

Measurement: Adult Learning Activities

Ordering Objects

Partners or Table Groups

10 minutes

Materials: 4-6 objects of a similar sort per pair or table group, sticky flags, writing implements (either the flags or the writing implements must come in three colors)

Introduce the Activity

Give each group a set of 4 or 5 similar objects (containers, books, blocks, writing implements). Ask the groups to put their objects in order from biggest to smallest.

Keep Comparing

Ask them to use sticky flags to number their objects.

Then have participants put their objects in order from biggest to smallest *a different way*. Number the objects again, using a different color.

Ask participants to repeat the process again, if possible.

Have groups share their findings. Discuss what they have discovered about attributes and comparison.

Conclude the Activity

Emphasize the complexity of answering the question, “Which is bigger?” We have to know both what and how we are comparing!

Ordering Objects Emphasizes:

- Measurement is comparison.
- Many attributes can be compared/measured –*What kind of “big” is it?*
- Some comparisons are easier to make than others.

Key Questions to Ask:

- *Did comparing objects by a different dimension or attribute change the order? Why?*
- *Why is it possible to order some, but not all, sets of objects more than two ways?*