

size & shape

Do you think that will fit? Or is it too small / big? Or the wrong shape?

Jigsaw puzzles

(or cut up cards or photos)

EARLY
CHILDHOOD
MATHS GROUP

predicting

What picture / colours will be on the piece that goes next to this one?

shape & fit

Can you see a piece that looks like this space? What shape will the piece be that fits here?



fit & which way round?

predicting

I wonder what it will look like when it is finished.

Oooh, shall we turn that around and see if it fits?

website



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shape

How many sticky out / in bits does the piece that we need have?

Jigsaw puzzles

(or cut up cards or photos)

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MATHS GROUP

shape & position

I'm going to look for all the straight sided pieces to go around the outside



shape & fit

How do you know that piece is not the right one?

shape & position

Are there any pieces with corners? Where might they go?

position & informal shape language

I think we need a piece where the sticky out bits are opposite each other...can you find one?

website



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comparing capacities

Would you like
this big jug or
this small jug?

In the bath

(or water play with a bowl,
pool or sink)

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CHILDHOOD
MATHS GROUP

comparing capacities

Let's pour all of
the water from the
yellow pot into this
blue pot, what do
you think might
happen?



capacity

Let's see if one jug full
will fill all these
cups...

volume

Let's half-fill these ones so
we can both have the
same amount of 'drink'.

website



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volume

Can you fill it right up to the line?

In the bath (or water play with a bowl, pool or sink)

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MATHS GROUP

capacity & comparison

Which cup holds the most water do you think? How might we check?

size & capacity

This ladle is HUGE!
It holds more than
this cup!



capacity

If we keep on pouring, this will over-flow!

how many & weight

I wonder how many pebbles I can fit in my pot / tub before it sinks?

website



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position

The goat is under /
on top of / behind /
in front of / next to
the bridge.

Reading a book

EARLY
CHILDHOOD
MATHS GROUP

more

This is a longer
book, look at all
the pages!



predicting & sequencing

What might happen
next, do you think?

height, fit & size

I wonder if she'll be able
to reach the top. I wonder
if she will be able to hide
behind the tree.

numbers

I think page 6 has a good picture...
can you find it?

website



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Reading a book

direction & routes

Let's retell the journey and remember what they passed on the way. Maybe we could draw a map?



adding

How many fish do you think we will see on the next page, if there is one more?

counting & comparing

I think there are more birds than butterflies in this picture, what about you?

direction & routes

Which way should the hen go to get to the hen house?

time language

What happened first / next / after / before that?

website



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position

What is next to
the post office?

Walking to the shops

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CHILDHOOD
MATHS GROUP

numbers

Let's see who will be the
first to see a number 3
somewhere. I'm going
to look on the cars and
the doors.



counting

Let's count the
steps!

direction & routes

Which way do we go now?
Which way next?

estimating

I wonder - how many
dogs we will see on the
way to the shop today?

website



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direction & routes

You give me the directions today!

Walking to the shops

remembering routes

Can you remember, what are we going to pass next? The post box or the garden gate where the dog lives?

counting

There are lots of lampposts on this street... can we count them all?



direction & routes

Here's the bus stop. Let's see which buses stop here and where they go. Look – there's a map.

number order

Some of these door numbers are missing ...

website



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how many

How many cars have you got altogether?

Playing with toy vehicles and play people

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MATHS GROUP

direction

My car is going over / under / around the bridge.

size

Which do you think is the biggest / smallest car? Why do you think that?



size & shape

Can we make a car park / garage to fit these cars?

website



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counting

Here is a bus stop. Let's line up all the people to catch the next bus... it's late, there's a long queue. How many are waiting now?

Playing with toy vehicles and play people

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CHILDHOOD
MATHS GROUP

perspective

What can the driver of the silver car see?



position

Let's line up all the cars – where will the red car go? What about the blue one – maybe next to / behind / in front of the red car?

length

Which car goes furthest when we roll these down the ramp?

website



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sharing

Lots of cherries today! Lets share them all out.

Making a snack

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CHILDHOOD
MATHS GROUP

counting or adding

Oh no! We don't have enough. How many more do we need?



comparing & how many

How many would you like? 1 or 2?

shape

Would you like your toast cut into fingers or triangles?

size

Would you like the big spoon or the small spoon to eat that?

website



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sharing & counting

We have 10
crackers to share
fairly. How many
will you each get?

Making a snack

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MATHS GROUP

counting

How many
bananas do you
think we need if
we all want one?



shape

Would you like a
circular or rectangular
biscuit?

sharing & comparing

Let's share them so we all have
the same number.

shape

Let's cut it exactly in
half / into two pieces.

website



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counting

1 sock, 2 socks!

Getting dressed

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MATHS GROUP

counting

1, 2, 3, 4.
4 poppers fastened up.



size & pattern

Are these your gloves or are they too small / big for your hands? Do they match?

which way round?

