The Number Line

Do you remember the yellow and black number line above the board in your elementary classroom? We'll build it in steps to help students understand the development of our number system.

A primary number line would contain only the **Natural** (or Counting) **Numbers**, unconnected.

. . . . >
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ⋯

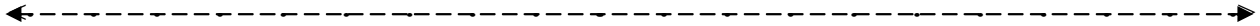
Next we add zero, and we have the set of **Whole Numbers**.

. . . . >
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ⋯

If we include the opposites (negative versions) of the natural numbers, we have **Integers.**

<. . . . .>
⋯ -7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ⋯

Now we insert the fractions, repeating decimals, and terminating decimals between the integers. This gives us the **Rational Numbers**. Our line is almost now a solid line.



This is as far as we need to go until we study Irrational numbers such as square roots and pi.

We'll continue the development of the number line at a future date.