Grams and Kilograms: Reading a Weighing Scale in Year 2 Maths

Key points

- In Year 2 (children aged 6 to 7), pupils learn to weigh things using scales marked in grams (g) and kilograms (kg).
- A kilogram is a larger unit than a gram, and 1 kg is the same as 1,000 g.
- Many scales have marked lines, called divisions, with numbers only on some of them, so children learn to work out the amount between the marks.
- Estimating first, by guessing what an object weighs before reading the scale, helps children think about whether their answer makes sense.
- Children move from saying something is 'heavier' or 'lighter' by feel to reading an exact number on a dial or digital display.
- Practice is most useful when it is short, hands-on and linked to everyday objects, as the Year 2 maths programme encourages.

Things to try at home

- Use kitchen scales with a bag of pasta, rice or flour, and ask your child to guess the weight before you check together.
- If the scale has marks, point to the line halfway between two numbers and ask, 'What do you think this weighs?'
- Look at food packets together and find the weight printed on them, then talk about whether it is in grams or kilograms.
- Play 'heavier or lighter' with two objects from around the house, then check your guess on the scale.
- Count in steps with your child, such as 100 g, 200 g, 300 g, if your scale shows those marks, and stop whenever they have had enough.

Find out more

- Ask your child's class teacher which scales the class uses and how they are taught, as methods can vary between schools.
- Read the mathematics section of the National curriculum in England on GOV.UK (Department for Education), which sets out what Year 2 pupils should learn about measurement.
- Search GOV.UK for the Department for Education's 'Mathematics guidance: key stages 1 and 2' for non-statutory advice on teaching measurement.