

# Monkey Buddies Activities



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# Brain Maker Summer Math Transition Guide

## Kindergarten to First Grade

A parent-friendly readiness guide  
built around generalized grade-level  
math skills



# Monkey Buddies Brain Maker

## Kindergarten-to-First Grade Transition Math Plan

Grade-Level Readiness Skills + Activity Page Teaching Map

### Program Style

Count it. Build it. Draw it. Talk it through. Use it. The work is aligned, but it should still feel playful, concrete, and developmentally appropriate.

### Brain Maker Connection | Monkey Buddies Learning Lab

Prepared as a parent-facing planning document for rising first grade summer math support.

## Brain Maker Purpose

This plan helps a rising first grader strengthen the math skills that first grade depends on: counting, number sense, comparing, beginning addition and subtraction, teen numbers, shapes, measurement, money, patterns, data, and math language.

The goal is not to turn summer into school. The goal is to give the child repeated, playful practice with the ideas that make first grade feel understandable.

### Important Build Note

For this age band, ideas should overlap heavily. Counting, comparing, drawing, building, explaining, and using objects should show up across many weeks instead of appearing once and disappearing.

## How This Plan Works

The plan follows the same Brain Maker family structure as the older transition plans, but the work is more activity-page related and more hands-on. Each pair includes a direct skill-builder page and a use-it activity page. Both are teaching pages; the second page simply makes the idea more concrete.

Part	Purpose
Skill Builder Page	Introduces the concept with clear models, teacher/parent language, and guided practice.
Use It Activity Page	Reinforces the same concept through drawing, cutting, matching, sorting, coloring, building, moving, or game-style practice.
Grade-Level Readiness Skills	Shows the kindergarten standards being reinforced and the first-grade expectations being prepared.

## Spiral and Overlap Principle

This plan is intentionally not one-and-done. A child may work on counting, ten-frames, number writing, sorting, and story problems across several weeks. That is not repetition by accident; it is the developmental point.

- Counting objects should appear in addition pages, money pages, data pages, and shape pages.
- Math talk should appear every session: How many? How do you know? What changed? What stayed the same?
- Addition and subtraction should be acted out, drawn, built, and written before they become abstract.
- First-grade readiness grows from repeated exposure, not rushing into worksheet stacks.

## Readiness Priorities

Priority	Skill Area	Why It Matters
1	Counting and cardinality	Count objects accurately, know the last number tells how many, count forward, and write numbers.
2	Number sense and comparison	More, fewer, same, greater than, less than, equal to, one more, one less.
3	Early addition and subtraction	Put together, add to, take apart, take from, make 5, make 10, and solve tiny story problems.
4	Teen numbers and place value	See 11-19 as ten ones and some more ones.
5	Shapes, measurement, data, money	Use real objects, sort, classify, compare, and describe with words.

# Kindergarten-to-First Grade Readiness Map

Use this as a flexible 15-pair map. Each pair can be one week, part of a week, or spread across multiple weeks depending on the child. Skills should overlap heavily and return often.

## Pair 1: Counting Routines and Number Confidence

Skill Builder Page	Use It Activity Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Count aloud by ones and tens</li><li>• Count forward from a given number</li><li>• Practice number before and number after</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number path walk</li><li>• Calendar counting</li><li>• Find and count objects around the room</li></ul>
<p><b>Grade-Level Readiness Skills: Kindergarten review: counting sequence, count forward from a number, number names, and number confidence. Grade 1 readiness: count to 120, read and write numbers, and use counting patterns.</b></p> <p>Brain Maker Focus: Can the child count with confidence and keep the count sequence going without always starting at 1?</p>	

## Pair 2: Count Objects and Tell How Many

Skill Builder Page	Use It Activity Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One-to-one counting with objects</li><li>• Last number tells how many</li><li>• Count groups in lines, circles, and scattered sets</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Count-and-circle pages</li><li>• Grab-and-count jars</li><li>• Build a set to match a number card</li></ul>
<p><b>Grade-Level Readiness Skills: Kindergarten review: one-to-one counting, counting objects, and understanding that the last number tells how many. Grade 1 readiness: use counting to support addition and subtraction story problems.</b></p> <p>Brain Maker Focus: Counting should connect to quantity, not just memorized number words.</p>	

