



Thinking Abilities and General Knowledge Activity for 12 to 18 Months

Nesting Cups

Engaging in this activity teaches children to be aware of properties of size and space as they fit objects inside each other. Fine-motor practice occurs, too.

Materials:

- Plastic food-storage containers
- Plastic drinking cups
- Plastic measuring cups
- Different-size cans

What to do:

1. Let the child practice pulling apart and putting together two or three paper cups of the same size. This will help her get the idea of fitting things inside each other without needing to worry about sizes.
2. Introduce different-size nesting cups by giving only two cups from the set, the largest and smallest. When the child has figured out which cup goes inside the other, let her try two cups that are closer in size.
3. Let the child explore how nesting cups fit together through trial and error. The child first may try to fit a large one into a smaller one. That is a good way for the child to learn because she is learning from her mistakes.
4. Introduce a third nesting can after she can easily nest two. Again, start with significant size differences and let the child practice through trial and error.
5. Try the following if the child needs extra hints:
 - Line up the cans side by side according to size.
 - Keep the two larger cans identical in color or type, and the smallest one different in color or type.
 - Give the child the largest and middle cans to nest, and then give her the smallest.
 - Give the child the smallest and middle can to nest, and then give her the largest.