Oh no! It is upside down / inside out!
Let's turn it around.

position

Your shoes need their buckles on the outside of each foot.

website



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position

Tights! Are the toes pointing forwards?

Getting dressed

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counting backwards

Let's count back as the zip goes down. 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0.



counting forwards

Let's count as the zip goes up. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

counting

Vest, T-shirt, jumper – that's 3 layers on today! When you put on your coat it will be 4! If you take off your jumper it will be 2.

position

Right arm in, left arm in.

website



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how many

Candles! Whose birthday is it? How old are they? Have we the right number of candles so we can sing?

counting / how many?

How many pieces have you cut it into?

Let's share the dough so we all have the same amount. How shall we do that?

volume



Playing with dough

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CHILDHOOD
MATHS GROUP

estimation & size

How many biscuits do you think you can make with that cutter?

length

Who can make the longest worm with their dough?

website



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Playing with dough

how many

How many holes
you have made?

how many

How many cakes
are in the tray?
How many spaces
do we have left?



size & fit

Which cutter will
you choose to make
more biscuits this
time?

patterned arrangements

Can we make it the
same on both sides?

weight

Here are the scales,
let's weigh your cake.

website



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size & which way round?

This box of cereal is huge, we'll have to lie it down I think.

weight

Which of these is the heaviest?

Putting away the shopping

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MATHS GROUP

size, shape & fit

Where shall we put the big bottle so it will fit?



counting

How many apples do we have? Let's count them as we put them in the bowl. 1, 2, 3. There are 3 apples in the bowl.

website



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Putting away the shopping

size

This is a big potato!



counting

1, 2, 3, 4.
That's 4 cans of beans. Did we buy 4? Is that all of them?

weight

This box is heavy – can you lift it okay?

position

Put the yogurt next to / on top of / in front of / behind the butter.

website



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predicting

Jump, hop, jump,
hop, jump, hop,
jump... what comes
next?

noticing

I can see a stripey
pattern. What do
you think I am
looking at?

patterned arrangements

I'm having a biscuit with spots
around the edge. Do you want
one with spots around the
edge or in the middle?

Pattern spotting

EARLY
CHILDHOOD
MATHS GROUP

pattern rules

Oooh! There's a zigzag pattern on
that wall paper, 'up, down, up down,
up, down'. I can do it with my finger!

reflection patterns

That building has a window and a door
on each side. They're the same but the
other way around!

predicting

"Heads, shoulders, knees and
toes, knees and toes. Heads
shoulders knees and toes, knees
and _____". a song with a pattern

website



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Pattern making

circle patterns

I'm arranging
the toys in a
circle!



lining up patterns

I'm putting them in
a line, all looking
the same way.

lining up patterns

I'm using all
the same
bricks to
make a tower

fixing mistakes

Which one's gone wrong?
Can you fix it for me?

size patterns

I'm making a circle,
inside a bigger circle,
inside a bigger circle,
inside an even bigger
circle.

noticing

Oh, you've put them in a spiral!

website



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fixing mistakes

Can you spot my mistake?

spotting what repeats

Let's see - what is the repeating unit?

copy

Can you copy my pattern unit (e.g. red blue blue). Now let's make it again and again to make a long train that goes on and on, with this pattern.

copy & continue

Can you continue (carry on) my pattern?
Can you copy my pattern? (underneath)

finding the rule

Can you tell me what the pattern is? (big small, red blue, or AB)

website



Pattern making

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making a pattern with 2 things

Can you make up your own pattern with two things that repeat over and over?

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pattern rules

What is your pattern unit? What is the smallest part that repeats over and over?

Pattern making

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pattern rules & mistakes

Can you make up a pattern with a mistake for me to spot?

copying (a new way)

Can you do actions in the same pattern as your objects?



copying (a new way)

Can you make the same pattern but this time with different objects?

border patterns

Let's make your pattern go around a shape (circular plate, large triangle or square). Does your pattern 'work' and keep going round forever? Why / why not?

continuing (in both directions)

Can you continue your pattern to the left as well as to the right?

website



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height

I'm going to make a tall tower with the bricks

Making plans

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MATHS GROUP

days of the week & pattern

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday... over and over!



how many & shape

How many T-shirts do you think you need to take on holiday? Help me fold them.

fit

Help me pack your things in your bag. How will we make everything fit inside?

sequencing

Shoes on, then go outside.

website



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direction & routes

Which way shall we go? Around or through the park?

Making plans

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counting backwards

It is five days until your birthday. Let's write the numbers and cross one out each day to countdown.



days of the week & counting

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday... 1,2,3, that's three days away.

time language

We'll have lunch first then go to nursery after.

estimating

I wonder - how many red cars will we see on our walk today?

website



Watch your child playing • See what they enjoy doing • Join in and use these ideas when they seem ready