

Reading and writing 4-digit numbers – digits to words and back

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

NUM.PVT.3

explore equivalent numerical expressions of numbers using the base ten system.

INTERACTIVES

Place Value Blocks (Dienes) · challenge, display

Number Line · display, explore

LESSON ARC

Put 3,650 on the IWB and ask pupils to chunk it aloud before any hands go up. Build 2,134, then 5,008, on the place-value-blocks interactive — 5,008 is the pivot: which words warn a column is empty? Introduce the thousands number line and place numbers together. Pupils write four read-aloud numbers as digits in copybook, then turn two into words. Student Activity Book carries the individual practice.

TEACHING MOVES

- Getting Started.** Write 3,650 and hold five seconds of silent think-time before any hands. Take two or three hands-up answers, not call-outs, and listen for natural chunking — 'three thousand ... six hundred ... and fifty'. That chunking is the whole lesson; name it back when you hear it.
- Watch and Notice.** Build each number on the place-value-blocks interactive, pointing at each column as you read its chunk. On 5,008, stop before revealing — ask 'which words tell you a column is empty?' Then introduce the number line for the first time: 'find the thousand first, then slide along for the hundreds.'
- Try It Together.** Read a number in words (e.g. 'four thousand and seventy'). Before any pupil comes up, ask the whole class to point in the air to roughly where it lands between thousand marks, then send one pupil to drag the marker. Mix in 4,070 and 7,016 and ask which chunk flags the empty column.
- Write the Numbers in Your Copy.** Read four numbers slowly for pupils to write as digits — 2,450; 5,003; 8,200; 6,070 — then have them write 3,090 and 7,016 in words. Circulate glancing for the empty-column slip: 'three thousand and ninety' written as 390 or 3,9. This is practice, not marking.
- Class Challenge.** Run 1,205 → 3,090 → 7,016 → 9,400 briskly. For each, ask 'which words tell you a column is empty?' and take two or three hands-up answers before a pupil builds it. Keep it as consolidation — confirm and move on rather than re-explaining each one.
- What Did We Notice?.** Listen for pupils naming the words that signal an empty column — 'and eight', 'and ninety' leap over a missing place. Revoice: 'so when we jump from the thousands word straight to the small word, a column in the middle is empty.' Ask one pupil to say exactly where the zero goes in 3,090.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

⚠ A pupil hears 'three thousand and ninety' and writes 390 or 3,9 — they drop the empty hundreds column instead of holding it with a zero.

Build 3,090 on the place-value-blocks interactive with an empty hundreds column visible. Point at the gap: 'no hundreds here, but the column still has to be there.' Have the pupil read each column back, naming the empty one aloud.

⚠ When reading 9,400 or 1,205, pupils stumble on zeros sitting between working digits — they either say a phantom chunk or lose track of which column the zero fills.

Lay the blocks side by side, column by column, and read left to right pointing at each. For 1,205, stress 'one thousand, two hundred — no tens — and five.' The said-aloud pause where a column is empty is what to drill.

DIFFERENTIATION

EMERGING

- Keep this group on full numbers like 2,134 and 3,650 where every column works before bringing in the empty-column examples.
- Pre-draw the four column labels in their copybook so they place digits into a ready-made grid rather than spacing it themselves.

DEVELOPING

- After the copybook numbers, ask them to write one number that has exactly two empty columns and read it aloud to check.
- Hand them 7,016 and 7,160 together — same digits, different reading. Which has the empty column, and where?

PROFICIENT

- Challenge them to find every four-digit number you can make from the digits 5, 0, 0, 8 and read each aloud — which arrangements skip a column when spoken? Capture it in the copybook.
- Pull them ahead into the Student Activity Book page while the class finishes the Class Challenge.

↗ **Cross-curricular:** Tie to Geography — read the populations of Irish towns (e.g. Tralee, around 23,000; Clonmel, around 17,000) and write the four-digit ones in words.

ANSWER KEY

a) Each digit sits in its own column; line them up on the right.

b) A digit's value = the digit \times its column.

c) Largest: biggest digit on the left; smallest: smallest non-zero digit on the left.

Q1: 2 (2 ones)

Q2: 4,000 (4 thousands)

Q3: $3,772 = 3,000 + 700 + 70 + 2$

Q4: 2486, 2963, 7553, 7628