

Guess My Rule

This is a simple game that allows learners to start to understand how to sort and categorize objects.

Recommended Age: 3+ years old

Time needed: 5+ minutes

What You Need

- A collection of objects--the more objects, the better. Looks for objects of different shapes, sizes, materials, colors, etc. For example:
 - Pens, scissors, paper clips, and other items from a desk
 - Small toys, action figures, plushies
 - LEGO and other items from puzzles and building toys
 - Safe items from around the kitchen
 - Keys, coins, chargers, rubber bands, batteries and other items from a junk drawer
- A tray, cookie sheet, paper plate or some place to place a few objects
- A friend

What You Do

- One person picks out three objects that have something in common, and places them on the tray. Some ideas:
 - Shape
 - Color
 - Size
 - Made of the same material
 - Have the same function
 - Found in the same place
 - All start with the same letter (a great one for older kids!)
- Challenge the child to guess the connection!



Tips for Adults

- Start with simpler, more obvious connections (“They’re all yellow!”) and work up to more challenging ones
- Invite your child to take a turn at selecting objects for you!
- For very young learners, ask them to go through the entire pile, and pick out all the objects that are yellow, or all are circles, or some other common feature.
- You can also try picking out 3 objects that have something in common, and one that is different, and ask your child to guess the one that doesn’t belong.



What’s Going On?

Categorization is an important science skill. All kinds of things are organized into categories: trees, animals, plants, rocks, etc. When scientists find something new, the first thing they do is compare it to things they already know and see if it is similar to anything they’re familiar with. In the end, the new thing may or may not wind up in the same category as the known things, but it’s a place to start.

Learning and Skills Connection

- **Thinking creatively and imaginatively:** Envisioning possibilities, solutions, and forms of expression; having hunches; thinking outside the box; problem finding and solving
- **Critical thinking:** Employing objectivity, looking for and applying evidence
- **Analytical reasoning:** applying logic, breaking problems into parts, comparing, categorizing, counting, measuring, estimating

Doing STEAM with Kids

STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math. There are lots of ways you can explore these letters, apart or together. Ask your child to make predictions, describe what they see, and to imagine possibilities and solutions. Don’t worry so much about the “right” answer. Developing curiosity, and problem-solving skills are important first steps to doing STEAM!

