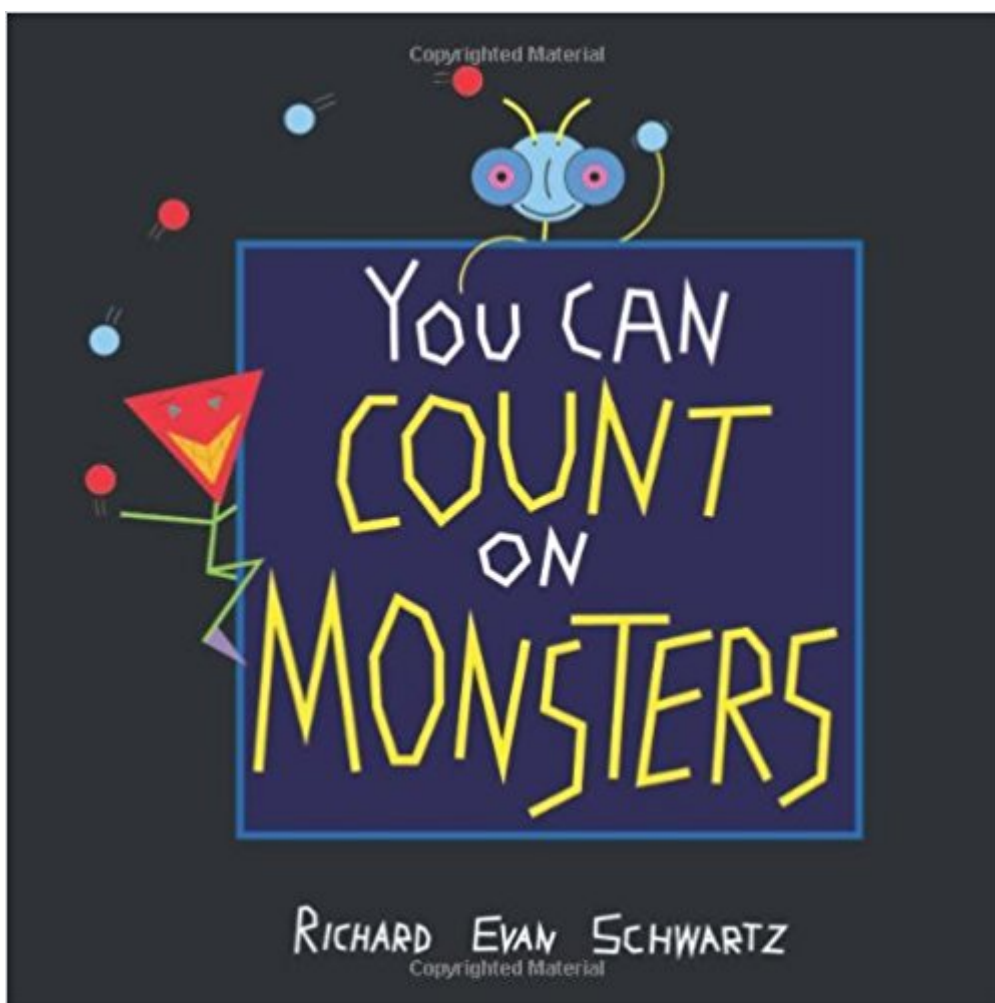


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# You Can Count On Monsters: The First 100 Numbers And Their Characters



## Synopsis

Using a unique teaching tool designed to motivate kids to learn, this volume visually explores the concepts of factoring and the role of prime and composite numbers. The playful and colorful monsters are designed to give children (and even older audiences) an intuitive understanding of the building blocks of numbers and the basics of multiplication. The introduction and appendices can also help adult readers answer questions about factoring from their young audience. The artwork is crisp and creative and the colors are bright and engaging, making this volume a welcome deviation from standard math texts. CRC Press Author and NPR's Math Guy Keith Devlin spoke with Scott Simon about how the book makes finding prime numbers fun. "This is one of the most amazing math books for kids I have ever seen," Devlin says. "Great colors, it's wonderful, and yet because [Schwartz] knows the mathematics, he very skillfully and subtly embeds mathematical ideas into the drawings."

## Book Information

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Age Range: 8 and up

Grade Level: 3 and up

## Customer Reviews

Grade 4 • This hybrid math/art book is both ambitious and imaginative. An introductory section explains the colored-dot configurations and factor trees for numbers 1 to 100, which appear on the verso of each spread. These factor trees are "all the way grown out" to the lowest common factors, or prime numbers. On the opposite page is a monster scene that represents the number. Schwartz has created a creature for each prime number: "Each monster

has something about it that relates to its number, but sometimes you have to look hard (and count) to find it." Thus, the monster for 5 is a five-featured, five-pointed star, and the 13 monster sports a pink-and-white eye-patch with 13 segments. The illustration for 14 is a "7" monster eating a "2" monster. The "78" picture includes monsters representing 2, 3, and 13, the prime factors of that number. The pages are glossy black with flat, colorful abstractions. The author's claim, "The only thing you really need to know in order to enjoy this book is how to multiply whole numbers together, like 2 and 3," is an understatement; readers will need patience and an open, undaunted mind to deconstruct the monster scenes. This is a book for math lovers who want to have some fun.

