



earlySTEM™ Size Sorting Tower

Here's What You Get!

- 1 Sorting Tower with 5 Self-Correcting Pieces

Introduction

Young children are fascinated by differences in sizes from a tiny acorn to a giant tree. Discovering things that are bigger or smaller sparks curiosity. The basic math skills of comparing and contrasting help children understand that things may be alike or different, and also helps them identify and describe relationships between objects. By its very nature, measurement helps develop reasoning and logic skills and connects geometry and numbers, two critical domains of early mathematics.

Use the Size Sorting Tower to address these Head Start Early Childhood Learning Outcomes:

- Goal IT-PMP 1 Child uses perceptual information to understand objects, experiences, and interactions.
- Goal IT- PMP 2 Child uses perceptual information in directing own actions, experiences, and interactions.
- Goal IT-PMP 6 Child coordinates hand and eye movements to perform actions.
- Goal IT-C 10 Child uses matching and sorting of objects or people to understand similar and different characteristics.
- Goal P-MATH 8 Child measures objects by their various attributes using standard and non-standard measurement. Uses differences in attributes to make comparisons.

Suggested Activities

Sorting Up, Sorting Down

Place the Size Sorting Tower vertically and remove two pieces. Demonstrate how the pieces fit into the slots. Remove the pieces and invite the child to fit them into the slots. Next remove three, then four, then all five. When the child can successfully fit all the blocks into the slots, turn the Tower over and try again.

Sorting Horizontally

Turn the Sorting Tower on its side so that the blocks and slots face up. Remove the blocks and encourage the child to place each block into the correct slot. Turn the Tower so the sizes are reversed and repeat.

Just the Blocks

Together, examine the five blocks. Notice that they are all the same width but are of different lengths and thicknesses. Interact with the child to position the blocks in many different ways. Stack a tower so that the thinnest block is on the bottom and the thickest block is on the top. Create a staircase by placing the blocks vertically from tallest to shortest. Create a different set of steps by placing the blocks horizontally from thinnest to thickest. Guide the child to choose which block comes next in each activity and verbalize the chain of events using measurement terms and positional words. For example, "You picked a tall block to put next to the short one. Can you find a block that is even taller?"

Size Sorting Tower (continued)**Everyday Measurement**

Incorporate measurement terms in everyday activities to promote early math skills as well as foster vocabulary development. Opposites, comparatives (comparing two things), and superlatives (comparing three things) are especially enriching for young children.

near far
long short
wide narrow
heavy light
many few
more less
big little
high low

tall taller tallest
thin thinner thinnest
fast faster fastest
small smaller smallest

That is a tall tree.
You took a long nap.
This is a heavy chair.
There are many chocolate chips in my cookie.
Isabel has long hair, Charise has short hair.

Measurement Tools

Some young children may be fascinated with measuring. Encourage them to compare and use non-standard items to measure objects. For example, a pencil might be longer than a crayon, a sandwich might be as thick as a building block. Have measuring tools available and invite the children to explore and experiment with rulers, scales, clocks, timers, and more.