Which One Doesn't Belong?

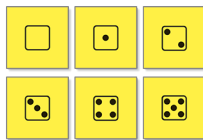**YOUNG MATHEMATICIANS**

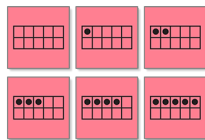Players 1-4 • Ages 4+ • 5-10 min

GOAL

To give a clear explanation of, or reason for, why a particular card does not belong among a set of cards. There can often be more than one card that "doesn't belong" in a given set of cards.

CARDS TO USE
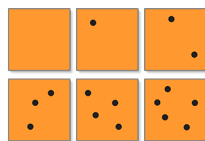
Start with:

Dice
0-5

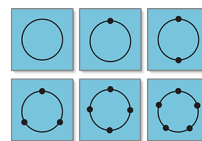10 Frame
0-5

Ordered
0-5

For later games: select more cards, one set at a time:
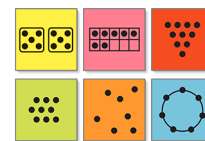
Ordered Dots
0-5

Scattered Dots
0-5

Circle
0-5

Extra Challenge

Select more cards
6-10

VOCABULARY

Same

Different

Belong

QUESTIONS

How do you know?

What do you see that makes you say that?

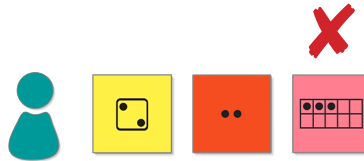Do you see another way that one of the cards doesn't belong?

HOW TO PLAY
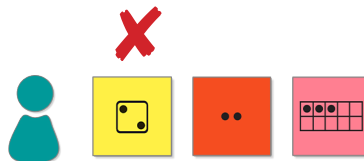
1. Place three cards on the table.

2. Ask, "Which card doesn't belong? Why?"

Give children plenty of time to look through the cards, and accept all answers that they can justify. It may be that the card with three dots doesn't belong because the other cards have two dots.

Or, it could be that the card with two dots in a diagonal line doesn't belong because the dots are in a straight line on the other cards.

3. Once the children finish explaining why one card does not belong, say, "Ready for a new set?" Put down three new cards. Ask, "Which one doesn't belong? Why?"

4. Continue to play with different cards. Once children are comfortable with cards 0-3, add the 4-5 cards. Once children are strong with 0-5, add the 6+ cards.

TIPS FOR PLAYING

- When children are new to this game, you can start simple by using colors. Put down two cards that are the same color and one card that is a different color and ask, "Which card doesn't belong? Why?" Once children are comfortable playing the game, use different colors and encourage children to notice the dots. Ask, "Do you see anything about the dots on these cards that might be the same or different?"

WHAT CHILDREN ARE LEARNING

- How to explain their thinking and talk about math concepts.

- To check whether quantities are the same, you might notice children counting the number of dots on the cards. Or, you might see them immediately know how many without counting. Immediately knowing how many is a skill called subitizing. Subitizing is our ability to quickly recognize quantities. It's important for children to practice both counting and subitizing because they form a foundation for later math skills.

- This game calls children's attention to the details on the cards. We might show three different images for the number 3. They are the same in they are all 3 dots but they may be different in their arrangement. Children may notice that only one card has a grid and the others don't. Or they may notice that two have dots arranged in a line and the other is arranged up and down (vertically). Children also have the opportunity to notice that even though 3 dots may be arranged in many different ways, it's still 3 dots.

- Don't worry if you accidentally put down three cards with nothing in common. Have children explain how all three are different!

- You can use this game with lots of different objects you have in the classroom or at home.

MATH TOPICS

Number: Counting and Cardinality

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 Which One Doesn't Belong.