

## A TEACHER REFLECTS

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I found that there were a lot of tricks to explain and explore for Lesson 1. Talking about the tricks helped students see the patterns. To get the class into a pattern-seeking mode, I began with familiar basic number patterns, such as skip-counting by twos and fives or a series of square numbers, 1, 4, 9, 16.... Since many students thought of number patterns only as repetition like 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3..., I tried to help them see the pattern in starting with 2, then adding 3 at each step: 2, 5, 8, 11....

Decoding tricks proved to be an attainable goal for most students. Devising tricks was more difficult and not everyone succeeded. This activity fosters perseverance for sure! The process was difficult for many to explain. Michelle said, "I just kept trying." Following the process was much easier to do than explaining the process. We went back at the end of the lesson and did an example trick to talk about the process steps.

To see if they understood the concepts, I asked students to write in their math journals about the definition of mathematical problems, how to identify a pattern, and how to test if a pattern is always true.

We spent some time in class discussing how a table works in examples such as bus schedules, fast food menus, and class schedules. We made tables together as a class and in small groups. Working together made the problems less intimidating and helped everyone. For example, Jovanna understood the problem well and explained it to Veronica. Both were satisfied with their understanding of the problem after some discussion and were proud to have been able to solve the problem on their own. That is powerful!

We especially enjoyed acting out the problem in Lesson 3. This was important for spatial learners, made math fun and effectively demonstrated the problem.