Glossary of Number and Counting Vocabulary

Here are some important terms to describe mathematical concepts and skills in number and counting.

Key Word	Definition
Base-ten number system	The number system we use to assign place value to digits in numbers. The base-ten system uses digits 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 to represent all other numbers in its system (for example, the number 32 represents three tens and two ones).
Cardinality	The understanding that when counting a set of objects, the last number word in the count list represents the size of the set.
Counting	The process we use to identify the quantity of objects in a group.
Count list	The ordered list of number words.
Digit	A single symbol we use to make numerals (for example, 1 or 2).
Number	The quantity, or amount, of something.
Number words (one, two, three, …)	The way we represent numbers using language. This includes words and sign language.
Numerals (1, 2, 3, …)	The mathematical symbols we use to record numbers.
One-to-one correspondence	The understanding that we use one and only one number word for each object in the set of objects being counted.
Skip counting	Counting forward by a number other than one (for example, skip counting by ten is counting 10, 20, 30, and so on).
Stable order	The understanding that number words are in a specific order, and this order never changes.
Subitizing	The ability to immediately observe the number of objects in a group without counting.