

RAFT IDEAS

Topics: Binary Numbers, Place Value, Exponents, Number Bases

Materials List

- ✓ Weaving board
- ✓ Beads of two colors
- ✓ String or cord
- ✓ Ascii alphabet

This Activity can be used to support the teaching of: Common Core Math Standards:

- Factors (Grade 4, Operations and Algebraic Thinking, 4)
- Place Value (Grade 4, Number & Operations in Base Ten, 1; Grade 5, Number and Operations in Base Ten, 1 & 2)
- Exponents (Grade 6, Expressions and Equations, 1)
- Problem Solving and Reasoning (Mathematical Practices Grades 4-12)



Binary Weaving

Breaking the Computer Code



Computers use binary numbers (Base 2), a series on “ons” and “offs” that encode information. In this activity, students use the Ascii alphabet to encode a message into woven band, and then other students can decode the information.

To Do and Notice

1. Introduce students to the binary system and the Ascii alphabet (either include the binary number or let the students figure them out.)
2. Direct the students to choose one bead color to represent “0” (off) and another to represent “1” (on).
3. Challenge the students to encode a secret message in binary using beads. This could be a Native American-style band eight beads wide, or a very long string of single beads.
4. Have students switch their beaded creations with classmates to decode.

The Math Behind the Activity

	2^7	2^6	2^5	2^4	2^3	2^2	2^1	2^0
Base 10	128	64	32	16	8	4	2	1
L = 76	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
i = 105	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1

Computers use the binary system (base 2) because it can be transmitted electronically, through “offs” and “ons”. A number has been assigned to each capital letter, lower-case letter, and punctuation mark. To translate a number to binary, go through the following steps:

Turning 76 into binary:

- Can you subtract 128 from 76 and get a positive number? No. Place a 0 in the 2^7 column.
- Can you subtract 64 from 76 and get a positive number? Yes. Place a 1 in the 2^6 column.
 - Subtract 64 from 76 ($76-64=12$)
 - Continue process with remaining number = 12
- Can you subtract 32 from 12 and get a positive number? No. Place a 0 in the 2^5 column.
- Can you subtract 16 from 12 and get a positive number? No. Place a 0 in the 2^4 column.
- Can you subtract 8 from 12 and get a positive number? Yes. Place a 1 in the 2^3 columns.
 - Subtract 8 from 12 ($12 - 8 = 4$)
 - Continue process with remaining number = 4
- Can you subtract 4 from 4? Yes. Place a 1 in the 2^2 column.
 - Subtract 4 from 4 ($4 - 4 = 0$)

Once 0 is reached, place a “0” in all remaining columns.

Web Resources (Visit www.raft.net/raft-idea?isid=303 for more resources!)

Ascii Alphabet

American Standard Code for Information Interchange

Symbol	Decimal	Binary	Symbol	Decimal	Binary
A	65	01000001	a	97	01100001
B	66	01000010	b	98	01100010
C	67	01000011	c	99	01100011
D	68	01000100	d	100	01100100
E	69	01000101	e	101	01100101
F	70	01000110	f	102	01100110
G	71	01000111	g	103	01100111
H	72	01001000	h	104	01101000
I	73	01001001	i	105	01101001
J	74	01001010	j	106	01101010
K	75	01001011	k	107	01101011
L	76	01001100	l	108	01101100
M	77	01001101	m	109	01101101
N	78	01001110	n	110	01101110
O	79	01001111	o	111	01101111
P	80	01010000	p	112	01110000
Q	81	01010001	q	113	01110001
R	82	01010010	r	114	01110010
S	83	01010011	s	115	01110011
T	84	01010100	t	116	01110100
U	85	01010101	u	117	01110101
V	86	01010110	v	118	01110110
W	87	01010111	w	119	01110111
X	88	01011000	x	120	01111000
Y	89	01011001	y	121	01111001
Z	90	01011010	z	122	01110010