

SORTING

Sorting activities involve children in making decisions using statements, pictures or objects.

Learning objectives

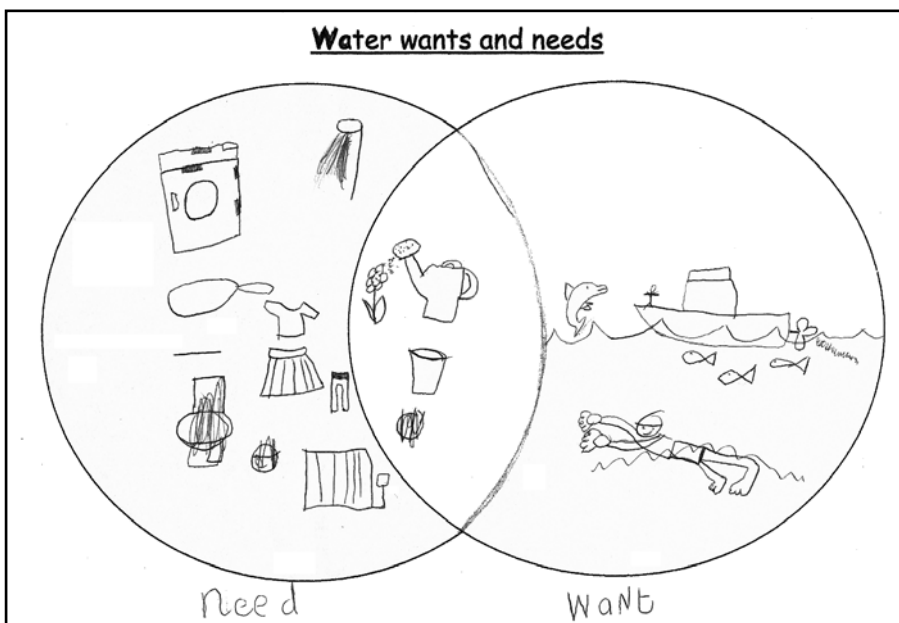
- ❑ to co-operate in a decision-making process;
- ❑ to express and justify opinions;
- ❑ to enhance discussion skills, ie comparing, contrasting, listening, depending;
- ❑ to understand that there is not always a right or wrong response to a situation.

How?

- ◆ Organise children into groups and give each group a series of statements, objects or pictures.
- ◆ The task is to sort the statements etc into different categories. This could be agree/disagree/don't know.
- ◆ Groups can feed back some of their decisions. Which caused the most discussion?
- ◆ There are different ways of sorting: eg physically sorting statements or objects into piles; using the framework of a Venn diagram to sort areas of overlap and difference or using a sorting tray, which could be a jam tart tin, or anything with compartments. PE hoops make great Venn diagram circles!

Outside the frame

In a sorting activity include some statements which are not relevant to the question in order to help children develop discerning skills. For example, if you're asking children to sort statements into: things which are and are not threats to the environment, as well as statements such as 'acid rain causes buildings to wear away', include examples such as 'we enjoy going on holidays'; 'cows live on farms in the countryside'. As well as sorting within the categories of a Venn diagram, they should place irrelevant cards outside it.



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Example:

Fair trade

Make a collection of fresh fruit and vegetables, tins, packets of rice and beans etc. If possible collect foods which have country of origin on the packet. Ask groups to sort the items into as many different categories as they can. Feedback on how they sorted the food. To explore issues of fair-trade, concentrate on where the foods originate and how they get to this country. Use materials such as **Go bananas** and **The whole world cake** to explore some of the issues about who gets paid what in the journey from picker to supermarket.

Example:

Disability issues

My class had done some work around disability issues earlier in the year. As a way of evaluating what they were thinking I gave them these statements to sort. They used Venn diagrams with the categories: we agree, we disagree, we're not sure. The activity encouraged some interesting discussion and I was pleased about how confident they felt to talk through these issues.

If I see someone struggling to manage in the supermarket I should help them.

It's really embarrassing to see 'them' mongol kids in the Early Learning Centre catalogue.

People with disabilities do not need our sympathy.

Buildings can disable some people.

When discussing individuals, the word 'normal' is most unhelpful as it suggests that there must be a group who are 'abnormal'.

It would cost a lot of money to make buses and trains accessible for invalids. They need their own transport.

'Heidi', 'Peter Pan' and 'What Katy did' are good stories to read to children.

People who have a disability need a fair chance to be as independent as possible.

Handicapped people need our help because they cannot manage on their own.

Statements about disability issues