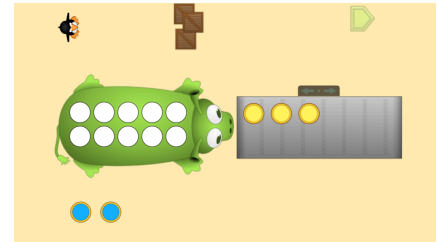
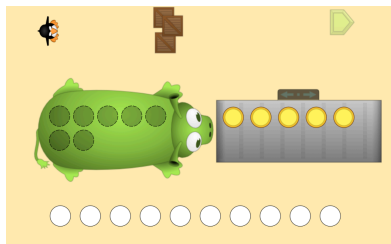


Materials

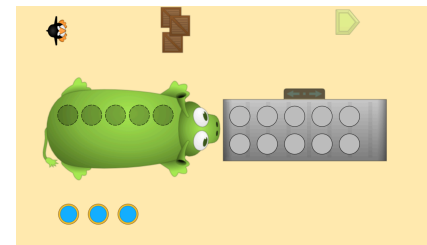
Pie Monster Game mats
 Color counters
 Paper and pencil
 Dry erase markers, whiteboards

- Display the first puzzle in Level 1 of the Pie Monster. Ask students, “What do you see? What do we need to do to clear a path for JiJi?”
- Ask students, “What number should I choose on the Pie Monster and why? Turn and talk to your neighbor about what you think the answer is.”
- Share and try student solutions. Talk about how they knew the total number of pies the pie monster was eating. Play a few more puzzles in Level 1.


Directions


- Display the first puzzle in Level 2. Ask students, “How is this puzzle different from the ones we just did? How many pies do we need to choose now and how do you know?” Solve the first puzzle together. Model how to represent the puzzle using an equation with a variable (e.g., $4 + ? = 6$). Explain that the unknown represented the number of pies picked from the bottom.
- Display the next puzzle in Level 2. Ask students to write down the equation represented by the puzzles, using a variable for the unknown. Discuss answers as a whole class. Repeat with a few more puzzles in Level 2.

- Project a puzzle from Level 4. Have the students model the problem and solution using their math tools or whiteboards.
- Have students explain to a neighbor how their model represents the problem and solution. Select different students to share (look for different types of strategies) and discuss as a class. Repeat with a few more puzzles from Level 4.


Sample Questions

- What is the question this puzzle is asking us to solve?
- How did you solve the puzzle?
- Explain how your model represents the puzzle.
- Can you write an equation to represent this puzzle?
- What is the unknown in this puzzle? How could we represent it?

What to look for

How does the student:

- solve the puzzles? (Are they thinking flexibly about addition and subtraction? Do they struggle with specific problem types? (e.g., result unknown, change unknown, start unknown))
- write an equation to represent the problem? (Great opportunity to connect the visual to the symbolic and reinforce the meaning of equality as “same as.”)
- represent the puzzle? (Do they use tools? An equation with a variable?)