

The Yes/No Sort

Players 1-4 Ages 3+ 5-10 min

GOAL

To sort a group of items into two sets (yes/no) according to one sorting attribute, or characteristic.

MATERIALS

Any collection of items that can be sorted into yes and no piles according to one specific attribute (a particular type, size, shape, color, texture, etc.). Examples include:



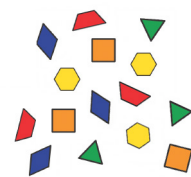
Nature Items



Clothing Items



Kitchen Items



Pattern Block Shapes

VOCABULARY


Compare
Same
Different

QUESTIONS

Can you explain the sorting rule to me?
What is another sorting rule we could use?

HOW TO PLAY

1. Choose a collection of items and place them in a pile on a table or floor.
2. Choose an attribute, or characteristic, for children to sort the collection into “Yes” and “No” piles by. Examples:
 - Nature items: things that are brown, things that are soft

- Clothing: blue items, small items, sandals
 - Kitchen: spoons, raisins (from a fruit or trail mix)
 - Shapes: triangles, shapes with four sides
3. Show children the collection of items. For example, show a laundry basket with clothes inside. Then say, “Let’s sort these clothes into two piles. In one pile, put all of the clothing that is blue. In another pile, put all of the clothing that is **not** blue.”
 4. Hold up a piece of clothing from the basket, then ask, “Is this blue?”
 5. Once a child responds correctly, ask, “Which pile should we put it in? The blue pile or the other colors pile?”
 6. Let the child add the piece of clothing to the correct pile.
 7. Have children continue to sort the clothes into the piles of blue and non-blue. Allow them to make reasonable sorting decisions as they go, providing questions to draw out the child's thought process. For example, if a shirt has blue and yellow stripes, ask children which pile they think the shirt belongs to (e.g., “it goes in the blue pile because everything that has some blue on it will go in the blue pile”).
 8. Once children have finished sorting, ask comparison questions:
 -  “Which pile looks bigger, the blue pile or the other colors pile?”
 - “The blue pile is bigger. What do you think that means? Do we wear a lot of blue clothing?”
 - “How many pieces of clothing do you think are in the blue pile? Can you count and see if you are right?”
 9. Try to expand on this activity by putting the clothing items back into the basket and choosing a new attribute for children to sort the collection into yes/no piles by. For example: “Let’s sort the clothes into two piles again. This time, let’s put all of the kids’ clothes in one pile and the grown-up clothes in another pile.”

WHAT CHILDREN ARE LEARNING

- Many young children love to sort and organize their toys or other collections of objects around the house or in their classroom. This process of sorting, or classification, is an important practice in science and mathematics. Activities like this help children gain experience with grouping objects by their characteristics and counting how many in each group. Later, they will use these skills when collecting and analyzing data to solve problems.
- It is important to understand that young children’s verbal skills vary. Some will be able to verbalize their answers to questions more easily than others. Children who demonstrate emergent language skills should be allowed to respond by pointing to piles or showing numbers with their fingers.

MATH TOPICS

Data Collection and Analysis

Sorting and Attributes

Shapes and Geometry

VIDEO



Watch Game Video

View the QR code in your smartphone’s camera app or QR code reader to watch a video that shows how to play The Yes/No Sort.

The Mystery Rule

Players 2-4 Ages 5+ 10-15 min

GOAL

Children determine the common attribute, or characteristic, among a set of items.

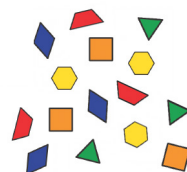
MATERIALS



Nature Items



Counter Sets



Pattern Block
Cutouts



Clothing Items

VOCABULARY

Same (in common)

Different

Sorting rule

QUESTIONS

How did you figure out what the sorting rule was?

What did you look at and notice?

What did you think about?

HOW TO PLAY

1. Choose a collection of items and think about how you would like to sort them. Sorting means to separate into groups. You could sort by attributes such as size, color, shape, or how an item is used.




2. Then, put all the items that follow your rule in one group, and all the items that don't follow your rule in another group.



3. Start your turn by saying, "I used a mystery sorting rule to sort these items from the rest of the pile. Can you look at the items and tell me what my sorting rule was? What do all of these items have in common? What is the same about these items?"

Some children may be able to tell what the sorting rule is right away ("You took out all the orange"). You can respond by saying, "Yes, I made a group of all the orange laundry!"

Others may need more time and experience. Ask questions to direct children's attention to the sorting rule.

-  "Are these items the same size or different sizes?"
"Are they the same color?"
"Are these all the same type of laundry item?"

4. Discuss with children how they figured out the rule. Don't be surprised if they come up with a different rule than you thought of. It's exciting to talk about how more than one rule can be true.
5. When you're ready, play again, or this time have the child choose their own mystery sorting rule for others to solve.

WHAT CHILDREN ARE LEARNING

- Many young children love to sort and organize groups of objects. This process of sorting, or classification, is an important practice in science and mathematics. Activities like this help children focus on the attributes of objects and think about what makes things the same and different.
- To solve the mystery sorting rule, children need to ignore the differences between the items in the set (e.g., that the orange laundry includes different clothing items) in order to determine what the items have in common (they are all orange). This helps children develop both their sorting skills and their attention-shifting skills.

MATH TOPICS

Data Collection and Analysis

Sorting and Attributes

Shapes and Geometry

VIDEO



Watch Game Video

View the QR code in your smartphone's camera app or QR code reader to watch a video that shows how to play The Mystery Rule.