

Measurement Activities

How many centimeters are in a meter? How many inches are in a foot? These fundamentals may seem like second nature to an adult, but to children these important ideas might seem like a foreign language. It is necessary to make measurement a familiar concept to your child because he will be encountering units of measurement every time he deals with time, money, rulers, and scales (just to name a few examples). By applying measurement to real-life situations, you will make the concept easier to comprehend and provide your child with a strong motivation to learn it.

What You Need:

- Butcher paper
- Marker
- Tape measure



What You Do:

1. Talk about objects around the house that are tall, short, long, heavy, light, small, and big. Ask him to compare objects in terms of size. Is the oven bigger than the toaster? Are the stools shorter than the table? Allow him to measure things with non-standard or arbitrary units of measurement at first (hand print, paper clip, etc.).
2. Record your child's growth every month or two on a wall chart. Create this using butcher paper, a tape measure, and a marker. Get him involved by showing him his height on the tape measure and describing it in terms of feet, inches, and increments thereof.
3. Once your child has gotten the hang of standard units of measurement, give him a ruler or tape measure and encourage him to measure furniture, rooms, books, and other household objects.

Vocabulary Builders:

Use these key words when discussing measurement with your child.

- Decimeter
- Centimeter
- Height
- Inch
- Foot
- Meter
- Big, tall
- Small, short
- Ounce
- Pound
- Heavy, light

Next time you visit the library, check out one of these books:

Ten Beads Tall by Pam Adams. Child's Play, 1989.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle. Putnam, 1994.

Big, Small, Short, Tall by Loreen Leedy. Holiday, 1987.

Inch by Inch by Leo Lionni. Morrow, 1995.

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