Stages in Subtraction

Subtraction - Early Stages (EYFS)

Children will engage in a variety of counting songs and rhymes and practical activities.

In practical activities and through discussion they will begin to use the vocabulary associated with subtraction.

They will find one less than a given number.

They will begin to relate subtraction to 'taking away' **using objects** to count 'how many are left' after some have been taken away.

6 – 2 = 4

'Take two apples away. How many are left?'

Children will begin to count back from a given number.

Subtraction - Year One

- **Given a number, identify one less**
- **Read, write and interpret mathematical statements involving subtraction (-) and the equals (=) sign**
- **Subtract one- digit and two-digit numbers within 20, including zero**
- **Solve missing number problems eg   20 - ☐ = 15**

NB Ensure that children are confident with the methods outlined in the previous year's guidance before moving on.

Children will continue to practise counting back from a given number.

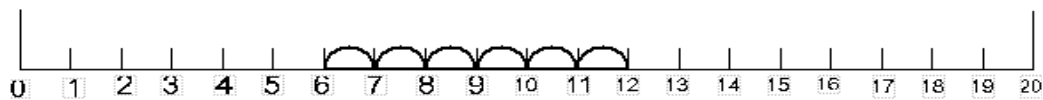Initially use a **number track** to **count back** for subtraction:

9 – 5 = 4
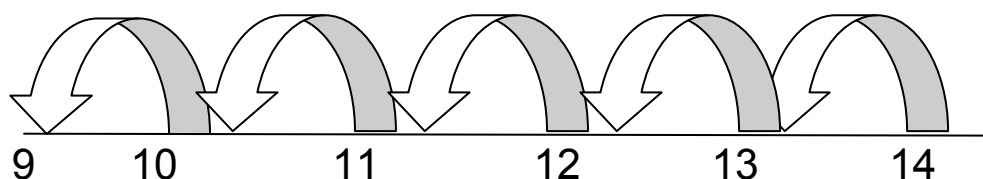
'Put your finger on number nine. Count back five.'

Then progress to a **marked number line:**

12 - 6 = 6

'Put your finger on number twelve and count back six.'

14 – 5 = 9

'Put your finger on number 14 and count back five.'

NB Ensure children are confident with using a **marked number line** before moving on to an empty number line (see year two guidance).

Continue to practise counting back for subtraction with numbers within 20.

Counting on to find a small difference:

Introduce complementary addition to find differences (only use for **small** differences). The use of models is extremely important here to understand the idea of "difference".

Count up from the smallest number to the largest to **find the difference** using resources, e.g. cubes, beads, number tracks/lines:

11 – 9 = 2
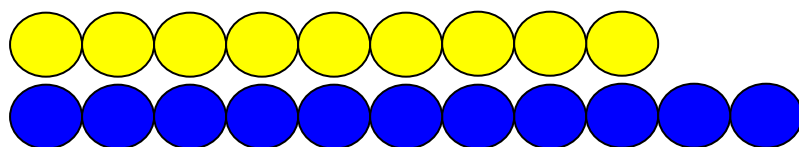
The **difference between** nine and eleven is two.

NB If, at any time, children are making significant errors, return to the previous stage in calculation.