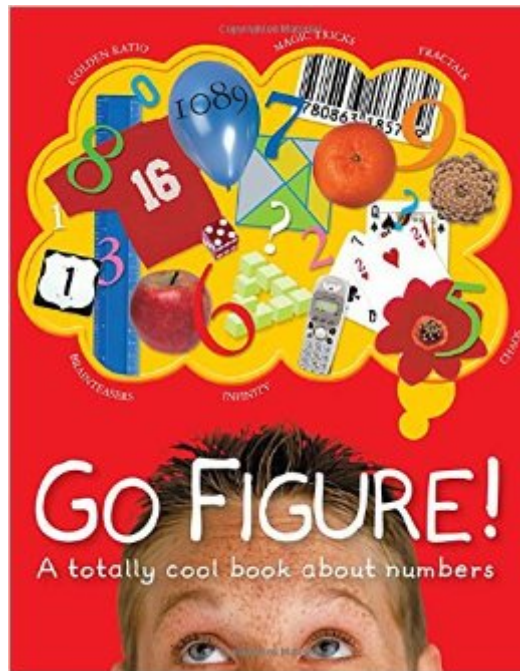


The book was found

# Go Figure!: A Totally Cool Book About Numbers (Big Questions)



## Synopsis

Numbers create the structure to our universe. Without numbers, computers would not work and cars would not go. There would be no way to quantify things. You wouldn't be able to ask "How many?" or "How much?" We would not understand time or distance. Sports records wouldn't matter! Go Figure! is a math book filled with the weird and wonderful side of math and numbers. Discover why there are 60 minutes in an hour, why daisies have to have 34, 55, or 89 petals, and why finding a prime number could make you a millionaire. Go Figure! is also packed with activities that children can try out on their own or with friends, including brainteasers, magic tricks, and things to make, while also learning about the simple puzzles that stumped the world's brainiest mathematicians for centuries. Go Figure! is a fun and quirky look at the magical world of numbers, without the effort of a math textbook.

## Book Information

Series: Big Questions

Hardcover: 96 pages

Publisher: DK Children (August 15, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0756613744

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Product Dimensions: 8.8 x 0.5 x 11.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (34 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #69,868 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #41 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)

[Science, Nature & How It Works > Mystery & Wonders](#) #376 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)

[Education & Reference > Math](#) #21179 in [Books > Reference](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Without math, the pyramids would never have been built. ~ Johnny Ball  
Go Figure! gives children the opportunity to unlock the magic of numbers through brainteasers, mind-reading games and magic tricks. This book also contains some of the puzzles that have stumped the world's smartest mathematicians. The author, Johnny Ball introduces concepts to make math more fun and very easy to understand. Part of what makes this book quite enjoyable is the full-color pages filled with

diagrams, pictures and explanations. The concepts are divided into four main chapters: Where do Numbers come from? Magic Numbers Shaping Up The World of Math Children will learn about Roman numerals, infinity, secret codes, World News, how counting began, shapes, chaos and logic. Johnny Ball also answers the following questions: Did Cavemen Count? How many molecules are in one glass of water? What do the symbols on a Babylonian clay token mean? How did the Mayans count? How do insects use prime timing to survive? How did numbers evolve? See Indian numbers go from 10 symbols to what they are today. One was originally a horizontal line. Three, three horizontal lines. Which really helps to explain why three looks the way it does today. Really fascinating stuff even for adults to read about. As someone who enjoyed writing words upside down on my calculator in school, I thoroughly enjoyed this entertaining book about how math evolved through time. There is even a page comparing 1-100 in Babylonian, Egyptian hieroglyphics, Chinese script, Hindu, Hebrew, Greek, Roman, Mayan and Modern Arabic.

Here's a rare find: A lively, colorful, intellectual book about math for kids (or indeed anyone who can do basic arithmetic). Author Johnny Ball begins at the beginning, with a review of the many ways that different cultures reckon numbers. Base ten? How about base 20 (in cultures where people count on their fingers AND toes)? Kids also get to see how different systems for writing numbers--from Egypt to Rome to India to the Mayan empire--developed. And Ball presents all sorts of intriguing topics, including pi, magic squares, primes, geometry, topology, logic, and fractals. The book is bursting with helpful illustrations and peppered with questions, thought problems, cool math shortcuts, and activities. For example, the reader learns how to prove that a triangle's angles add up to 180 degrees (by drawing a triangle on paper, tearing out each corner, and then fitting them together along a straight line). Negatives? The explanations aren't always satisfying, as when Ball explains why numbers from the Fibonacci sequence (i.e., ...5, 8, 13, 21, 35...) turn up in nature so often. ("...they provide the best way for packing seeds, petals, or leaves in a limited space without large gaps or awkward overlaps.") But I don't really see this as a shortcoming. The book is designed to be a brief introduction, and Ball's presentation should inspire the curious reader to track down more information. My more important complaints: (1) Some of the "brain teasers" are really just smart aleck riddles about how we interpret everyday speech--e.g., "How many birthdays does the average man have?" (Answer: One) or "How is it possible to push a large doughnut through a cup handle?" (Answer: Poke your finger through the handle and give it a push!

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