

EMPOWERING TEACHERS

Vocabulary Instructional Routine: Identify and Sort Common Objects into Categories

Preparation/Materials: Eight to ten picture cards of common animals (e.g., duckling, cat, swan) and objects (e.g., pot, jacket, cottage), green “yes” and red “no” cards for each student.



- *Italicized type is what the teacher does*
- **Bold type is what the teacher says**
- Regular type is what the student(s) say

- **Bullet (•) and bolded type are what the teacher and student(s) say in unison**
- Letters and words that are in print are in "quotation marks"



NOTE: This instructional routine should be used in conjunction with a story previously read from your reading program (e.g., The Ugly Duckling). The categories of “animal” and “not animal” may be changed to appropriately fit with many topics in texts (e.g., color, food).

TEACHER EXPLAINS TASK

We are going to sort picture cards into two categories.

TEACHER MODELS TASK

A category is a group of things that share something alike.

I will sort pictures of things that are animals into the “animal” category and pictures of things that are not animals into the “not animal” category. An animal is a living thing that breathes and can move around.

Hold up a picture of the duckling.

In the story, The Ugly Duckling, the duckling is an animal. The duckling is a living thing that breathes and moves around. I will put the picture of the duckling in the category “animal.”

Hold up picture of a pot.

A pot is not a living thing. A pot cannot move around and it cannot breathe. I will put the picture of the pot in the category “not animal.”

Continue naming and sorting pictures into “animal” and “not animal” categories, following the same format.

TEACHER & STUDENTS PRACTICE TASK TOGETHER

A category is a group of things that share something alike.

Let’s sort pictures into two categories. Let’s sort pictures of things that are animals into the “animal” category and pictures of things that are not animals into the “not animal” category. An animal is a living thing that breathes and can move around

Let’s answer by holding up the green “yes” card and saying “yes” if the picture shows an animal which is a living thing that breathes and can move around. Let’s answer by holding up the red “no” card and saying “no” if the picture is not an animal

Hold up picture of the duckling.

Is a duckling a living thing that breathes and can move around?

Teacher and students hold up “yes” card.

- Yes

Hold up picture of a pot.

Is a pot a living thing that breathes and can move around?

Teacher and students hold up “no” card.

- No

That’s correct. A pot is not an animal. A duckling is an animal because it is a living thing that breathes and moves around.

Continue sorting pictures into “animal” and “not animal” categories, following the same format.

That’s correct. The things we answered with “yes” are animals. The things we answered with the “no” are not animals.

EMPOWERING TEACHERS

STUDENTS PRACTICE TASK

Your turn.

A category is a group of things that share something alike.

Hold up the green “yes” card and say “yes” if the picture shows an animal which is a living thing that breathes and can move around. Hold up the red “no” card and say “no” if the picture is not an animal.

Hold up picture of duckling.

Is the duckling a living thing that breathes and can move around?

Students hold up “yes” card.

Yes.

Hold up picture of pot.

Is a pot a living thing that breathes and can move around?

Students hold up “no” card.

No.

That’s correct. A pot is not an animal. A duckling is an animal because it is a living thing that breathes and moves around.

Continue sorting pictures into “animal” and “not animal” categories, following the same format.

That’s correct. The things you answered with “yes” are animals. The things you answered with “no” are not animals.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Provide frequent group and/or individual opportunities for students to sort common objects into various categories (e.g., provide small pictures for sorting into predetermined and labeled categories)

SCAFFOLDING SUGGESTION FOR ERRORS

Verify that students understand sorting by categories. If an error is made, repeat the steps by explaining, modeling, and providing another practice opportunity. If difficulties persist, provide other examples using a more basic category (e.g., color, food).

Adaptations using this instructional routine:

- Increase the level and number of categories for each sorting activity (e.g., animals - jungle, farm, ocean).
- Have students create their own categories to sort a given set of items.

For further independent student practice, refer to the FCRR Kindergarten and First Grade Student Center Activities at http://www.fcrr.org/curriculum/pdf/GK-1/V_Final.pdf

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