Calculate 52+26 on the soroban

Set fifty (finger) two (thumb) on the soroban
Add twenty (thumb) and add six (pinch).
Interpret the answer: 78

Calculate 52+26 in your head

Calculate 74-35 on the soroban

Set seventy (pinch) four (thumb) on the soroban
You don't have 30 to take away "30 and 20 make 50" so add 20 and subtract 50
You don't have 5 to take away "5 and 5 make 10" so add 5 and subtract 10.
Interpret the answer: 74-35=39

Calculate 74-35 in your head

"When there’s not enough beads to take away you have to work out another way of doing it."

Pupils found calculations involving an exchange difficult to carry out, both on the soroban and mentally. The structure of the soroban strongly supports the concept of place value. Working from left to right on the soroban emphasises the most significant figures in line with commonly used mental calculation strategies. Many pupils switched to a left-to-right approach for mental calculation after the soroban lessons, showing a greater awareness of the quantity value of the digits.

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