Challenge these students to create their own prime monsters and combinations. While the dot configurations and factor trees are less inventive, they provide a more concrete explanation of the math for the rest of us. — Barbara Auerbach, PS 217, Brooklyn, New York Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

This delightful book is the result of the author's desire to teach his daughters about primes and factorization. Apart from an introduction and some explanatory material in the back, it consists of one hundred double pages: on the left page is a number and that many dots, arranged into clusters that display its factorization. On the right page is a picture that represents the same information using the author's 'monsters,' which represent the prime numbers. --MAA This compact, innovative book counts to 100 using prime numbers represented as monsters, each with identifying characteristics (two resembles a bee with two buggy eyes, and three is an angry-looking triangular creature). The book opens with explanations of multiplication, prime and composite numbers, and factor trees, then moves on to a list of numbers. Each prime number looks unique, while composite numbers are represented by scenes involving their prime monsters (eight is illustrated as three of the beelike twos, i.e., two times two times two. Readers may have difficulty deciphering the pictures, which come to resemble little works of abstract geometric art. But especially for creative learners, visualizing the roles each monster plays may lead to deeper number sense. Ages 4 to 8.

--Publishers Weekly My eight-year old granddaughter Natalie is just learning about multiplication and as we read through almost the whole book, she especially liked the 'special numbers' (primes) where a new shape appeared. At one point she paused and said, 'You never get two special numbers one right after the other.' I gave positive reinforcement for this, her first mathematical conjecture (not mentioning the one counterexample of 2 and 3). She's going to take the book to her second grade class. Every school library should have one. --Thomas Banchoff, former MAA President

After reading the reviews and the sneak peaks here on , I was expecting a great book from Mr. Schwartz. What I did not expect however, was how absolutely brilliant it was going to be! What Schwartz does with the monsters to teach about prime numbers is both beautiful and ingenious. I homeschool 3 boys of primary school age. Our oldest son is autistic and has an extreme aversion to math. Our second son is the complete opposite, devouring anything and everything numeric. He's followed by our youngest who needs a thrill to sit still. All of my boys LOVE this book! My oldest (who is \*the one\* who would benefit the most from reading it) shied away from it at first. He's a bright boy and knew all too fast that the book was teaching math, a subject in which he struggles so much with. Well, after listening and watching me read this book, and seeing both his mother and his younger brothers having so much fun as we all "played" along, he had to come over and join in. He loves it! My two younger boys are quite obsessed with it. I have to give them turns with it!.I highly recommend this book to anyone who has a struggling learner/special needs child. With all of its benefits academically, I would (and will) buy the book for adults as well, if not just for the art work! It's amazing (and clever!) how Mr. Schwartz brings to life these numbers! As an adult who's also had an extreme aversion to math (my entire life) I can honestly say that Mr. Schwartz is the first person to claim that math can be fun, and then went on to prove it to me! What's more, is that he proved it to my child(ren)!

As described -- fast shipping -- thank you!!

My son loves this book so much when we checked it out from the library that I had to buy it for him. It showed up in excellent condition. I couldn't even tell it was used. Thank you so much!

My kid is in first grade. After receiving (and loving) this book, he's flying through math well above his grade level. If your kids are into math, or if they're struggling with multiplication and factors, this would be a great book.

Today in my Math Mavens program, we opened the book You Can Count on Monsters by Richard Evan Schwartz for the first time. This is a book I bought because I heard glowing reviews of it on NPR. The concept of the book is teaching prime and composite numbers through colorful, geometrical monsters. It is written for any age, from preschool on up, and my students really appreciated it. They had a lot of fun looking at the monsters, spotting the prime monsters hidden

inside the composite monsters, and describing what they saw. For example, one said the 20 monster looked like "two innocent two-monsters held in custody by evil nacho chips." For fans of Singapore Math or number bonds in general, you will also appreciate how each number is represented with a number of dots, the numeral, and a multiplication number bond for composite numbers. All in all, it makes a powerful set of connections for students between numbers, images and fun. The book covers numbers 1 through 100, with an introductory section that explains factoring, prime and composite numbers, and how the book is designed, all with colorful images and not too wordy. A section in the back has a further exploration of prime numbers. A wonderful enrichment for any math education!

I originally picked up this book intending to give it to my nephew for his fourth birthday, but after receiving it and taking a look through it I decided to hold onto it for another year or two. Unless a 3-4 year old child is extremely advanced, this book is going to be lost on them; my guess is that the optimal age is somewhere in the 6-9 year range, but then again I'm 32 and I enjoyed it immensely. For sure this is not a book to sit down with and read from front to back--it's the kind of book that any person, regardless of age, is going to browse through a bit, a few pages at a time. There is no "story" per se, but there's certainly a thread through the book as the monsters (the unique visual characters for each of the prime numbers) reappear later in combinations to represent larger numbers. The monsters themselves are for the most part arbitrary, but along with the "grouped dots" page that accompanies each one, they do a fantastic job of presenting numbers in an engaging, visual way. Whole numbers represent countable quantities. It is important to reinforce that fact so that people (especially children) don't get hung up on / turned off by the use of numerals (like 27, 81, etc.) to communicate numbers.

My daughter loves this book. Helpful for math.

I have always loved math and hope that my children will too. I firmly believe that good math learning requires creativity, to help learners understand the concepts rather than just memorize. This book is a fantastic way to do that with multiplication and factors (and probably a few other basic elements of math that I don't know enough to name) for an elementary school age onward. My bright 5 year old daughter loves this at the moment, although I thought when I first looked at it that it would be too advanced for her. She enjoys looking for the images of the prime monsters within the pictures of composite numbers and sorting out their relationships ("look Mommy the three is poking the two and

he doesn't like it" on the 6 page) on the right side of the pages. On the left sides, she is counting dots, adding and starting to learn multiplication. As a concept. Wow! Factors and composite vs prime numbers are introduced but full understanding will come as she gets a little older. I'm buying this again as a birthday gift for my niece who is about to enter first grade.

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