

Comparing numbers to 20: which is more?

INTERACTIVES Number Line · challenge, display, explore

WHAT THIS LESSON TEACHES

On the number line, the number that sits further along is more than the other. The marker closer to zero is fewer.

→ 15 is more than 12 because 15 sits further along the line.

→ 12 is fewer than 15 because 12 sits closer to zero.

MODEL THIS ON THE BOARD

BLITZ SCORES ON THE LINE

- 1 Mark the school score **15** and the visitors score **12** on the number line.
- 2 See that **15** sits further along than **12**.
- 3 So **15** is more than **12**. The school scored more.

LESSON ARC

Open with the blitz scores 15 and 12 already marked on the number-line interactive; take three hands-up on who scored more before naming the language. Model three score pairs, pointing further along for more than and closer to zero for fewer than, then have the class chorally repeat each sentence frame. Pupils take turns marking four pairs in Try It Together, write two comparison sentences in copybook, then run four brisk Class Challenge pairs at the board. Maths-talk lands on how the line shows which number is more.

TEACHING MOVES

1. **Getting Started.** Show 15 and 12 already on the number-line interactive. Take three hands-up only — not open call-outs. Accept pointing further along or 'bigger' for now; don't force the phrase more than yet.
2. **Watch and Notice.** For each pair, point to the marker further along and say more than, then the one closer to zero and say fewer than. Model the full sentence once, then invite a choral repeat. Linger on 14 and 16 — they sit close, so make the class look before naming.
3. **Try It Together.** Call the pairs in order: 6 and 9, 10 and 13, 8 and 18, 15 and 17. After each pupil marks both scores, hold for the class to say the more than and fewer than sentences before the next turn. If a pupil names the bigger number without using the line, revoice them back to the markers.
4. **Circle which is more in your copy.** Walk the row for a quick glance only — right number circled, and the words more than or fewer than in the sentence. This is whole-class copybook practice, not marking.
5. **Class Challenge.** Keep board turns brisk: 4 and 7, 11 and 14, 19 and 9, 12 and 20. Class confirms each answer before the next pupil. After every turn, revoice with more than / fewer than — no fresh teaching.
6. **What Did We Notice?.** Ask how the number line shows which is more. Listen for further along or closer to zero. Revoice: 'so the marker further along is the bigger number.' Head off anyone who only names a bigger digit without looking at the line.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

⚠ Pupils name the bigger number from memory or digit size without looking at the markers — ‘15 is more because I just know’ or ‘9 is more than 19 because 9 is a bigger-looking digit’.

Stop and gesture both markers on the line. Ask: ‘Which sits further along from zero?’ Revoice their answer as a more than / fewer than sentence tied to the markers, not the digit shapes.

⚠ Pupils say ‘less than’ for the smaller count, or freeze on fewer because the word feels new.

Remind once: for how many things, we say fewer (not as many). Point to the marker closer to zero and have the class chorally say ‘12 is fewer than 15’ before moving on.

⚠ On close pairs like 14 and 16, pupils guess or swap more and fewer because the gap looks tiny.

Zoom attention to the two neighbouring marks. Trace slowly from zero past 14 to 16 so the class sees 16 is still further along, then lock the sentence frame.

DIFFERENTIATION

EMERGING

- Stay with wide-gap pairs (9 and 19, 8 and 18) on the interactive while the class does closer teens; pupil points to further along before any sentence.
- Pre-write the stem ‘___ is more than ___’ in copybook so they only circle and fill the two numbers.

DEVELOPING

- After a Class Challenge turn, cover the numbers and ask them to retell more than / fewer than from the marker positions alone.
- Give a near pair such as 15 and 17 and ask: ‘How do you know without counting up from zero?’

PROFICIENT

- After copybook, pose: ‘Tell me a number that is more than 12 and fewer than 18 — how does the line prove it?’ Keep it to a spoken answer at the IWB, not a new task type.

✍ **Cross-curricular:** Keep the GAA blitz frame — compare real class or yard-game scores on a 0–20 line using more than and fewer than.

ANSWER KEY

Your turn · Ring the bigger number. A) ring 8 B) ring 17 C) ring 14 D) ring 18

Your turn · Write the missing numbers. 13

Is it right? · 11 is bigger than 4. tick · 9 is bigger than 15. cross

Star challenge · Ring the bigger number. ring 14

EXTENSION SHEET · STRETCH ANSWERS

S1: 13

S3: 12

S2: 17

S4: 8