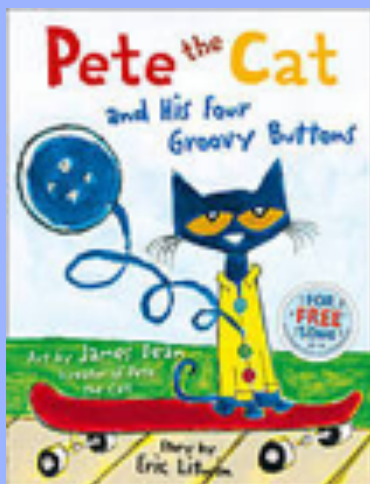


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ILLUSTRATOR:

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Pete the Cat is wearing his favorite shirt, the one with the four groovy buttons. One by one, the buttons pop off! But losing the buttons doesn't bother Pete; he just keeps singing his song and subtracting to tell how many buttons are left.

Ages: 3 to 6 years**ATOS Reading Level:**
1.2**Lexile:** AD350L**ISBN:** 9780062110546**Copyright:** 2012

Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons

Pete keeps losing his buttons one by one, but does Pete get upset?

Topics: subtraction, counting**Activities To Do Together:**

Pete the Cat keeps losing buttons off of his favorite shirt! Use this story to introduce the concept of subtraction. Taking one away from a group of objects results in fewer objects. This is the foundation of subtraction.

Before reading the book:

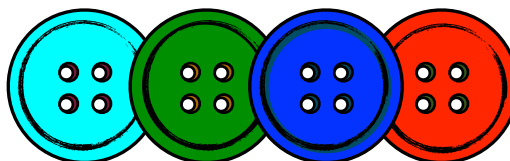
- Practice a “count down”! 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, ...
- Talk with your child about subtraction and taking one away. What happens to the total number of items when you take one away?

While reading the book:

- Use four big buttons or other objects to follow along with the story, taking one away as Pete loses each button. Ask, “How many are left now?”
- Together with your child, practice reading the equations that are in the book.
- Talk about the equal sign as being the balance point in the equation; what is on one side of the equal sign has the same value as what is on the other side of the equal sign.

When you have finished reading the book:

- Line up some toys or other items. Together, count how many there are. Remove one and ask your child how many are left. Repeat this until there are none left (zero).
- Find a shirt that has buttons. With your child, count the button holes on the shirt and count the number of buttons. Do they match? Is there a button for each button hole? How many buttons would be left if one of them popped off?



Questions for Mathematical Thinking:

1. What would you do if the buttons on your shirt started popping off?
2. What did you notice happening to the number of buttons on Pete's shirt throughout the story?
3. How does the number sequence 4, 3, 2, 1 describe what happened to the buttons on Pete's shirt?
4. How is subtracting one like a countdown?
5. In what other situations would you count backwards or subtract one at a time?

Early Math Project Resources:

Visit [Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons](https://countplayexplore.org/book/pete-the-cat-and-his-four-groovy-buttons) (countplayexplore.org/book/pete-the-cat-and-his-four-groovy-buttons) to find activities and related California Learning Foundations and/or Mathematics Standards provided by the California Department of Education for this book.

Vocabulary

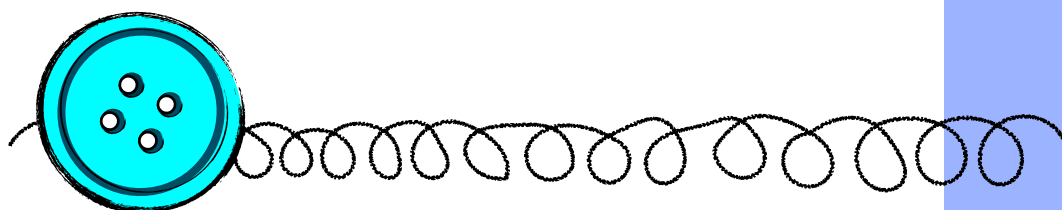
Math words found in the story: four, one, three, two

Related math words: are left, equal, equation, equal sign, minus, subtraction

Words to build reading comprehension: groovy

Related Books: *10, 9, 8...* by Molly Bang; *Ten Minutes Till Bedtime* by Peggy Rathmann; *Eight Silly Monkeys* by Steve Haskamp

Click this link to the [World Catalog](https://www.worldcat.org/works/OL123456789/Pete_the_Cat_and_His_Four_Groovy_Buttons) or enter bit.ly/3Z6M2Oj to find *Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons* in the public library.



Math Connections: Use *Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons* to introduce subtraction. As Pete loses each button, ask your child how many are left. They may need to count the buttons to answer the question. Together, look at how the subtraction is represented with an equation.

Have fun counting down, “Five, four, three, two, one, zero!” Talk with your child about where they might hear or see a countdown: at the beginning of a race or maybe a rocket launch. Counting down can help children understand the concept of subtracting one at a time.

Have your child practice reading the equations on the pages out loud. Talk about how the equal sign is the balance point in the equation; what is on one side of the equal sign has the same value as what is on the other side of the equal sign. Represent subtraction with a group of familiar items: blocks, crayons, fingers, spoons, etc. For example, lay out five items. Ask your child to count the items to tell you how many are there, then say, “I’m going to take away one of them. How many are left?”... “Right! Five minus one is four toys!” Continue taking one toy away and asking how many are left. In the end, when there are none left, be sure to describe the amount as zero. “One minus one is zero toys! There are none left.”

Stages of Learning

Concrete —> Representational—>Abstract

For children who are confident with hands-on counting and subtracting, encourage them to write an equation that represents a subtraction situation. For example, if there are five toys and they loan one to a friend, how many do they have now? With your child, explore writing an equation that looks like this: $5 - 1 = 4$ as well as this: $4 = 5 - 1$. You may need to model this skill a few times before your child can do it independently.

