



Children's Museum of Houston

Mix & Match Estimation

Use your estimation skills to match the unmarked containers to their amount.

Materials:

- Several containers (preferably of the same size)
- Small objects to put in the containers (For example: toy cars, plastic spiders, Legos™, beans)
- Post It Notes or scraps of paper
- Marker

Procedure:

Set Up: Place different numbers of objects in the containers (For example, 5 cars in one jar, 10 Legos™ in another, etc.). Count and write down the amount in each container on a Post It Note. Mix up the Post It Notes and put aside in a pile.

To Play:

1. Give students time to examine the different containers and objects inside the containers.
2. Ask students to estimate the number of objects in each jar.
3. Match the Post-It™ Notes to the appropriate jar.
4. Check answers.

Questions to Ask:

- How did you decide which container matched which amount?
- How did you decide which container had the most objects?
- Can you think of a time when you wanted to know how many objects there were, but you couldn't count them?

Background:

Good estimation skills can help you when buying packaged goods (Potato chips, candy, etc.) to make sure you are getting the best deal for your dollar. Sometimes you can estimate by "just looking." Sometimes you can count the bottom layer and then estimate how many layers are in the container. Other times, the objects will need to be counted. All of these experiences will build better estimation skills. For more practice, place objects in a container without counting them first. Estimate how many objects are in the container and then count to see how close you were. Keep practicing with different containers and objects until you get good at it. For an extra challenge, play again using different sized containers and different objects.