

Medieval Finger Counting

The merchants of Medieval Europe and the Middle East used a system of finger counting. They could do rapid calculations on their fingers and keep track of money during the bargaining process. This type of finger counting is a place value system. The digits in the ones place are represented on the pinkie, ring, and middle fingers of the left hand.



1



2



3



4



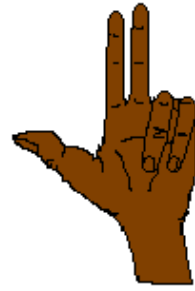
5



6



7



8



9

The positions of the thumb and index finger give the value of the tens place.



10



20



30



40



50



60



70



80



90

The hundreds place is the same as the ones place, but the digits are on the right hand.



100



200



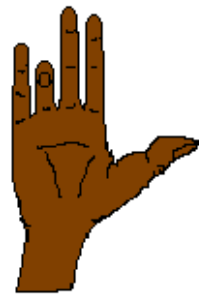
300



400



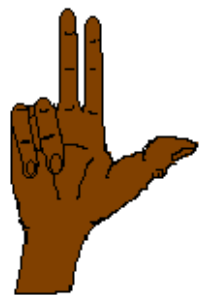
500



600



700



800



900

The thousands place is the same as the tens place, but it is on the right hand, too.



1000



2000



3000



4000



5000



6000



7000



8000



9000

Can you read these numbers?

