



DOING LAUNDRY

DAILY ROUTINE EXPLORATIONS WITH YOUR YOUNG CHILD



ABOUT THIS ROUTINE:

Doing the laundry is a great opportunity to support STEM learning! Talk about STEM ideas and use STEM words as you and your child sort and wash clothes together.

Next time you do laundry, tell your child you want their help sorting the clothes.

"I wonder how we should **sort** all these clothes. Let's look carefully and figure out how to put them into **groups!**"

As you sort through the laundry, ask your child what they notice about the clothes. Give your child wait time to respond. Ask them to describe what they **feel and see**, like the **colors, textures, and sizes**. "Is this shirt **soft** or **rough**? Is this towel **thick** or **thin**? How does this sweater **feel different** from your t-shirt?" Talk about why the characteristics of materials matter when we do laundry.

Laundry is also a perfect opportunity to explore **sorting!** Work with your child to **sort** clothes into **groups**. Ask: "Which group has **the most**? Which has **the least**?" Thinking about how to sort things into groups and counting them to answer questions is a big part of classification and data analysis!

STEM LEARNING AREAS:

Physical Science: Concepts related to objects or things, what they do, and how they move

- **Structure & Properties of Materials:** Understanding characteristics of things and how those characteristics impact what things do

Math: Concepts related to numbers, patterns, shapes, and space, and how to use them to solve problems

- **Classification & Data Analysis:** Sorting things into groups and then figuring out how many are in each group to help answer questions

Every child is different. Do what works best for encouraging your child's independent exploration during this suggested daily routine. These are only suggested activity adaptations. Consider consulting your child's care team first.



Follow your child's lead and interests. Enthusiastically ask your child questions about what they are doing and what they like.



Answer your child's questions. If you do not know the answer, work together with your child to discover the answer.



Encourage your child to participate in the activity as much as possible. Praise your child's efforts and successes.



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ADAPTATIONS FOR DAILY ROUTINE EXPLORATIONS WITH YOUR YOUNG CHILD

WHAT CAN I DO TO SUPPORT MY CHILD'S LEARNING?

ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENT

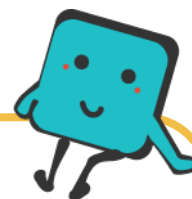
- Place clothing items and/or laundry basket within reach in a contained space for easier access
- Use stool if your child can't reach the washer and/or dryer
- For children with low muscle tone, use a pillow or rolled up towel to support their trunk and body if seated

MATERIALS

- Have child's assistive technology ready and available, including augmentative & alternative communication (AAC) device
- Use adaptive devices (reacher) to help children pick up clothing items
- Use braille tags to help children with visual impairments find or organize the clothes
- Place an anti-slip mat below the basket(s) so it does not move

INTERACTIONS OR INSTRUCTION

- Narrate/sign your child's actions as they interact with clothing items
- Use a variety of methods of communication (sign language, gestures) to meaningfully engage your child
- Communicate with your child at eye level
- Speak or sign slowly, emphasize keywords, and wait for a response
- Praise your child's efforts with words, facial expression, or body language
- Make eye contact and smile as you talk to your child
- Provide hand-over-hand support or be physically close by if needed to help guide your child sorting or moving clothing items
- Support children with communication challenges or visual impairments by using actual objects or pictures to represent steps of the routine
- Consider using visual cues or a tablet with pictures of the objects to signal next steps and/or each step of the sequence (see following pages)
- Use Braille on the visual cue cards to support children with visual impairment
- Model and demonstrate how to do the steps of the routine



Adaptations are simple changes you can make to your child's space, toys, or activities to help them stay engaged and learn STEM ideas and words during daily routines.

Quick Tip:

Communication may include the use of words, signs, gestures, and different types of cues, such as touch, object, movement, or visual.





DOING LAUNDRY

VISUAL CUES FOR DAILY ROUTINE EXPLORATIONS WITH YOUR YOUNG CHILD

USE TO DIRECT DOING LAUNDRY



Clothes

Gather dirty clothes



Washer

Open washer



Detergent

Add soap



Dirty

Add dirty clothes



Power

Turn on washer



Dryer

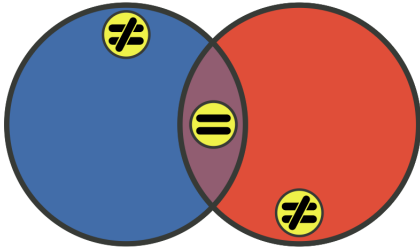
Hang up or move to dryer



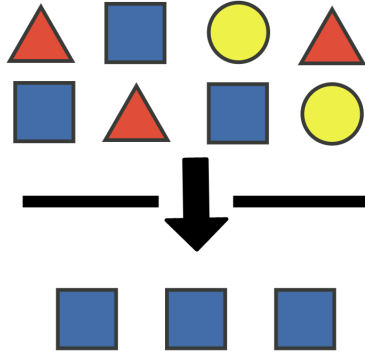
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VISUAL CUES FOR DAILY ROUTINE EXPLORATIONS WITH YOUR YOUNG CHILD