### Pair 3: Read, Write, and Match Numbers 0-20

Skill Builder Page	Use It Activity Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognize numbers 0-20</li><li>• Write numbers 0-20</li><li>• Match numerals to sets of objects</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number trace and build pages</li><li>• Clip-card number matching</li><li>• Roll, count, and write</li></ul>
<p><b>Grade-Level Readiness Skills: Kindergarten review: read, write, and match numerals 0-20 to sets of objects. Grade 1 readiness: read, write, and represent numbers with growing independence.</b></p> <p>Brain Maker Focus: The child should connect the written number, spoken number, and actual amount.</p>	

## Pair 4: Compare Groups and Numbers

Skill Builder Page	Use It Activity Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More, fewer, same</li><li>• Greater than, less than, equal to</li><li>• Compare two written numbers from 0-20</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Which group has more? picture cards</li><li>• Match-and-compare games</li><li>• Build two towers and compare</li></ul>
<p><b>Grade-Level Readiness Skills: Kindergarten review: compare groups and numbers using more, fewer, same, greater than, less than, and equal to. Grade 1 readiness: compare numbers using place value and number sense.</b></p> <p>Brain Maker Focus: Comparison starts with matching and counting before symbols matter.</p>	

## Pair 5: Sort, Classify, and Count Categories

Skill Builder Page	Use It Activity Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sort objects by color, size, shape, or kind</li><li>• Count each category</li><li>• Talk about which group has more or fewer</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Button/bead sort page</li><li>• Picture sort and count</li><li>• Favorite things tally start</li></ul>
<p><b>Grade-Level Readiness Skills: Kindergarten review: sort, classify, count categories, and describe attributes. Grade 1 readiness: use data, graphs, and shape attributes to answer questions.</b></p> <p>Brain Maker Focus: Sorting builds early data thinking, vocabulary, and attention to attributes.</p>	

## Pair 6: Make 5, Break 5, and Fluency Within 5

Skill Builder Page	Use It Activity Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Add and subtract within 5</li><li>• Use fingers, counters, dots, and drawings</li><li>• Find missing parts of 5</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Five-frame games</li><li>• Dot card flash</li><li>• Shake-and-spill counters for 5</li></ul>
<p><b>Grade-Level Readiness Skills: Kindergarten review: compose, decompose, add, and subtract small numbers within 5. Grade 1 readiness: build toward addition and subtraction fluency within 20.</b></p> <p>Brain Maker Focus: Small-number fluency is a foundation for first-grade addition and subtraction.</p>	

## Pair 7: Make 10 and Ten-Frame Thinking

### Skill Builder Page

- Use ten-frames to see parts of 10
- Find the number that makes 10
- Decompose numbers to 10 with objects or drawings

### Use It Activity Page

- Ten-frame fill-ins
- Make-10 matching cards
- Color the missing part of 10

**Grade-Level Readiness Skills: Kindergarten review: decompose numbers to 10 and use ten-frames to show parts of a whole. Grade 1 readiness: use make-10 strategies for addition and subtraction.**

**Brain Maker Focus: Making 10 is the bridge from counting everything to using efficient strategies.**

## Pair 8: Addition Stories Within 10

Skill Builder Page	Use It Activity Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand addition as putting together and adding to</li><li>• Act out and draw addition stories</li><li>• Write simple equations with support</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Story problem mats</li><li>• Sticker addition scenes</li><li>• Draw it, count it, write it</li></ul>
<p><b>Grade-Level Readiness Skills: Kindergarten review: understand addition as putting together and adding to. Grade 1 readiness: solve addition story problems using drawings, objects, words, and equations.</b></p> <p>Brain Maker Focus: Young children should solve story problems with objects, drawings, words, and equations.</p>	

## Pair 9: Subtraction Stories Within 10

Skill Builder Page	Use It Activity Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand subtraction as taking apart and taking from</li><li>• Act out subtraction situations</li><li>• Connect subtraction to missing parts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take-away picture mats</li><li>• Cross-out and count pages</li><li>• Snack math or toy math stories</li></ul>
<p><b>Grade-Level Readiness Skills: Kindergarten review: understand subtraction as taking apart and taking from. Grade 1 readiness: solve subtraction and missing-part story problems using models and equations.</b></p> <p>Brain Maker Focus: Subtraction should feel like a story action before it becomes a symbol problem.</p>	

