Day 21 · What are we measuring?

Pick one thing. What do you want to find out?

Useful purpose: Choose an attribute before a unit or tool; separate length, mass and capacity.

1 · Find the starting point

Ask how a paper strip could fit a book. Hear the child's meaning of long, heavy and holds. Check reading 100, 250 and 500 without treating naming a number as measuring.

2 · Prepare a suitable invitation

Offer a ruler with a clear zero, a familiar stable kitchen scale and an empty unbreakable measuring jug. Adult checks tool condition, markings, safe reach and an uncluttered dry surface. Nothing needs to be bought. Use supplied label words if kit is unavailable.

3 · Brief worked model

I want a strip that reaches across this book, so I need length, not mass. I would use centimetres and a ruler. For the mass of a small sealed packet I could use grams and a scale; for how much a jug holds I could use millilitres and a measuring jug. A label is a supplied claim, not my new measurement.

4 · Guided new try

Name one question about an empty box. Offer length/mass/capacity word cards and let the child choose. Ask what information a ruler would not give. Explain a different answer rather than silently replacing it.

5 · Own attempt

Choose a route below, then name or point to an attribute, suitable unit and useful tool. Usual communication or exact scribing is welcome. One thoughtful choice is enough to start.

6 · Observe and respond

Record the intended attribute and the reason for the unit/tool. If a child chooses mL for a strip, ask what that unit helps find, then compare two questions about the same object. Do not score reading difficulty as a maths error.

Specific next teaching

If attribute/unit/tool are connected, ask how a bigger version might need another unit. Otherwise use one object with separate 'how long?' and 'how much can it hold?' questions before introducing a new object.

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Pick a route

1 · Tool detective

Which tool would help?

Choose one familiar safe object and one question; direct an adult to show two tools, then choose and explain.

Observe: Attribute and tool fit the question.

Next teaching: Compare two different attributes of an unrelated empty pencil box.

Evidence boundary: Choice and explanation; no measurement performed yet.

2 · Label mix-up

Can you fix these labels?

Use these MODEL labels: bookmark length 18 mL; water bottle capacity 500 cm; sealed packet mass 250 g. Repair the first two with cm and mL and tell why the third already fits.

Observe: 18 cm, 500 mL and 250 g, with each attribute explained.

Next teaching: Give new labels for a ribbon, a jug and a block without repeating these values.

Evidence boundary: Supplied label interpretation, not live product facts.

3 · One object, two jobs

What else could we find out?

Draw, describe or type two questions about an empty carton: the length of an edge and how much it can hold. Choose tools and units for both without handling it.

Observe: Same object can have different measured attributes.

Next teaching: Try a new container and ask which question needs a scale.

Evidence boundary: Plan and mathematical choices, not performed measurement.

Ordinary aids and full words · Choose another ordinary day

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