

Lesson 2 – Novel use of the count tool for literacy

Aim

- To use the count tool to answer hypotheses about common letters in use.

Success criteria

- Children can use a spreadsheet to work out which letters appear most often.
- Children can use the 'how many' tool.

Resources

- 2Calculate tool

Activities

1. Explain that we are going to see how spreadsheets can also be used for literacy and for carrying out investigations.
2. Open a new spreadsheet in advanced mode.
3. Remind the children how to make their spreadsheet bigger by clicking on the + in the button on the



bottom right of the screen to add more cells.

4. In this lesson we will be testing out a hypothesis about which letters are most commonly used in the English language. We will start off by asking whether 'e' is the most popular vowel.
5. Create a spreadsheet like the following picture:

Test out a hypothesis about which letter is most common in the English language.	Is 'e' the most popular letter in the English language?	What other letters do you think might be popular?
a		
e		
i		
o		
u		

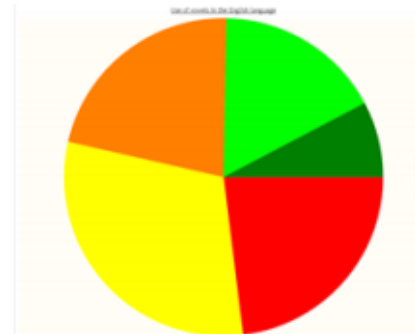
6. The vowels on the left-hand side are the variables that we are going to get the spreadsheet to count. Click on the cells next to the letter 'a' and add a 'how many' tool from the controls toolbox on the right-hand side.



7. This tool will count all of the letter 'a's on the spreadsheet except for the cell to its immediate left.
8. Ask children to create a similar spreadsheet and add the 'how many' tool for each vowel. Which is the most common vowel so far?

Test out a hypothesis about which letter is most common in the English language.	Is 'e' the most popular letter in the English language?	What other letters do you think might be popular?
a	9	
e	16	
i	9	
o	12	
u	7	

9. Add some common consonants e.g. m, t, s, c, p and see how the count updates.
10. Add some more sentences for the tools to count. These can be typed into cells or copied and pasted e.g. from a website such as an online encyclopaedia.
11. Can children answer questions about the most popular letters? Can they use the spreadsheet to answer hypotheses e.g. Certain genres will use a greater variety of letters than others?
12. Can children present their results in a graph?



13. The count tool can also count words as well as individual letters. Can children suggest words to count? They could enter a variety of connectives for example and see which is the most commonly used in a variety of texts.