Sort and Count

Quick Description: Children sort objects and then quantify the groups. (Adapted from Clements and Sarama, 2020)

Key Questions

“How can we sort objects by attributes?”
“How many objects are in each sorted group?”

Activity

- Make objects available to children.
- Encourage children to sort objects by attributes.
  - Examples of attributes include:
    - Color
    - Height
    - Weight
    - Shape
- After children have sorted by an attribute, demonstrate how they can quantify one of their groups by counting the objects in it.
- Ask them to quantify the other groups they have by counting those. Then ask, "Which as more?"
- They might sort a collection of buttons into those with one to four holes and count to find out how many they have in each of the four groups.
- To do this, they focus on and describe the attributes of objects, classifying according to those attributes, and quantifying the resulting categories.

Formative Assessment
For children who need additional support:
- Demonstrate sorting while sitting close to the child.
- Have the child practice sorting as you give specific feedback.
- Observe for frustration and back off as needed to support independence.
For children who need a challenge:
- Have them write down the number of objects they had per group and discuss which group has more and less.

Materials

- Variety of Objects, preferably of similar sizes but a variety of shapes and colors
  - Example: Fruit Counters, Coins, Pattern Blocks, Food from pretend kitchen.

Notes

Teach children different vocabulary for describing differences and similarities.

Example, "An attribute is something about an object or person that we can describe. We use attributes to help us sort and classify. Describing an attribute can help others understand what we are describing."