

Topics

Structure and Properties of Matter, Observation Skills, Language, Empathy

Materials

- ✓ 25-50 mixed objects with various shapes, textures, materials, colors, sizes, etc.
- ✓ Blank cube or index cards
- ✓ Pen, pencil, or marker
- ✓ Optional: paper bag, drawstring bag, or box

Learning Standards

NGSS: Structure and Properties of Matter

2-PS1-1

2-PS1-2

5-PS1-3

This Reminds Me of the Fair

A Quick Activity to Enhance Connection Skills



This “warm-up” style activity encourages students to make quick connections between objects and previous knowledge or experiences.

Assembly

1. Place objects in a bag or box to conceal objects or keep objects visible on a table.
2. Label the faces of a blank cube or index cards with categories, 1 per side/card.
3. Examples of categories: place, food, sport or game, animal, celebrity, song or sound, historical event. Categories could also reflect specific content, themes, vocabulary, or other topics of interest.

To Do and Notice

(Note: It is important to emphasize that there are no wrong answers. This exercise is meant to be a quick, brain warm-up where unusual connections are encouraged.)

1. Each student chooses an object, either by picking one out of the bag without looking or by quickly choosing an object from a pile on a table.
2. Students take a minute to observe the attributes of the chosen object.
3. Roll the cube or draw an index card to reveal a category and announced the category to the group.
4. Students try to make connections between the object and the category by completing the sentence frame, **“This reminds me of ___ because ___.”**
5. Example: The object chosen is a craft stick and the category is place. A student might respond saying, “This reminds me of going to the county fair because the stick is long, narrow, and flat. It’s good for holding ice cream. We always ate lots of ice cream at the fair!” It’s okay if students add a bit more to the response.

The Content Behind the Activity

“Creativity is just connecting things. When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn’t really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while. That’s because they were able to connect experiences they’ve had and synthesize new things.” – Steve Jobs

The ability to make connections between concepts enhances brain development and is important in linking education to real-world applications. As with any skill, practice can increase students’ abilities to make more remote connections between objects or concepts and previous knowledge or experiences. This activity focuses on making connections between the properties of material objects and ideas or concepts printed on a cube or on cards. Responses are based on student experiences.

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