Categories and Word Finding

What is this?
Sorting items into categories develops your child’s vocabulary skills by allowing them to compare how objects are similar, how they belong within certain groups, and also compare the function of the groups, e.g. food we eat, clothes we wear, vehicles you drive. It also helps your child learn, store, and retrieve new vocabulary.

How you can help
Sorting objects into groups is something that we do every day without realising. Many daily chores around the house can be used to help your child develop their understanding of categories. Involve them in the activities listed below and use these as opportunities to talk about where things belong and why.

- **Sorting shopping.** When putting away groceries. Ask your child to help you decide where each item belongs, e.g. that goes in the fridge/fruit bowl/cleaning cupboard/freezer/vegetable box/bathroom cupboard, etc.

- **Tidy-up time.** As you put things away around the home, talk to your child about where they belong in the house or in a particular room, e.g. ‘Towels go in the hot-press’, ‘your shoes go in your room’, ‘books go in the bookcase’, ‘toys go in the toy box’, or ‘clothes go in the wardrobe’.

- **Doing dishes.** While putting the dishes away, ask your child to tell you in which cupboard each item belongs, e.g. ‘Cups belong in the cup cupboard’, ‘plates belong in the big cupboard’, ‘saucepans go in the pots cupboard’, or ‘knives, forks, and spoons go in the cutlery drawer.’
Washing Day

Involve your child in the job of sorting laundry. Ask them to help you to sort out the clothes in your laundry basket in a number of different ways.

Sort by:
- colour
- name, e.g. trousers t-shirts, socks, etc.
- fabric
- clothes you hang up/fold.

As you take each item from the basket talk about its name, colour and which group it belongs to.

Sort It Out

On the sort boards provided overleaf help your child to match each item to the correct category.
Name and talk about each item with your child and help them decide in which group the item belongs.
When you have decided where the item belongs, use a marker to match it to the correct group.
Sort it out
Cheeky Monkey mix-up

Show your child the picture of Cheeky Monkey and explain that he likes playing tricks.

Mummy Monkey has been tidying up and sorting out the things that go together. Cheeky Monkey is playing a trick on his mummy and has mixed some of the things up.

Look at the items on the next three pages.

Show your child each item in turn, name and talk about the thing in each picture and ask them to tell you which things belong together and why.
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