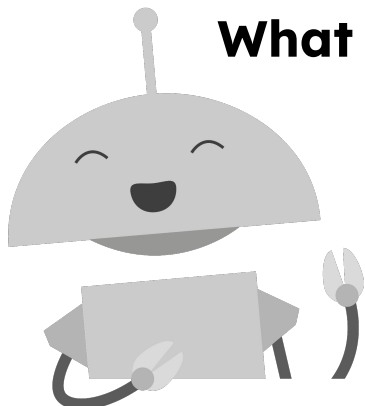


3-5 Activity Solve a Back-to-School Joke

Back to School 2026
K-5 Activities

Directions: August 16th is National Joke Day! Answer the questions below and use the key to find the answer to the joke!

$\begin{array}{r} 1241 \\ + 1521 \\ \hline \end{array}$ S	$\begin{array}{r} 6,238 \\ - 4,581 \\ \hline \end{array}$ P	$\begin{array}{r} 1,356 \\ + 1,198 \\ \hline \end{array}$ L
Round 1,832 to the nearest hundred. _____	Round 1,643 to the nearest ten. _____	What number does this represent?  _____
How many faces does this 3D shape have?  _____	How many vertices does this 3D shape have?  _____	How many vertices does this 3D shape have?  _____
Which digit represents the tens place? 654 _____	Which digit represents the thousands place? 7,256 _____	Which digit represents the hundreds place? 1,923 _____



What did one pencil say to the the other pencil?

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2,554	8	35	1,800	6	5	9
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	!	
2,762	1,640	1	7	1,657		



Starting something new can bring big feelings. You may feel excited about what's ahead this year or nervous about trying something new. You might even feel frustrated when learning gets hard. Those feelings are a normal part of growing!

Build Your Own Calm-Down Bottle

A **calm-down bottle** is one tool that can help you remember to slow down, breathe, and let your feelings settle.



You will need...

- ☐ A clear plastic bottle or jar with lid
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Clear glue or glitter glue
- ☐ Glitter
- ☐ Food coloring (optional)
- ☐ Sequins, beads, or small charms
- ☐ An adult helper

Directions:

1. Fill your bottle about three-fourths full with warm water.
2. Add two to four spoonfuls of glue in the bottle.
3. Sprinkle in glitter and any other small beads or charms you'd like.
4. Add a drop or two of food coloring if you'd like.
5. Ask an adult to put the lid on tightly. They may glue the lid shut for extra safety.
6. Gently shake the bottle, set it down, and watch the glitter settle.
7. Take slow, deep breaths while you wait!

My Calm Plan

Directions: Everyone has big feelings sometimes, and that's OK! Circle the feelings you sometimes have.



Angry



Sad



Frustrated



Worried



Excited



Disappointed



Things that help me feel calm:

✓ Check the ones you'd like to try.

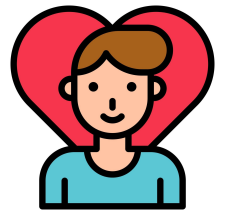
- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Counting to 10 | ☐ Stretching |
| ☐ Drawing or coloring | ☐ Taking a break |
| ☐ Listening to music | ☐ Taking deep breaths |
| ☐ Reading a book | ☐ Other |
| ☐ Talking to an adult | |



Directions: Everyone feels big emotions sometimes. Think about the people, places, and things that help you feel calm when you're upset, worried, or frustrated. You can draw, write, or do both!

People, Places, and Things That Help Me Feel Calm

People who help me feel calm...



Places where I feel calm...



Things that help me feel calm...

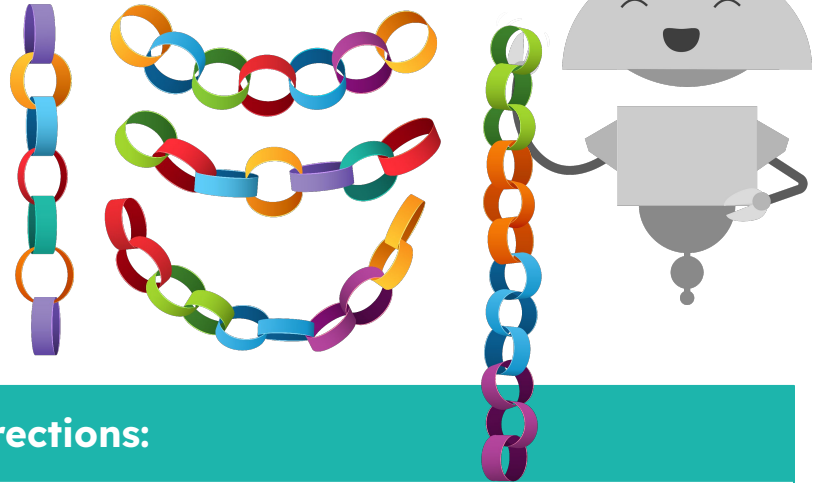




A motto is a short phrase you repeat to remind yourself of something important, like “I can do hard things,” “I show kindness to others,” or “Mistakes help me learn.”

