

HELPFUL HINTS FOR USING MANIPULATIVES

1. Don't rush through the manipulatives because you lose the effect.
2. Don't force students to use the manipulative after an idea has already been conceptualized.
3. To avoid the above pitfalls requires:
 - (a) teacher observation
 - (b) teacher questioning

4. In order to get the most from the use of manipulatives, students need to progress from using only manipulatives to the use of symbols. This is a three step process.

1. Manipulatives only - free experimentation followed by "guided" experimentation.
2. Manipulatives and symbols. Pictures are also at this stage.
3. Symbolic

It is important to remember that not all students will be at the same place at the same time.

HOW TO SET UP "STRUCTURE" WITHOUT STRUCTURE

1. Have materials available and put out no more than you want your students to use at that time.
2. Try the activity yourself before you have your students use them. Even a few minutes will give you a "feel" for them.
3. Make sure the materials are appropriate to the students level.
4. Never be afraid to change a game or a rule or procedure to fit you and your students and their needs.
5. Keep groups small enough so there are no long waits for turns or for input.
6. Have a sharing time for problems and successes.