On and Off the Bus

You need a play bus – that is, an old box, or a bus created out of cardboard and Sellotape and red paint or felt-tips. The bus can be as elaborate and realistic or as basic as you like! You also need passengers. These can be tiny soft toys or plastic animals or people; they could be Lego or Duplo people.

**How to play**

* Start the bus with 6, 10 or 12 passengers as appropriate for your child.
* Make bus driving noises and create the sense of the bus driving from one ‘stop’ to another. Allow the bus to visit five stops.
* Follow the schedule below.
* At each stop …
  + BEFORE taking the people off, ask how many will be left.
  + BEFORE letting the people get on, ask how many will be on the bus when it sets off again.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2 people  get off | I person  gets off | 1 person  gets off | 2 people  get off | 3 people  get off |
| 1 person gets on | 3 people  get on | 2 people  get on | 3 people  get on | 1 person  gets on |

* Show the passengers on fingers. Hold up six fingers, then, as 2 people are getting off, fold down 2 of the fingers. How many are left? Now hold up an extra finger to show a person getting on. How many now?
* You can record the stops as sums. But if this spoils the activity or is stressful, don’t do it. Just do the sums orally by saying them.

4 + 1 = 5

Stop 1

6 – 2 = 4

* Visit all the stops, doing the sums as you go.
* If the child has enjoyed it, play again!