

# THOAN

## Main Curriculum References

(exact references will vary with learner group and how the resource is used)

N1/E1.7 – use calculator to check calculations using whole numbers

N1/E2.7 – use and interpret +, -, x and = in practical situations for solving problems

N1/E2.8 – use calculator to check calculations using whole numbers

N1/E3.9 – use and interpret +, -, x, ÷ and = in practical situations for solving problems

N1/L1.3 – add, subtract, multiply and divide using efficient written methods

N1/L2.2 – carry out calculations with numbers of any size using efficient methods

## Contributor's notes

The acronym THOAN is short for **THink Of A Number**.

This activity is great as a whole group starter, across all levels. Some learners use calculators if they find that easier and using calculators also then encourages them to try the task using bigger numbers.

I usually start by drawing a cloud on the board - to act as the mystery number, and then write up the instructions as we go along. Learners can then use paper and pen and go back to the start if they need to do so.

Once we have done the task a couple of times we talk through WHY it works.

I then invite learners to try making their own THOAN using mini-whiteboards. These can be very simple - ranging from 'Think of a number, subtract the number you just thought of - your answer is zero' onwards. Calculators are very useful here as they enable the learners to try their ideas out quickly. For example, one E2/E3 learner came up with a brilliant one - 'Think of a number, add 1, add 2 add 0, subtract 3 and you are back where you started!' He then proceeded to try this out on several numbers, finally stopping when he had got to a million add 1 etc!

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**THANK YOU**

# Think of a number

1. Think of a number between 1 and 10
2. Add 1
3. Double the result
4. Add 3
5. Subtract 4
6. Add 5
7. Halve the result
8. Add 6
9. Subtract 7
10. Add 8
11. Subtract 9
12. Subtract the number you first thought of

**Your answer is 1**

- Try making some 'THOANs' of your own!
- Start with small numbers and test your answers as you go.
- You may also like to try much larger numbers using a calculator.