

Classifying

Classification is the skill of sorting or grouping items by similar characteristics, such as colors, shapes or sizes. Children naturally classify toys by type and sort crayons by color. Children between the ages of 3 and 4 years old enjoy sorting and classifying objects usually by one characteristic (color, shape or size). If your preschooler does not know the names of colors or shapes, it may be helpful to ask him or her to find something that is the same color or shape as a specific item. As children develop, they can classify by more than one characteristic, such as sorting the green square blocks. When selecting materials for young children, avoid any small items that could pose a choking hazard.

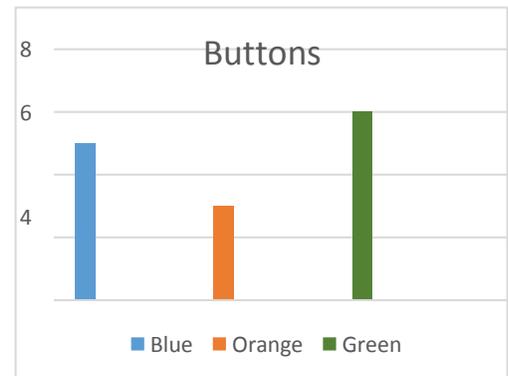
Ideas to try

Rocks and Leaves: As children explore a bin of rocks and leaves, they can learn which items are big, little, rough, smooth, thick, thin, hard, soft, wet or dry. Children are learning to classify items by similarities and differences.

Button, Button: Children can classify or sort large buttons by color, shape or size. They can sort by the type of button (metal, plastic or cloth) whether the buttons are shiny or dull, or how many holes are in the button.

Sorting Pom-poms: Provide children with a variety of pom-poms in different sizes and give them tongs to sort the pom-poms into a small, medium or large container.

Sorting Graph: After sorting items such as leaves, large sea shells or post cards, have the children record the information on a graph or chart. You can create a bar graph by listing the types of objects on the bottom and the number of objects on the side. (See example.)



Authors: Teresa Byington, YaeBin Kim, and Dan Weigel
University of Nevada Cooperative Extension



University of Nevada
Cooperative Extension

The University of Nevada, Reno is an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, creed, national origin, veteran status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, or gender expression in any program or activity it operates. The University of Nevada employs only United States citizens and aliens lawfully authorized to work in the United States.

Copyright © 2017 University of Nevada Cooperative Extension