

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:



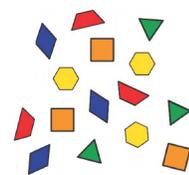
Nature items



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 and 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*.