

Smaller, Smaller, Smallest: Comparing Sizes in Reception

Key points

- Children in Reception (the first year of primary school) learn to compare the size of different objects.
- They practice using words like 'smaller' and 'smallest' to describe things in a group.
- Direct comparison happens when children place two or more objects side by side to see which is smaller.
- Indirect comparison is when children use a third object to help them figure out which of two other things is smaller.
- Building this vocabulary helps children meet the goals of the EYFS Profile, which is the report schools use to summarise a child's progress at the end of the Early Years stage.
- Every child develops at their own pace, and some may need more time or different tools to explore these ideas.

Things to try at home

- Line up a few favourite toys and ask your child to help you find the smallest one.
- While getting dressed, look at the shoes in the house and talk about which is smaller and which is the smallest.
- Find three different sized spoons in the kitchen and play a game of putting them in order from smallest to biggest.
- During a walk, spot some leaves or stones and chat about which ones are smaller than others.

Find out more

- Your child's class teacher or the school's EYFS lead.
- The GOV.UK website for official information on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework.