

Groups and Patterns

Let's sort and create patterns using everyday items! Children will group objects and make simple patterns while exploring similarities and differences.

STEM Focus: Mathematics

Experiences Your Children Will Have

- Sorting and grouping items
- Experiencing and making patterns

Vocabulary

- Pattern: Something that repeats
- Group: To put things together
- Same/Different: Things that do or do not look alike.
- Sort: To organize things into groups

Materials

- Objects you have multiples of around your home (socks of different colors or designs, natural materials, kitchen utensils, colorful cereal such as Froot Loops)
- A basket or container to hold objects
- Optional: A muffin tin to use for grouping items

Beginning

- Tell your child, Today we are going to sort and make patterns!
- Demonstrate how to group objects. You might say, I am putting all the spoons together and all the forks together. I wonder how you will group your objects?
- Invite your child to begin exploring.

Middle

- Encourage your child to touch, sort, group, and line up objects.
- Use the materials alongside your child and imitate how they use them.
- Talk about what they are doing. You might say, You put all the red ones together, or, You created a red group!
- Use the vocabulary words intentionally while interacting with your child.
- Use the specific strategies below, depending on your child's age:
 - Infants and toddlers may begin to explore the materials by mouthing, holding,

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or moving objects into groups. You can support your child by describing similarities and differences: I have a white sock and a blue sock. Where are some other white and blue socks?

- Preschoolers may group objects and begin simple patterns. You can support your child by modeling and asking questions: I made a pattern: fork, spoon, fork, spoon. What comes next?; What kind of pattern do you want to make?
- School-age children may create more complex patterns and explain their thinking. You can support your child by offering challenges: I wonder if there is another way to group these materials; What would happen to your pinecone and stick pattern if you added these rocks?

End

- As you notice your child begin to lose interest, give them a warning that you are going to put the materials away. You might say, In a few moments we are going to clean up. You can try out one more group or pattern.
- Encourage your child to help you clean up the materials and put them away together.

Additional Learning

- Point out patterns that you observe around your home (artwork that is displayed, tile patterns, flowers in a garden, stripes on wallpaper).
- Create groups and patterns during normal routines (group fruits, vegetables, and meat in the cart while grocery shopping; make a pattern while adding fruit to a kabob for snacktime).