

NUMBER LINE ACTIVITY

Purpose: To give a visual representation of the number line and rational numbers.

Supplies: string, clothespins, index cards labeled with counting, whole, integer, irrational, and rational numbers, including absolute values and square roots.

Procedure: String clothespins along the string at various increments, then hang the string across the front of the room. Pin the number zero at the center of the line.

- Greet students at the door with an index card.

- Ask all the students with counting numbers to come forward first. Get the class to recall the definition of counting numbers to clarify. Students should then order themselves and pin their numbers to the line, leaving some empty pins between each card.

- Continue the process with whole, integer, & rational numbers, clarifying both the definition of each term and the method for ordering, especially negatives and decimals/fractions. Complete the procedure with a discussion of absolute values and irrational numbers, like pi.

Extension: Have students break into pairs and complete a Venn diagram of the terms discussed, complete with working definitions and examples. You can provide them with these or have them make up their own. Compare and contrast each category of numbers. (How are they alike? How are they different? What are their defining characteristics?)