

AUTHOR:
Stuart J. Murphy

ILLUSTRATOR:
Lois Ehlert

A colorful sock is looking for its match. It believes it will never be worn unless it's part of a pair.

Ages: 2 to 6 years

Lexile: AD440L

ATOS Reading Level:
Not available

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A Pair of Socks

Will the red and blue sock ever find its match?

Topics: classification, matching, comparisons

Activities To Do Together:

You can use the book *A Pair of Socks* to introduce the concept of matching. When children match objects they look for similarities and differences. Through comparison, children begin to categorize objects and develop a sense of what belongs together. Objects can be grouped by type, color, size, pattern, texture, or shape. Matching and grouping are important skills that helps children develop visual perception and reasoning abilities.

Before reading the book:

- Ask your child to tell you what they think the story is about.
- Talk about the word *pair* and what it means. Talk about the parts of the body that are in pairs, i.e., a pair of ears, a pair of knees. Ask your child to identify other body parts that are in pairs. Ask what parts of the face are not in pairs.
- Talk about what it means to match a pair of socks and the different ways that objects can be matched, for example, by color, pattern, shape, size, texture, etc. Practice matching by sorting socks into pairs with your child. Ask your child why they think two socks are or are not a pair.

While reading the book:

- Count the socks on the page. Find the matching socks.
- Ask your child to describe the patterns and colors of socks.
- Find out whether your child thinks all of the socks belong to the same person? Why or why not?

When you have finished reading the book:

- Encourage your child to practice matching with household items. Matching silverware: spoons with spoons and forks with forks; or finding similar types of groceries that need to be put away in the same place; or matching and putting away pairs of shoes are useful and real life ways your child can practice matching.
- Play a matching scavenger hunt game. Choose a pair of items and show one of the pair to your child. Encourage them to find the match. Provide clues with positional words, like it's **next to** the dresser or **under** the bed.
- Ask your child what they would like to match.

Conversations During Daily Routines with Toddlers:

1. Cooking Time - Notice objects that match each other. "Look, two pinto beans. Same color. Same size."
2. Park Time - "Here is a green maple leaf. I wonder if we can find one that matches this one."
3. Dressing Time - Give your child a choice of shoes to wear by showing them two different shoes, then ask if they can find the match to the one they chose.
4. Play Time - Make a game out of finding matching toys. "Here is your red car, can you find a matching car?"
5. Clean Up Time - "Let's match up all the pairs of shoes before putting them away."
6. Laundry Time - Talk about what you notice as you match the family's socks: "Here's a blue sock with the zig-zag pattern, I'm looking for a sock that's the same size, color and pattern. This one is the same color but it is too small so it doesn't match. Here is the matching sock; it has the same color and zig-zag pattern as the other one. This is a match!"

Questions for Mathematical Thinking:

1. What does it mean to match? What are some examples of things that match?
2. Two of something make a pair. You have two eyes that are a pair. Two mittens are a pair. What else makes a pair?
3. When sorting laundry how do you know which socks go together?
4. How is sorting dirty laundry different than sorting clean laundry? Why?
5. When matching shoes, what can you look at to know if they match?

Early Math Project Resources:

- [Sock Sort](#) (English)
- [Sock Sort](#) (Spanish)

Follow this [link](#) for additional online resources.

Vocabulary

Math words found in the story: match, not far, pair

Related math words: classification, comparing, sorting

Words to build reading comprehension: fluffy, grimy, puffy, slimy, stinky, sudsy

Related Books: *Three Little Firefighters* by Stuart J. Murphy; *Sorting at the Market* by Tracey Steffora

Click this link to the [World Catalog](#) or enter <http://bit.ly/3LfBwKB> to find *A Pair of Socks* in the public library.



Math Connections:

A Pair of Socks provides a playful introduction to classification. Classification involves sorting, grouping, or categorizing objects according to established criteria or rules. Children as young as three months of age have expectations of objects and people based on their attributes. The word “attribute” refers to the properties of an object such as the object’s size, color, or shape. This story focuses on perceptual categorization or categorizing based on similarities or differences in visual appearance. It’s important for young children to have many opportunities to classify objects as it supports their problem solving, logic, and analytical abilities.

