

Minnesota Storytime
Reading Guide

Title: *How Many Elephants? A Lift-The-Flap Counting Book*

Author: Selby Beeler

Illustrator: Barney Saltzberg

Publisher and Copyright Date: Candlewick Press, 2004

Connection to Minnesota: Minnesota author

Summary: This lift-the-flap counting book begins with a toddler replying to the title question with “There aren’t any elephants.” He counts to 10 looking for common objects like shoes, books, hats, etc., but doesn’t see the elephants coming into the room and entering the closet until the end of the book.

Suggested ages: 0-3, 4-6

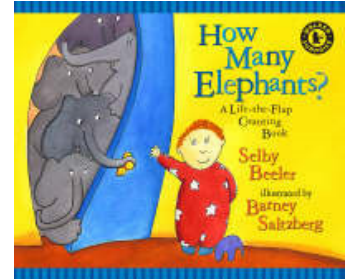
Tips for Reading:

- Use a young toddler voice when reading the quotes from the child.
- Encourage the children to lift the flaps after you read the questions in the story.
- When you re-read the book, point out the elephants and the numbers on each page.
- The last counting page (10 dinosaurs) has a pull-out drawer instead of lifting the flap, and the drawer is often stuck if the book is new. So before reading, wiggle the drawer to free the corner and check that it pulls out at an angle.

Questions before reading:

- Have you ever seen an elephant? Where?
- How big are elephants? Could an elephant fit in your house? Could an elephant fit in your closet? How many elephants could you fit on your hand?
- What number do you use when there is none of something?
- Can you count from 0 to 10?

To Introduce this story say: This is a counting story that begins by asking a little boy the question “How many elephants are in your closet? “ What do you think he’ll say? Let’s find out.



**Questions
After Reading:**

- Were you able to guess what was behind any of the flaps? How did you know?
- Why wasn't the little boy able to see the elephants until the very end of the story?
- Why do you have to be extra careful when you read a lift-the-flap book?

RELATED ACTIVITIES

Art:

- Draw some of the counted items featured in the book: elephants, paintbrushes, shoes, books, animals, balloons, hats, markers, cars, robots and dinosaurs.

Dramatization:

- Make up the same kind of story using normal everyday things that you have around like crayons, rocks, and pennies and put them under, in, or behind things like paper towels, boxes, and doors.

Language:

- As you go through the book again, name the colors of the counted items featured in the book: elephants, paintbrushes, shoes, books, animals, balloons, hats, markers, cars, robots and dinosaurs.

Math:

- As you go through the book again, count all the items under each flap.
- Count from 0 to 10 using your fingers.
- Count backwards from 10 to 0.

Music:

- Sing a counting song, such as "One Elephant Went Out to Play", "Five Little Monkeys" or "This Old Man (knick-knack-paddy-whack)"

Writing:

- Write the numbers from 0 to 10.
- Write the words for the numbers zero to ten.

Other:

- Play "Hide and Seek".

**Suggestions for
English Language
Learners:**

- Count from 0 to 10 in your native language.
- Name all the counted items featured in your native language: elephants, paintbrushes, shoes, books, animals, balloons, hats, markers, cars, robots and dinosaurs.

Related Books:

- ***Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed*** by Eileen Christelow (Houghton Mifflin, 1989)
- ***Ten, Nine, Eight*** by Molly Bang (Greenwillow, 1983)
- ***Feast for 10*** by Cathryn Falwell (Clarion, 1993)
- ***From One to One Hundred*** by Teri Sloat (Dutton, 1991)
- ***One Duck Stuck*** by Phillis Root, illustrated by Jane Chapman (Candlewick, 2001)
- ***Two Bears Beneath the Stairs: A Lift-the-Flap Counting Book*** by Elizabeth Spurr, illustrated by Nadine Bernard Westcott (Simon & Schuster, 2002)

