Same Amount, Different Coins: Make 20p in More Than One Way

This guide explains a short video and printable worksheet made for children in Year 2 (the school year most children are in when they turn 7). It looks at how 20p can be made using different combinations of coins, helping children see that the same amount of money can look different depending on which coins you use. It's a light, playful way to link classroom maths with the kind of counting out change children might see at a shop till. There is nothing to prepare in advance and nothing to worry about if your child finds coins tricky at first — this is normal and part of learning.

What it is

This is a short video paired with a printable activity sheet, designed for children in Year 2 of primary school (usually aged 6 to 7). It focuses on money, specifically the many ways you can put coins together to make 20p. The activity uses clear, labelled pictures of coins rather than real money, so children can see and compare the values easily on the page. It sits within what's sometimes called Key Stage 1 (KS1) — the name for Year 1 and Year 2 together, the first two years of primary school after Reception. The resource is designed to be used alongside, not instead of, whatever your child's class is already doing with money in maths lessons, and it's meant to feel like a game rather than a test.

What happens

In the video, children are shown several different groups of coins that each add up to 20p — for example, two 10p coins, or a 10p and two 5p coins, or four 5p coins. Using the labelled pictures, children work out and explain how they know each group totals the same amount, which gets them thinking about addition in a flexible way rather than just following one method. At the end, there's a gentle challenge inviting children to come up with another combination of coins that also makes 20p, using the printable sheet to try out their own ideas. There's no single 'right' way to solve it — the point is exploring several routes to the same answer.

What it means for your child

This activity connects to the Department for Education's National Curriculum for maths in England, which for Year 2 includes recognising coins and working out different ways to make the same amount of money. Being able to see that 20p can be two 10ps or four 5ps helps children build a stronger sense of number generally, not just with money — it's the same flexible thinking that helps with addition and subtraction elsewhere in maths. It also gives real-world meaning to classroom maths, since handling change is something children will meet when shopping or spending pocket money. Schools vary in exactly how and when they teach this within Year 2, so if you'd like to know where it fits into your child's own lessons, it's worth asking their teacher.

How you can help at home

You don't need any special resources — a few real coins from a purse or a piggy bank work just as well as the printable sheet. Try tipping some 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p and 20p coins onto the table and asking your child to find two or three different ways to make 20p, or another small amount they choose themselves. Everyday moments work well too: if you're paying for something small in a shop, let your child help count out the coins, or ask them, 'Can we make this a different way?' Keep it short, light and led by your child's

interest — a couple of minutes is plenty, and there's no need for repeated drilling. If coins feel confusing at first, that's completely normal at this age and will come with time and practice.

Questions parents often ask

Do I need real coins? No — pictures work fine, and real coins are just an optional extra if you have them handy. My child finds money confusing — should I worry? Not at all; recognising coins and their values takes practice and children pick this up at different rates, so keep activities short and playful rather than repeated often. Will this be tested? This resource is for everyday learning and practice, not a formal assessment, though your child's school may check understanding of money in its own way — ask the class teacher if you'd like specifics. Is this suitable if my child is learning English or has additional learning needs? Yes — the coin pictures are visual and the activity can be slowed down, repeated, or adapted at home; if you'd like ideas tailored to your child, their teacher or school SENCO (the staff member who coordinates support for additional needs) is the best person to ask.

Sources

- Department for Education, GOV.UK — National curriculum in England: mathematics programmes of study (key stages 1 and 2), Year 2 measurement (money)