## Pair 10: Teen Numbers: Ten and Some More

Skill Builder Page	Use It Activity Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compose and decompose 11-19</li><li>• Show teen numbers as one ten and extra ones</li><li>• Use drawings, ten-frames, and objects</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teen number build-it mats</li><li>• Bundle 10 sticks and add more</li><li>• Ten-frame teen match</li></ul>
<p><b>Grade-Level Readiness Skills: Kindergarten review: show teen numbers as ten and some more ones.</b> <b>Grade 1 readiness: build place value understanding with tens and ones.</b> Brain Maker Focus: Teen numbers are early place value. They are ten and some more ones.</p>	

## Pair 11: Patterns and Repeated Reasoning

Skill Builder Page	Use It Activity Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognize and create simple patterns</li><li>• Describe the rule</li><li>• Continue a pattern using colors, shapes, sounds, or movements</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pattern strip pages</li><li>• Clap/stomp pattern game</li><li>• Build a bracelet or block pattern</li></ul>
<p><b>Grade-Level Readiness Skills: Kindergarten review: sort, classify, create patterns, and describe simple rules. Grade 1 readiness: notice structure, explain patterns, and use repeated reasoning.</b></p> <p>Brain Maker Focus: Patterns help children notice structure and predict what comes next.</p>	

## Pair 12: Measurement Words and Comparing Objects

Skill Builder Page	Use It Activity Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe length, height, weight, and size</li><li>• Compare two or three objects</li><li>• Use words like longer, shorter, taller, heavier, lighter</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Measure with cubes/paper clips</li><li>• Longest-to-shortest sort</li><li>• Find something longer than your pencil</li></ul>
<p><b>Grade-Level Readiness Skills: Kindergarten review: describe and compare measurable attributes such as length, height, weight, and size. Grade 1 readiness: measure with equal-size units and compare lengths.</b></p> <p>Brain Maker Focus: Measurement begins with noticing and comparing attributes before rulers are formal.</p>	

## Pair 13: Money: Coin Names and Counting Pennies

Skill Builder Page	Use It Activity Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify penny, nickel, dime, and quarter</li><li>• Count pennies to 20</li><li>• Sort coins by name and value</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coin sort mat</li><li>• Penny counting store</li><li>• Match coin pictures to coin names</li></ul>
<p><b>Grade-Level Readiness Skills: Kindergarten review: name and sort coins and count pennies with support. Grade 1 readiness: identify coins, understand coin value, and begin practical money reasoning.</b></p> <p>Brain Maker Focus: Money practice should be tactile and visual. For this level, name coins and count pennies first.</p>	

## Pair 14: Shapes, Position Words, and Building

Skill Builder Page	Use It Activity Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name flat and solid shapes</li><li>• Use position words: above, below, beside, next to, behind, in front of</li><li>• Describe sides, corners, and shape parts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shape hunt</li><li>• Build shapes with sticks/clay</li><li>• Make a picture from simple shapes</li></ul>
<p><b>Grade-Level Readiness Skills: Kindergarten review: name flat and solid shapes, describe positions, and use shape attributes. Grade 1 readiness: compose shapes, describe attributes, and work with equal shares.</b></p> <p>Brain Maker Focus: Shape work should include real-world objects, drawing, building, and describing.</p>	

## Pair 15: First-Grade Readiness Review and Parent Summary

Skill Builder Page	Use It Activity Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review counting, comparing, teen numbers, make 10, addition/subtraction stories, sorting, money, measurement, and shapes</li><li>• Use simple readiness checks without pressure</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Brain Maker review game board</li><li>• Mixed activity stations</li><li>• Parent summary: strengths, needs practice, ready for next step</li></ul>
<p><b>Grade-Level Readiness Skills: Kindergarten-to-first readiness review: counting, comparing, teen numbers, make 10, addition and subtraction stories, sorting, money, measurement, and shapes.</b></p> <p>Brain Maker Focus: The question is not whether the child can complete a stack of worksheets. The question is whether the child can count, build, draw, explain, and try again.</p>	

## Activity Page Menu

These page types can be used again and again across the summer. For kindergarten-to-first grade, repetition with small variations is productive, not boring.

