



Can You Count to a Googol?

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Introduces the concepts of very large numbers, up to a googol, and multiples of ten.

Can You Count to a Googol? Details

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From Reader Review *Can You Count to a Googol?* for online ebook

Bethe says

Interesting look at hard to imagine large numbers. Good illustrations demonstrate multiples of ten, but I lowered the rating 1 star because the illustrations are a bit off and the book doesn't mention the concept of infinity.

Christina says

My five year old fancies himself a budding mathematician. He adores many books by this author. Fabulous illustrations and relatable text.

Amanda says

Great way to begin conceiving how big the BIG numbers are for kids and adults.

Tatiana says

I will always remember this book for being at the center of my first independent math lesson. For fifth-grade, my topic was multiplying with powers of ten using exponents, and *Can You Count to a Googol?* really helped introduce all of that math content.

What I could not have anticipated while writing the lesson plan was that the students I received this morning were completely unfamiliar with powers of ten (and I later learned that they were the lowest level group), but between all the strategies I had planned and this book, they had a beginning understanding of powers of ten and exponents by the end of the hour. If the only tidbit they take away from the lesson was that the value of the exponent is equal to the number of zeros in the product, then at least they have a headstart when they reach powers in their math class.

Laura (Book Scrounger) says

Though its examples may not be quite as elaborate as in *How Much Is a Million?*, I think I like this one more because it covers a lot more about even bigger numbers, and actually explains some math along the way (such as that adding a zero to a number makes it ten times bigger). And the examples are still pretty creative -- penguins with scoops of ice cream, baskets of marshmallows, raining pennies, etc. It's hard to visualize just how big a "googol" is (1 followed by 100 zeroes), but this book certainly helps to blow my mind in the attempt.

Dolly says

This is an entertaining book that teaches children about large numbers. We just read *On Beyond a Million: An Amazing Math Journey*, so it was good to compare the different ways in which the numbers are described.

This book does not go into exponents as much, but it does explain the system by which the largest numbers were named. It also answers questions about what is considered a 'real' number (such as quadrillion versus gazillion).

The narrative is informative and engaging and the illustrations are colorful and cartoonish. We really enjoyed reading this book together.

Barbara Radisavljevic says

Beginning with 1 "the number of bananas you can balance on your nose, if you're a good banana balancer," the author keeps adding and illustrating the effect of adding zeros with his zany illustrations until he passes the googol, a real number named by the nine-year-old nephew of the first mathematician to write it down (as far as we know) in the 1930's -- a Dr. Edward Kasner. One of the most important points the author of this book makes is that although a googol exists, it is much bigger than anyone can ever really imagine, and that as big as it is, it is not the biggest number, because "You can keep on adding zeros forever." And on to infinity.

Lorie Barber says

Perfect for 5th grade powers of ten and the largeness of what numbers represent!

Sylvia Ulmer says

CCSS.Math.Content.5.NBT.A.2 Explain patterns in the number of zeros of the product when multiplying a number by powers of 10...Use whole-number exponents to denote powers of 10.

Our class read this as a review of place value and as a segue for introducing exponents/powers of ten. The kids definitely came away with an idea of exponential growth. The illustrations were very appropriate in helping them see what happens when you multiply by ten. It specifically pointed out that each time you add a zero to the end of a number, it is multiplied by ten. The students also had a high interest in the book, especially when it came to the cosmic measurements!

My only complaint is that the book was small, so it was difficult for a lot of the kids to see the illustrations.

(Also, as someone who is not convinced by evolutionary theory, I couldn't help but add, "Many scientists think," before the billion-year-old earth page).

Kayo C says

This book reminded me of my first graders when the class first learned about estimation. After the first few children took guesses it became a "contest" of sorts for who could should the biggest and most ridiculous number they had ever heard. They seemed more interest in being able to say a large number than say a close guess. This book would be great to discuss estimation and how we know some numbers and just way too big, it would also be useful for teaching place value and how the addition of a zero at the end of a number can change it's value tremendously. This book is humorous and will probably get a few laughs out the class and also introduces some really neat facts. Who knew that a "googol" was a real number? I give it a solid 3 stars.

Shelli says

An entertaining and educational book about very large numbers that make most people's brains hurt. How much is a googol? 10^{100} ! The illustrations were cute and helped to show just how many a billion and a trillion are, and what those numbers are most often used to represent.

Fjóla says

Liked this book about number sense just as much as *Is a Blue Whale the Biggest Thing There Is?*. It explains big numbers in the best way I can think of to get a feel for them. A nice touch at the end was the last page spread that explained how to come up with the representations used in the book, for instance how do we figure out "how big a stack 1,000,000 dollar bills would make", or that "100 eagles could really take you for a ride" ...

Karen says

Neat way to introduce place value

Chelsea Ulrich says

This book is helpful in allowing students to see what multiples of tens look like. Many students have a hard time understanding how multiplying by ten changes the number but the visual representations in this book would be helpful to ground students in their thinking. I could see using this with higher grades as this is something that they should have knowledge of and I can also see how using this as an introduction to multiplying by ten could be helpful for student understanding.

Rebecca says

If you are not very good with numbers this may be a difficult book to read. However, this is excellent for grouping by tens, and giving interesting facts about each of the numbers presented in the book. It is also helpful for teaching place values.
