

How Big Was It?

Using gestures and words to make size comparisons will help your child:

- Increase his math vocabulary: larger/smaller, shorter/taller, heavier/lighter
- Use hands, fingers or feet as measuring tools to show difference in size

Ideas to try with your child:

- Fill a small dish pan with water and provide different sized containers – measuring cups, bowls, yogurt containers, or small plastic bottles. As your child plays, ask: “Which one holds the most?” “How many times can you pour the water from this small container into the larger one to fill it?” “Of these two, which one holds less water?”
- Go on a “measure hunt.” Ask your child to find five things smaller than his hand and five things larger than his hand. Then use feet or fingers as a measuring tool.
- Line everything up from largest to smallest. Then, with a ruler or measuring tape, see how large each object is.

If your child is struggling:

- Work with the idea of more than/less than. With a box of cereal, take out a small handful, and a larger handful. Ask who has the most, and who has the least.
- Use gestures with words as you describe which one is longer, shorter, thicker or thinner.
- Measure the distance across the sidewalk using your feet, placing them heel to toe. Then measure using your child’s feet. Talk about shorter/longer as you describe your feet.

Going further:

- Make a simple recipe together using measuring cups and measuring spoons.
 - Compare the look and feel of one cup of liquid and one cup of flour or sugar. Show him how to add a “pinch of salt” or a handful of raisins, using his body for measurement
- At the grocery store encourage him to help you weigh the fruits and vegetables on the scale. Talk about which item is heavier or weighs more.

The WA State Department of Early Learning and the Richland School District believes that parents, families, and caregivers are young children’s best teachers. This resource guide, part of *Strong Foundations for School: Resource Guides for Parents of Young Children*, highlights a key developmental skill for **children Ages 3-4 years** that parents can help improve at home.



Adapted from *WA State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, 2012*: “Compare size by sight, feel and comparing to hands, feet etc., Use gestures or words to make comparisons” *Learning About My World, Ages 3-4 years*, pg. 64