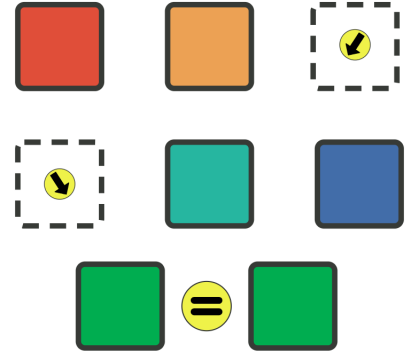
USE TO PROMPT



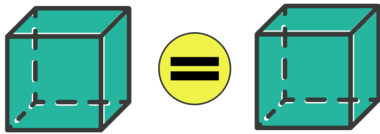
Compare and Contrast



Sort



Match



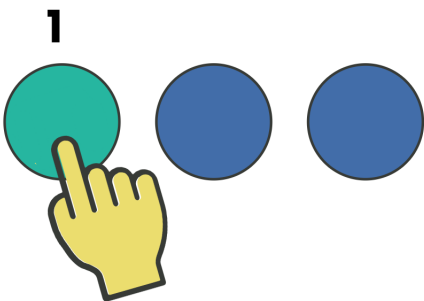
Same



Different



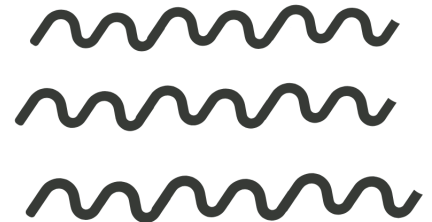
How many



Count



Flat



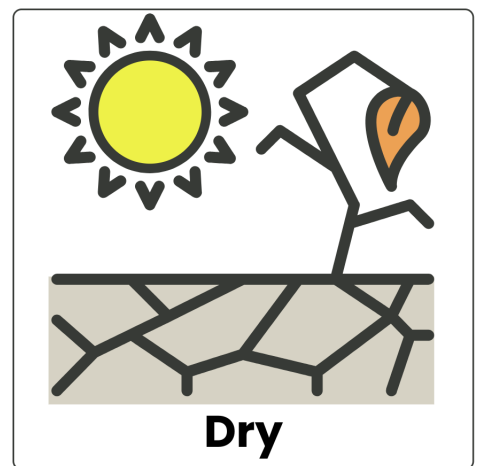
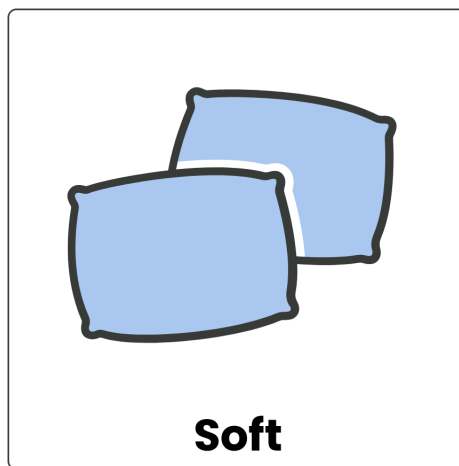
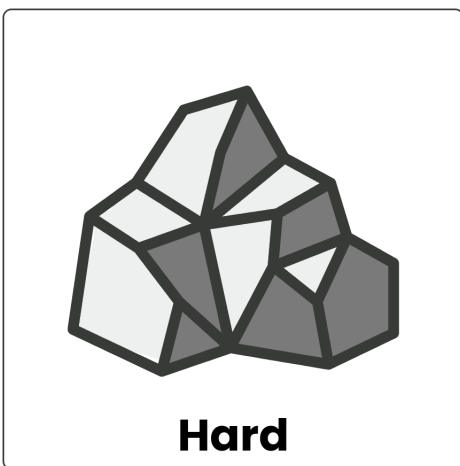
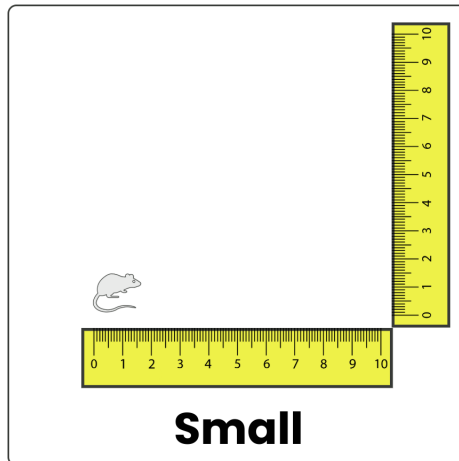
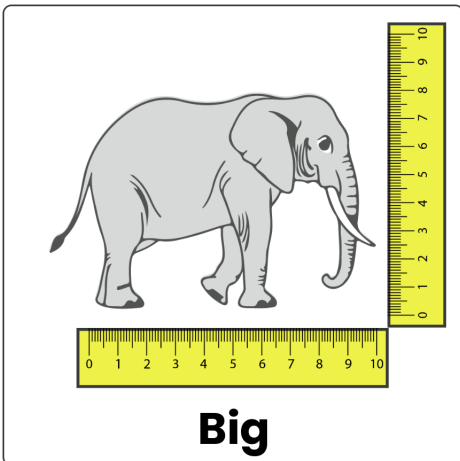
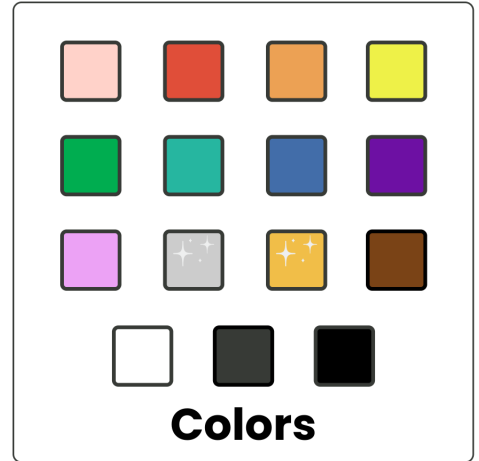
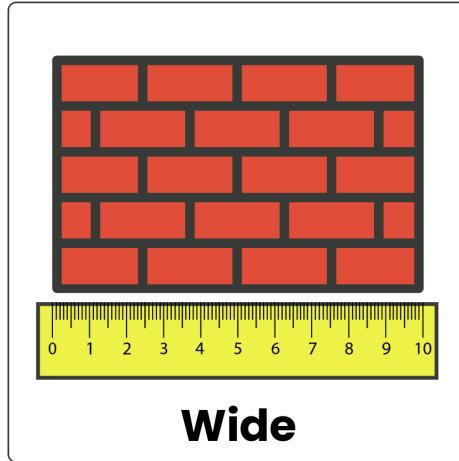
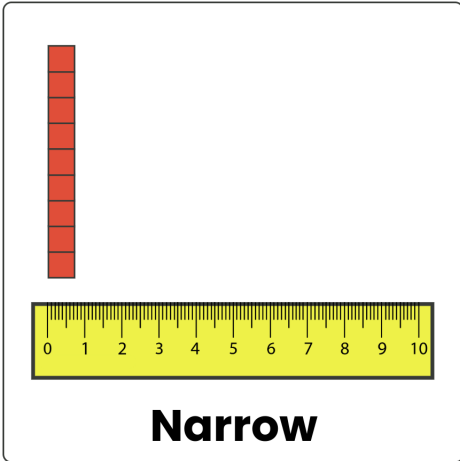
Bumpy



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VISUAL CUES FOR DAILY ROUTINE EXPLORATIONS WITH YOUR YOUNG CHILD

USE TO PROMPT



Need more visual cues?

Visit [STEMIE's Visual Cue Library](#) or check out STEMIE's tips for creating and using visual supports with [A Guide to Visual Supports](#).



DOING LAUNDRY

ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR DAILY ROUTINE EXPLORATIONS WITH YOUR YOUNG CHILD

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY IDEAS:

- Check out our Daily Routine Explorations for Getting Dressed on **STEMIE Learning Trajectories** (<https://stemielearningtrajectories.fpg.unc.edu/>).
- Check out our Discovery Play Activities for Touching Textures on **STEMIE Learning Trajectories** (<https://stemielearningtrajectories.fpg.unc.edu/>).
- Check out these books about clothing:
 - *Clothing of the World* by Clara Cella
 - *Clothes Around the World* by Clare Lewis
 - *Clothes in Many Cultures (Life Around the World)* by Heather Adamson
- Check out these books about laundry:
 - *Maya's Magical Laundry Basket (The Adventuristas)* by Carolyn Florey & John Garrity
 - *Lost in the Laundry: The Story of the Separated Sock* by Grace Liska-Verdu
 - *Henry Helps With Laundry* by Beth Braken

