

Family Activities



School Readiness Skill: Sorts and classifies objects

Sorting and classifying objects helps children begin to organize things in their world and creates an awareness that is important for the more complex math concepts children will be learning in school. Young children tend to begin sorting simple properties first such as size, shape and color. Try these fun activities at home to help reinforce classification skills.

Home Sorting



Work with your child to sort common everyday objects around your home and as a part of their everyday chores. Allow your child to help sort the laundry, toys, silverware, etc. Your child may sort the laundry by color or type of clothing. For example: sort all of the shirts in a pile, all of the matching socks in a pile, or all of the blue jeans in a pile. Have a discussion with your child as they are sorting these objects by asking questions such as: “How are these items alike or the same?” or, “Why did you put these items in this pile and not in this other pile?” Encourage your child to think of other ways to sort the items you’ve collected together.

Mystery Bag

Place an object found around your home (keys, a shoe, a piece of fruit, watch, toy, etc.) inside a paper bag or pillow case. Invite your child to guess what object is hidden inside the bag by listening to the clues you give that describe the item. For example, for an apple you might say, “It is the color red,” or “It is a fruit and it has a stem.” Be sure to give your child plenty of time to think about the clue before you expect an answer. If he or she continues to struggle, you may invite him or her to place their hand in the bag to feel and then guess. Allow your child to have a look inside the bag once the correct guess is given. Repeat this same activity with other household objects.



Nature Walk

Invite your child to join you in a walk around your neighborhood or local park. Choose commonly found objects in this location such as leaves, rocks, flowers, or plants. Once you decide on an object, collect as many different types of that object as you can find. For example, if leaves are chosen you will help your child collect an assortment of a variety of leaves. Then, find a quiet location for your child to sort the leaves in a variety of ways (by color, size, texture, or the number of points).



Change Sort



Take out a hand full of change or dip into the family's piggy bank and place it on a table in front of your child. Invite your child to sort the change into like groups. Help your child place all the pennies together, all of the nickels together, or all of the dimes together and so on. Keep in mind that it is not necessary or expected for your child at this age to be able to identify the coin or its value.

Clip and Sort Book

To do this activity you will need old magazines, scissors, glue, and several sheets of blank paper. Invite your child to pick a simple object such as animals, shapes, colors, toys, etc. Using the magazines, your child will do a search to find photos of that particular object, cut them out and glue them on a sheet of paper. Label the sheet with the object name. For example all of the animals would be on a page or all of the toys would be on another page and so on. Assemble the pages together and staple into a book to enjoy again and again.



Check out the list below for some great children's books that teach the concept of sorting and classifying. Many of these books are available at your local public library.

The Button Box by Margarett Reid

Sorting by Henry Pluckrose

More, Fewer, Less by Tana Hoban

Shape Up Curvy Snake by Babs Hajdusiewicz

Color Farm by Lois Ehlert