***Purpose:*** *Building automaticity for students to quickly identify half a familiar collection.*

**Activity:**

**You will need:**

* At least 30 counters for each pair of students
* A small whiteboard or paper and pencil for each pair of students

**Say to students:**

The more practice we have in halving groups, the faster we get at it. Today we are going to practice halving groups of counters. If I have 4 counters and I want to know what half is, how could I work it out?

Put four counters on the floor and ask a student to show you how to halve the group. Ask the student how they know they have halved the group (they might say they know because each group has the same amount of counters). If the student has separated the counters individually, ask what a faster way might be to split the counters into groups. Encourage students to count in multiples.

**Say to the students:**

So half of a group of 4 counters is 2 counters. The group of four was split equally into two halves with 2 counters in each half. Half of the group of 4 is less than 4. If we were to push the group back together, how many counters would we have?

Explicitly explain that half of the collection is less than the whole collection. If the counters were lollies, you would prefer to have the whole group rather than half the group.

Repeat this discussion using 6 counters, then 8.

**Say to the students:**

I am going to say a number. In your pairs, you will count out that many counters from your pile. I want you to work with your partner to halve the counters. So, if I say 6, I want you to count out 6 counters, then I want you to split the counters in half so there are the same number of counters in each group.

Make sure the students understand this step by doing a practice run. Ask each group how many counters make up half and how they know this is really half. When the groups are confidant doing this, give each pair a small whiteboard or paper and pencil to record their answer. Run through the activity having a discussion after each number. Use even numbers up to 30.

**Extension:**

Draw a grid on the board and write the even numbers from 2-30 on the top and leave the bottom blank:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 12 | 14 | 16 | 18 | 20 | 22 | 24 | 26 | 28 | 30 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Ask students to help you fill in the table. They can work in pairs with their counters – the counters provide a good visual for scaffolding so that later, when a child is asked to halve 10, they recognize that this is 10 separate items, rather than just a written numeral. Display this table as a poster in the room. For a quick activity at a later time, you could yell out a number on this table and see who can halve that number.