



Pick, Choose, and Group Categorization

Language Arts

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Student Objectives

The students will be able to:

- be more aware of their surroundings.
- recognize likenesses and differences in objects by categorizing them into groups.

Materials Needed

Teacher:

- chalkboard, posterboard, chart paper, or erasable easel board
- appropriate writing utensil

Students:

- pencil
- crayons
- paper

New Terminology

group: two or more people or things that are together

categorize: grouping things that are alike

classify: to put in a category or group

New vocabulary words may also be introduced while listing the objects during the activity.

Lesson Activity Process

Clock 15–20 minutes.

The teacher will:

1. Ask all students with brown eyes to stand on the left side of the room and all students with blue eyes to stand on the right. Ask all students with eyes not brown or blue to stand in the front of the room. Explain that you just used students' eye color to classify them; that is, you created groups of children according to eye color.
2. Now draw a line on the chalkboard. (Guess at the placement of the line by observing the average height of the students.) Tell students to file up to the board, row by row. Each student should stand at the line you have drawn. If the student is taller than the height of the line, the student should stand on the left side of the class. If the student is shorter, ask him or her to stand on the right. When all the students have measured themselves ask, What did I use to categorize you into groups this time? (Height)

3. After students have returned to their seats, explain that you are going to play a grouping game. Show them how to start the game by retrieving any object in the classroom as the students silently count to 20 (or students can watch the clock for 20 seconds). At the end of the 20-count, students should raise their hands, indicating it is time for you to go back to your seat with your chosen object.
4. Repeat this procedure for each row of students, until all the students have an object to share with the class.
5. Students should then name their objects as you list them on the chalkboard.
6. Now ask students to choose items from the list that have things in common. Have those items brought to a common tabletop.
7. Discuss why all the items on the table fit into a certain category or group. Have students think of one name to call all the items that have something in common.
8. Repeat this grouping activity until most of the objects students chose belong to one category or another.

Modifications for Students with Special Needs

- Start with general categories. Categorize things by color, size, etc., before going to more specific categories—things with wheels, things you can read, etc.
- Have pairs of students, rather than individual students, search for an object in the class.

Evaluation

Ask students to draw pictures of three items that could be grouped together. Underneath their pictures, ask students to print a word that identifies what the three items have in common—nonwriters will need your help with this.

Tips for Success

- If, as students group themselves, you find they are having difficulty with their behavior, you may wish to limit the number of students who will retrieve objects for the grouping game. In larger classes, you may wish to limit the number to 10 or 15 students.
- During the open discussion-and-answer segment of this activity, do not force any child to respond. Many children learn by listening and are not comfortable in



a large group setting or with an unfamiliar face in the classroom.

- Encourage the students to help spell words as they are listed on the board.
- Consider the age and development of the students when determining how much guidance to offer in grouping items.
- Use familiar words such as *same*, *different*, *alike*, and *not alike*.

Additional Related Activities

1. After categorizing the students by eye color and height, ask students if they can think of any other

ways in which they could be grouped. (Students may suggest categorizing by eye color and height together, by clothing or hair color, by gender, by shoe styles, etc.)

2. Each student can draw a picture on a Post-it note of the item he or she chose. Then have students use the Post-it pictures to create a categorization graph on the chalkboard.
3. Lead a discussion in which students try to categorize something they can't see in the classroom—kinds of foods, vehicles, television shows, etc.

Notes for Next Time