Skill Area	Activity Page Ideas
Counting	Number paths, count-and-circle, count the room, count and color, build a set.
Numbers 0-20	Trace/write/build, number match, missing number strips, before/after cards.
Ten-Frames	Fill the frame, make 5, make 10, match dots to numbers.
Addition/Subtraction	Story mats, sticker scenes, draw-and-solve, cross-out pages, number bonds.
Teen Numbers	Ten and some more mats, bundle sticks, teen number ten-frames.
Sorting/Data	Picture sorts, tally starts, category counts, more/fewer questions.
Money	Coin sort, penny counting, match coin pictures, pretend store.
Measurement	Longer/shorter sorts, measure with cubes, object hunt, estimate then check.
Shapes	Shape hunts, shape sort, build-a-picture, sides/corners pages, position words.

## Math Language Cheat Sheet

Use these words naturally while working. The child does not need a vocabulary quiz. The goal is repeated exposure while counting, building, drawing, sorting, and solving.

Word Group	Words to Practice
Counting Words	count, number, how many, more, fewer, same, before, after, next
Number Words	zero, one, ten, teen number, digit, equal, greater than, less than
Addition/Subtraction Words	add, put together, plus, altogether, subtract, take away, left, part, whole
Ten-Frame Words	five-frame, ten-frame, full, empty, make 5, make 10, missing part
Place Value Words	ten, ones, bundle, teen number, 10 and some more
Money Words	coin, penny, nickel, dime, quarter, cent, value
Measurement Words	longer, shorter, taller, smaller, bigger, heavier, lighter, measure
Shape Words	shape, side, corner, flat, solid, circle, triangle, square, rectangle, cube, cone, cylinder, sphere
Thinking Words	draw it, build it, explain, check, try again, does it make sense?

## Simple Parent Practice Ideas

Practice Idea	How to Use It
Car counting	Count red cars, signs, houses, or steps. Start from numbers other than 1.
Snack math	Use crackers, grapes, or cereal to act out addition and subtraction stories.
Coin jar	Sort coins by type. Count pennies. Name coins without requiring advanced coin counting too early.
Ten-frame quick looks	Show dots or objects briefly and ask: How many? How did you know?
Shape hunt	Find circles, rectangles, cubes, cones, and cylinders around the house.
Measure it	Use blocks, paper clips, or crayons to measure a shoe, book, or toy.
Story problems	Use real situations: You had 4. I gave you 2 more. How many now?

## End-of-Summer Readiness Check

This is a low-pressure check. It should feel like a conversation with objects, drawings, and activity pages, not a timed test.

Area	Ready-for-First Look-For
Counting	Can count to 100 by ones and tens; can count forward from a given number with support.
Objects	Can count a set accurately and explain how many are in the set.
Numbers	Can read, write, and match numbers 0-20 to objects.
Compare	Can tell which group or number is more, fewer, or equal.
Make 5 / Make 10	Can show small number combinations using counters or drawings.
Addition/Subtraction	Can solve simple story problems within 10 using objects or drawings.
Teen Numbers	Can show 11-19 as 10 and some more ones.
Money	Can name coins and count pennies to 20.
Measurement	Can compare objects using longer/shorter/taller/heavier/lighter language.
Shapes	Can name common shapes and describe simple attributes like sides and corners.

## Parent-Friendly Closing Message

### **Brain Maker Connection**

This plan builds first-grade readiness by helping children count, compare, build, draw, sort, explain, and solve. The work is built around generalized grade-level math skills, but it is designed to feel concrete and doable for young learners. When children can use objects, pictures, words, and simple equations to show their thinking, they are building flexible math brains.

## Standards Note

This guide is built around generalized grade-level math skills commonly addressed in kindergarten and first grade math standards across states. It is intended as a parent-facing transition guide, not a state-specific standards document.

Reference Area	Use in This Guide	Notes
Generalized grade-level math expectations	Used to organize kindergarten review and first-grade readiness skills.	This is not a state-specific standards document.
Early elementary number sense and operations	Used to prioritize counting, comparing, making 10, addition, subtraction, and teen numbers.	Skills are presented in parent-friendly language.
Early elementary measurement, data, money, and geometry	Used to include hands-on practice with objects, coins, measurement language, shapes, sorting, and simple graphing.	Activities may overlap across several weeks.