

# NIE PART 5

## Did you know?

THE first known use of numbers dates back to around 30,000 BC when tally marks were used by early mankind.

# THE NUMBERS GAME

## NUMBER KNOW-HOW

### Facts and figures

HERE are some interesting facts about numbers

- If you add up all the numbers from 1 to 100 consecutively (1 + 2 + 3...) it totals 5050
  - There are 31,557,600 seconds in a year.
  - The opposite sides of a die always adds up to seven.
  - The letter W is the only letter in the alphabet that has three syllables (all others have one).
  - There are exactly 1,048,576 bytes in 1 megabyte
  - What arrives after a million, billion and trillion? The answers are: quadrillion, quintillion, sextillion, septillion, octillion, nonillion, decillion.
  - Many languages have words expressing indefinite size of a number often used for effect or exaggeration. For example zillions or gazillions.
  - If the number 8 lies on its side, it shows the symbol for infinity in the world of mathematics.
  - One is the 35th most commonly used word in the English language.
  - $111,111,111 \times 111,111,111 = 12,345,678,987,654,321$ .
  - 2520 is the smallest number that can be exactly divided by all the numbers 1 to 10.
  - The birthday paradox says that in a group of just 23 people, there's a 50% chance that at least two will have the same birthday.
  - The largest prime number ever found is more than 22 million digits long.
  - 2013 was the first year since 1432 that's a rearrangement of four consecutive numbers.
  - $12+3+4+5+67+8+9 = 100$
- NUMBERS ARE FUN.

IMAGINE a world without numbers. For some of you this may seem exciting. No more addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, algebra nor calculus. No more maths.

However without numbers we would not be able to understand the concept of value.

Losing our number system would dramatically change our society and the way we live.

### Living without number

A tribe in Brazil seems to get by just fine with practically no comprehension of any mathematical concepts.

The inhabitants on the Maici River in Brazil live in a world unlike our own and it's not because there are no computers, mobile phones or cars.

In their everyday lives, the Piraha people appear to have no need for numbers. Numbers are just not a big part of their life.

Their language lacks numerical vocabulary and they seem to have no concept or words for exact numbers.

There are really only three numeric words in Piraha – "one", "two", and "many".

But "one" doesn't always mean

exactly one – it could mean one fish, a small fish, or only a few fish.

The Piraha have a unique way of life and believe that number words are just not necessary.

### Superstitious numbers

Our fascination with certain numbers is historical. For some cultures lucky or unlucky numbers have real meaning.

★ For the Ancient Babylonians the most meaningful number was 60. They based their mathematics and calendar around it. That's why an hour has 60 minutes, a minute 60 seconds and a circle 360 degrees.

★ One of the most widespread superstitious beliefs is that the number 13 is unlucky. It even has its very own name, even though you probably can't pronounce it: triskaidekaphobia.

★ In China, the pronunciation of the word for the number four is similar to that of the Chinese word for death and is therefore considered unlucky.

★ Nine is feared in Japan because it sounds similar to the Japanese word for torture or suffering.

★ In Australian cricket, 87 is called the "devil's number." It is believed that batsmen are more likely to strike out after getting that many runs. It is also an unlucky 13 short of 100, the number every batman wants.

★ The number seven also has some superstition surrounding it. Some believe the number holds a lot of power. There are seven days in the week, seven colours of the rainbow, seven notes on a musical scale, seven seas and seven continents.



NEXT WEEK: Koalas in crisis (QLD school holidays)

# NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION



If you are interested in the promotional benefits of sponsoring Newspapers in Education material to school students in Gympie, please call Toni on 5430 1008.

“THESE BUSINESSES CARING FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR CHILDREN”

