

Math Connections: Counting & Comparing

Use your classroom's real transportation tally data for hands-on math practice

This activity uses your classroom's actual weekly tally data. After the Friday tally is complete, project or write the week's numbers on the board.

Activity 1: Count and Compare

Write this week's tally numbers on the board:

Walk: ____ **Bike:** ____ **Bus:** ____ **Carpool:** ____ **Ride:** ____

Ask students:

"Which way of getting to school had the most students this week?"

"Which had the fewest?"

"How many students walked OR biked? Add those two numbers together."

"Were there more walkers and bikers, or more riders? How many more?"

MA Framework: K.OA.A.1–2 (represent addition/subtraction), 1.OA.A.1 (add/subtract within 20), 1.MD.C.4 (organize and interpret data)

Activity 2: Picture Graph

Give each student a small square of colored paper matching their mode (green = walk, blue = bike, yellow = bus, orange = carpool, white = ride). Students line up their squares on a poster to create a picture graph. Each column represents one mode.

Ask students:

"Which column is tallest? What does that tell us?"

"How many more students would need to walk to make the walking column as tall as the riding column?"

MA Framework: 1.MD.C.4, 2.MD.D.10 (picture graphs and bar graphs), K.CC.B.4 (counting to tell how many)

Activity 3: Comparing Across Days

Show Monday's tally and Friday's tally side by side. Ask students to find what changed.

"Did more students walk on Monday or Friday? Why do you think that might be?"

"What about the weather — was it different on those days?"

MA Framework: 2.MD.D.10 (draw picture/bar graphs and answer questions), K.MD.B.3 (classify objects into categories and count)

Tip: Keep a running class graph on the wall that grows each week. Students love watching the pattern build over time.