

Create a Color Collage

Have you ever watched your child sort objects into groups without being asked or prompted? Has he divvied up his candy on Halloween night, or put his Matchbox cars in groups according to color? Preschool kids find sorting and classifying objects fun, because it brings about a sense of organization and accomplishment. And the best news is, all this sorting helps with kindergarten math and science success. Before sorting, kids make conscious and unconscious guesses about what group might have more or less, and sorting allows them to qualify or disqualify their assumptions.

Kids can sort objects by shape, size, color, or any other quality. But for beginning students, sorting by color is a good place to start. This hands-on art activity will help your child work on her sorting skills, and make a beautiful addition to the refrigerator gallery, too!



What You Need:

- Collage materials in mixed colors, such as sequins, stickers, beads, pom-poms, buttons, feathers, macaroni, and foam shapes
- White glue
- Heavy construction paper, divided into four parts with lines or folds
- Markers

What You Do:

1. Spread the collage materials out on a table or other work area. Make sure the materials are mixed up, so that the sorting isn't already done!
2. Give your child a piece of heavy construction paper that has been divided into four boxes with lines or folds.
3. Ask her to pick a color for each box, then write the color with an appropriate pen or marker. For example, use a red marker to write "red."
4. Help your child glue a few of the collage items into the correct boxes. For example, red sequins go into the "red" box, as do red pompoms... When you think she's got the hang of things, let her go at it on her own. (Keep in mind that even though she may have the sorting part down, she may still need some help with the glue!)
5. Challenge your child's ability to articulate the process she's using. Ask her to tell you *why* she's gluing the items where she's gluing them. And once she's got color sorting down, consider throwing her a curve ball by asking her how *else* she might sort her items. For example, she might put all the buttons together, or all the things that are soft (feathers, pompoms, etc.) As she works on her collage, talk about what makes the items the same and what makes them different.

When there are enough sparkles and glue to satisfy your young artist, and the macaroni is just barely hanging on to the edge of the page, the masterpiece is complete. Congratulations. You've helped sharpen your child's sorting, color recognition, and fine motor skills, and thrown in a bit of artistic expression as well. All that's left to do is to make some room on the refrigerator!