MATHEMATICS · KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 3

Sorting and classifying objects

Difficulty level: Easy

Mathematics: Kindergarten to Grade 3

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Overview of the concept

This is how you tidy a messy pile, like sorting laundry, toys, or recycling, by putting things that share a feature together so you can count and compare them. A mixed pile tells you nothing, but sorted groups show you what you have and how much of each kind there is. Once things are grouped, you can count each group, compare them, and find what you need quickly. That is the first step in organising anything, from a toy box to a set of data.



Rule

Sorting and classifying: to sort, pick one feature, such as colour, size, or shape, and put things that share it together in one group.

Each group shares one feature, so you can count each group, compare them, and find what you have. Sort by one feature at a time.

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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q Sort these shapes by colour: a red circle, a blue circle, a red triangle and a blue triangle. How many groups are there, and what is in each one?

SOLUTION

This is a sorting question, so start with the one rule to remember: pick one sorting rule, and use it for every object. Here the rule is colour.

The red group has the red circle and the red triangle. The blue group has the blue circle and the blue triangle.

So there are 2 groups: red, with a circle and a triangle, and blue, with a circle and a triangle.

EXAMPLE 2

Q Sort these foods into fruits and vegetables: apple, carrot, banana and potato. Which goes in each group?

SOLUTION

This is a classifying question, so the rule is the type of food. A fruit grows from the flower of a plant and usually has seeds inside; a vegetable is another part of the plant, like a root.

The apple and the banana are fruits. The carrot is a root and the potato grows underground, so they are vegetables.

So the fruit group is apple and banana, and the vegetable group is carrot and potato.

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Practice questions

1 Sort these by colour: red ball, blue car, red block, blue cup. How many groups are there?

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2 Sort these animals into pets and farm animals: dog, cow, cat, pig. How many animals are in each group?

A. 1 pet and 3 farm animals

B. 2 pets and 2 farm animals

C. 3 pets and 1 farm animal

D. 4 pets and 0 farm animals

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3 **Which one does not belong?**

A Apple

B Banana

C Carrot

D Grape

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4 **Sort these numbers into even and odd: 2, 5, 8, 11. How many even numbers are there?**

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5 Sort these shapes by number of sides. Which one has the most sides?

- **A** Triangle
- **B** Pentagon
- **C** Square
- **D** Rectangle

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6 A group has 3 red buttons and 5 blue buttons. How many buttons are there in all, and how many more blue buttons are there than red?

- **A** 8 in all, 3 more blue
- **B** 7 in all, 2 more blue
- **C** 8 in all, 2 more blue
- **D** 5 in all, 2 more blue

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7 Sort these animals by size: elephant, mouse, horse, hamster. Which two are the small ones?

- A Elephant and horse
- B Mouse and hamster
- C Mouse and horse
- D Elephant and hamster

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8 Sort these into things that fly and things that swim. Which one belongs in both groups?

- A Duck
- B Bird
- C Fish
- D Shark

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9 **Sort these into things that are round and things that are not round: ball, box, orange, book. How many are round?**

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10 **You sort socks by colour and find 4 white pairs and 3 black pairs. How many pairs are there in all?**

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ANSWER KEY

1. 2

2. 2 pets and 2 farm animals

3. Carrot

4. 2

5. Pentagon

6. 8 in all, 2 more blue

7. Mouse and hamster

8. Duck

9. 2

10. 7 pairs

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