What You Will Need:

- ☐ Motto chain strips (next page)
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Glue stick or tape
- ☐ Crayons or markers



Directions:

1. Write or draw your answer to the prompt on each strip on the next page.
2. Cut out all five strips along the dashed lines.
3. Starting with Strip 1, curl it into a loop and glue the teal tab to the back of the opposite end.
4. Before gluing your next strip into a loop, slide it through the loop you just made with the text facing out. This links your strips together.
5. Repeat Step 4 until all five strips are connected.



Keep It Visible: Now that your motto chain is built, hang it up somewhere you'll see it every day, like your bedroom or workspace. Seeing your motto often helps it stay in your mind without even trying!



1 glue	Write or draw a short, positive phrase you want to remember this year — something you can say to yourself again and again.	My Motto
2 glue	Draw or write one thing you want to learn or get better at this year.	My Goal
3 glue	Ask a grown-up or friend for their favorite encouraging saying, or think of one from a book or movie.	A Saying I Heard
4 glue	Draw or write who helps you, like a family member, friend, coach, or even a pet.	Who Helps Me
5 glue	Draw a picture of yourself showing your motto in real life.	My Motto in Action



Directions: Find and circle the words in the word bank below.

Z	A	N	T	S	V	K	W	H	E	L	Q
G	R	M	C	E	N	S	V	L	D	N	M
S	N	H	N	O	T	E	B	O	O	K	A
T	P	M	H	M	H	U	P	M	S	C	T
U	P	D	E	S	K	I	I	Q	L	R	H
D	E	S	A	T	T	Y	A	R	T	W	P
Y	N	C	V	I	D	E	O	H	I	R	B
T	C	H	K	Z	M	U	D	R	B	I	E
W	I	O	C	R	A	Y	O	N	S	T	M
A	L	O	Y	L	E	A	R	N	N	E	X
M	N	L	D	W	O	T	R	E	A	D	O
F	F	K	P	N	F	S	J	Y	Q	D	L

pencil

notebook

art

school

crayons

study

desk

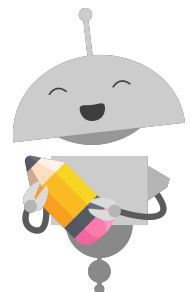
learn

math

read

write

video



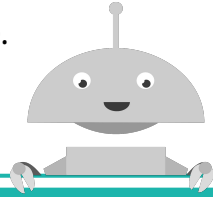


Directions: Use each given math challenge to practice your skills!

Example: My Age

I can use subtraction to show my age.

$$7 - 1 = 6$$



Challenge!

Pick one box and show your number two new ways. Use a drawing, tally marks, or a number sentence.

Math About Me

1

I can use subtraction to show my age.



2

I can use tally marks to show the number of letters in my first name.



3

I can show the number of books I want to read or hear this year with a drawing or by writing the numeral out.



4

I can use subtraction to show my age 2 years ago.



$$\underline{\quad} - 2 = \underline{\quad}$$

5

I can show the number of pets I have or wish I had with a drawing or by writing the numeral out.



6

I can use addition to show my birth month (1-12) + my age.



7

I can use tally marks to show my favorite number.



8

I can show the number of new things I want to learn this year with a drawing or by writing the numeral out.

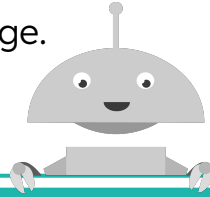




Directions: Use each given math challenge to practice your skills!

Example: My Age

I can use two operations to show my age.
 $(6 \times 2) - 3$



Challenge!

Pick one box and show your number two new ways. Use a drawing, tally marks, or a number sentence.

Math About Me

1

I can use two operations to show my age.



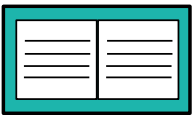
2

I can use subtraction to show the number of letters in my first name.



3

I can use addition to show the number of books I want to read this year.



4

I can use tally marks to show my age 2 years ago.



5

I can use multiplication or division to show the number of pets I have or wish I had.



6

I can use multiplication to show my birth month $(1-12) \times$ my age.



7

I can write an inequality to compare my favorite number to 50 using $>$, $<$, or $=$.



50



_____ favorite number

8

I can write an inequality to compare the number of new things I want to learn this year to 100 using $>$, $<$, or $=$.



_____ number of things



100