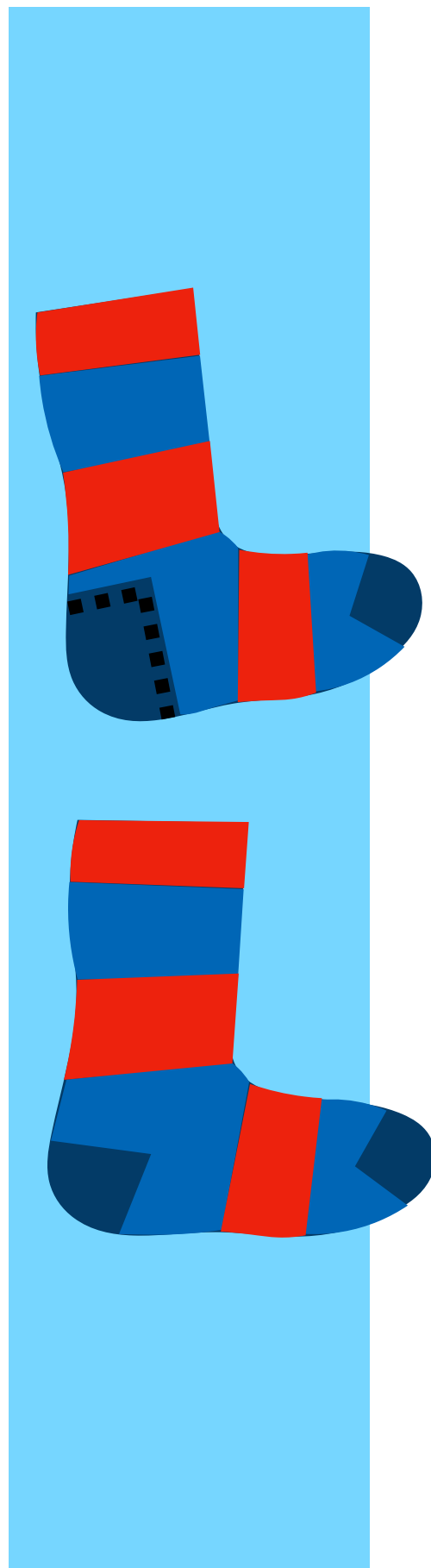
There are many playful ways to support classification with young children. Encourage your child to sort a group of objects by a particular attribute. For example, children might sort a group of blocks by their shape or they might make a game of finding all of the blue toys. As children begin to classify objects, it’s common for them to make some errors. As children have more opportunities to practice, they will develop an understanding of what belongs in a set and what does not. Children do not often spontaneously sort objects all on their own so it’s important for adults to model matching, sorting, and classification in a variety of situations.

You might encourage children to try the following with you:

- Sort a small cup of different shells or pebbles.
- Sort animals according to where they live.
- Sort leaves or play food according to shape and color.
- Sort clothing by who it belongs to.

Ask your child what they would enjoy sorting and how they would like to sort the objects. Suggest that they invent a sorting game and teach you how to play it.

Once your child is comfortable sorting a group of objects by a single attribute, explore together how a group of objects can be sorted by two attributes. For example, a group of toys might be sorted into two groups, a group of toys that are **both** blue and round and a group of toys that are not **both** blue and round.



Classification is a foundational skill for later success. For example, when children study Algebra, the ability to categorize objects by attribute directly relates to the skill needed to identify like terms. Early explorations also help children with data analysis, graphing, and logic.

Age Level	Related Infant Toddler Foundations , Preschool Foundations and CA State Standards
Infant/Toddler	<p>Problem Solving The developing ability to engage in a purposeful effort to reach a goal or figure out how something works.</p> <p>Classification The developing ability to group, sort, categorize, connect, and have expectations of objects and people according to their attributes.</p>
Preschool/TK	<p>Algebra and Functions 1.0 Children begin to sort and classify objects in their everyday environment.</p> <p>Mathematical Reasoning 1.1 Begin to apply simple mathematical strategies to solve problems in their environment.</p>
Kindergarten	<p>Measurement and Data K.MD.1 Describe and compare measurable attributes.</p>

