

WHAT IS SHORTER AND WHAT IS LONGER?



Topic: Mathematical skills, estimation of size



Key terms: comparison

What we need: various sizes of wooden sticks (thin, thick, short, long), leaves or stones dispersed across an area (woodlands are great but any outdoor space will work)

Estimated time: 30 minutes

Methods: discussion, demonstration, searching

Activity description:

Possible objectives: To support the use of mathematical language: comparing, sorting and sizes

Allowing opportunities to sort by length, height, width and thickness

Allowing opportunities to speak and listen to other children

Activity:

Aim of the activity:

To sort nature materials by different criteria.

Background context:

In nature it is impossible to find two sticks, leaves or stones that are exactly the same. Humans are part of nature, we are just as diverse: none of us are exactly the same as someone else.

Before the activity starts:

Divide children into groups of 5 or 6.

During the activity:

The children's task will be to search for natural materials of various sizes - e.g. sticks.

In the group they should look at the materials they brought and think which one is the smallest or largest. Taking turns, they then line them up on the ground, sorted by size - from the smallest to the largest.

As a whole group evaluate the activity - which group finished first, who found the smallest stick, who found the biggest, etc.

Possible extension of the activity:

Staying in groups, create one straight line by putting the resources next to each other. Decide together which group created the longest line, which one the shortest. You may also want to combine the groups (two groups could create one straight line and then eventually have all of the children together).

Possible evaluation questions for children:

Are there identical sticks, leaves, stones in the nature? If you are not sure, let's try to find two sticks, leaves or stones that are exactly the same. Did you have any luck?

Curriculum links:

Maths, comparison

Sources: TAKE ME OUT

Notes:

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