



STUDENT HANDOUT

GREEN LEVEL
MORE SUPPORT

The Numbers in the Coins

Grades 5–8 · Math

James Tissot (1836–1902), Brooklyn Museum

ADMIT ONE

NAME _____

DATE _____

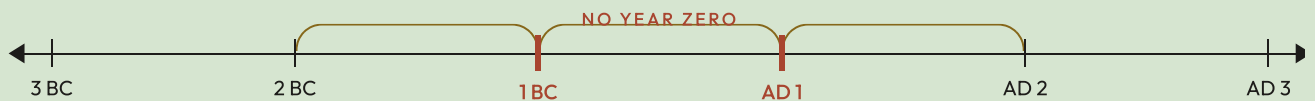
CLASS _____

Every coin in *In Their Hands* carries numbers: dates, reigns, weights, sizes, amounts. To work with the dates you need one rule that surprises most people: **there is no year zero**. The year 1 BC is followed straight away by AD 1.

PART 1

O1

No year zero



From 2 BC to AD 2, hop along the line: 2 BC → 1 BC → AD 1 → AD 2. **3 hops, so 3 years** — not 4. There is no zero to land on.

Now you try. How many years from **3 BC to AD 3**? Count the hops. _____ years

WORKED EXAMPLE

How long did Augustus rule?

1. Augustus ruled from **27 BC** until his death in **AD 14**.
2. Count back from 27 BC to the join: 27 years. Count on from the join to AD 14: 14 years. **$27 + 14 = 41$** .
3. The dates cross from BC to AD, and there is no year zero to stand on, so take away one: **$41 - 1 = 40$ years**.

PART 2

O2

Six spans of years

Both dates AD: subtract. **Both dates BC:** subtract too — BC numbers count *down* toward the join. **Across the join:** add, then take away 1. The first of each kind is started for you.

WHO	DATES	WORKING	YEARS
Tiberius (the Tribute Penny, a replica)	AD 14–37	$37 - 14 =$	
Pilate, prefect of Judaea	AD 26–36		

WHO	DATES	WORKING	YEARS
Herod the Great	37 BC–4 BC	$37 - 4 =$	
Emperor Claudius	AD 41–54		
Aretas IV	9 BC–AD 40	$9 + 40 = \underline{\quad} - 1 =$	
Herod Antipas (a replica)	4 BC–AD 39		

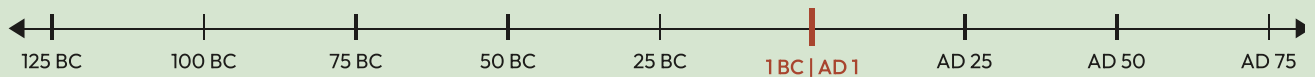
Which span is the longest? _____

PART 3

03

Put the coins in order

Write each letter above the line where its year belongs. BC years fall left of the join, like negative numbers. **A** the widow's mite first minted, 103 BC • **B** Herod the Great begins to rule, 37 BC • **C** the coin of Augustus, 5 BC • **D** Pilate's coin, AD 29 • **E** the coin of Festus, AD 59



Which coin was made earliest? _____

PART 4

04

Two small coins

They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything — all she had to live on.

MARK 12:44

The widow had 2 lepta and gave 2. Fraction given: $2/2 =$ _____ Percent: _____ %

Invented example: a rich man has 100 coins and gives 10. Fraction: _____ Percent: _____ %

Who gave the larger *share* of what they had? _____

PART 5

05

Half a shekel

Every Jewish man over twenty owed a **half-shekel** Temple tax each year. In Matthew 17:27, one coin worth one shekel pays the tax for two people, Jesus and Peter.

How many shekels pay the tax for 4 men? _____ For 10 men? _____

MINI MUSEUM CONNECTION

In Case 7, find the widow's two lepta, and Pilate's prutah: 1.79 grams, 16 millimeters, made in the year of the Passion.

minimuseumproject.org/exhibitions/in-their-hands