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Two mice balance on a teeter-totter. More animal friends come to join in, but the teeter-totter doesn't always balance. Find out what happens when a bird wants to join in the fun.

Ages: 3 to 6 years

ISBN: 9781481420518

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Related Books: *Just a Little Bit* by Ann Tompert



Balancing Act

What does it take to balance a teeter-totter?

Math Connections:

Equal

Balance

Weight

Activities to Do Together:

- Use this story to engage your child in an investigation of balance and what it means to be equal.
- Investigate the concept of equal by playing with a balance scale. (See below for directions on scale making.)
- Ask your child to make the scale balance by putting identical objects on each side of the scale.
- Then add other objects that weigh the same as each other, one at a time just like in the story.
- Ask your child to switch the objects from one side to the other. Do they still balance each other? For younger children, this is important when they solve number sentences or equations and understand that " $2 + 3 = 5$ " AND " $5 = 2 + 3$ ".
- Children can place one heavier object on one side of the scale and add several lighter objects to the other side until it balances. This concept is important so children realize that many light objects together can weigh as much as one heavier object.

Vocabulary for Building Math Concepts:

another, balance, one, too many

Extension Questions:

1. What do you think would happen if you sat on one end of the teeter-totter and the mouse sat on the other end? How many mice do you think would balance you? How do you know?
2. If you were sitting on one end of the teeter-totter, who (or what) could you place on the opposite end to balance you? How do you know? How could you find out?
3. In the beginning of the story, the two mice balance on the teeter-totter. What would happen if the mice switched places? Would the teeter-totter still balance?
4. What happened when the bird wanted to join in? Why do you think that happened?
5. Why do you think the teeter-totter broke at the end of the story?



Early Math Project Resources:

[Make a Scale](#) (English)

[Make a Scale](#) (Spanish)

[Balancing One at a Time](#) (English)

Balancing One at a time (Spanish) coming soon!

Online Resources:

[What weighs more: cereal or noodles?](#)

An investigation from Scholastic, Inc.

