

Using and applying mathematics

Packing Red Riding Hood's basket

- Answer a question by selecting and using suitable equipment and sorting information, shapes or objects
- Display results using tables and pictures
- Solve problems involving counting, adding, subtracting, doubling or halving in the context of measures

Setting up the activity (whole class or small groups)

Read the letter from Little Red Riding Hood explaining that she has so much to carry that she needs to arrange it all in two baskets. Look at the items of food and the baskets and discuss how to pack the baskets so that they each weigh the same.

What do we need to do to help Red Riding Hood pack two baskets so that they weigh the same?

What equipment do you think you could use? Can you find something in the classroom to help you?

Development (small groups)

Make sure children have a balance and allow them some time to tackle the problem in their own way. After a few minutes, ask them to explain their thinking so far.

Help them with the idea that each bucket of the balance could represent one of Little Red Riding Hood's baskets.

Allow further time to work on the problem, listening to the language children use and observing how they approach the work. Once the children have solved the problem to their satisfaction, they decide together how to record their findings to send to Little Red Riding Hood and make such a record (using drawings, writing, photos).

What can you say about the problem so far?

What has happened to the buckets? What does that mean?

Are the buckets balanced? How will you know when they are balanced?

How can you record what you have found out?

What you need

- Letter from Little Red Riding Hood (resource sheet 2)
- Items of food and drink
- Two baskets
- Balances
- Units for weighing such as cubes

Winding it down (whole class or small groups)

Talk with the children about how they approached the problem, anything they found difficult, and how they recorded their work. Compare how the groups recorded their work and, together, interpret the different recordings.

Finally, agree which record to send to Red Riding Hood or make a new class recording.

Can the children

- suggest how to solve a problem and what equipment they could use?
- record their findings, using a simple table or drawings?
- talk about how they solved the problem?
- work effectively as a small group, discussing issues that arise while they are working?

Make notes during the activity about how children tackle the problem, work with others and the vocabulary they use.

Making it easier

Limit the number of food items. Children compare baskets of food informally by holding one in each hand, then confirm by putting each basket's contents in a bucket on the balance.

Making it harder

See if children can also include the same number of items in each basket as well as making the baskets balance.

Useful vocabulary

balance, lever balance, weight, heavier/heaviest, lighter/lightest, the same as, equal, record, compare, measure, problem, list



Links to other stories

Handa's Surprise
Use a similar letter from Handa asking for help to pack two baskets with fruit to carry to Akeyo's village.

Kipper's Birthday
Organise two bags of birthday presents for Kipper, which both weigh the same.