

Scavenger Hunt

Hold the 1-pound weight provided. Then collect three objects around the classroom that weighs about 1 pound. Measure the objects you collected to see if they are indeed close to 1 pound.

Discussion, Suggestions, Possible Solutions

Materials: scale (metric and customary unit), objects that weigh 1 pound (or 1 kilogram)

Although the task is written using only pound as the unit. However, it is important that you have students engage in this task with other important units, both customary and metric.

Weight is a difficult attribute for children to understand because it is not visible unlike the attributes like length, capacity or area they have already studied. Sometimes, an object that is larger may weigh less than a smaller object due to the difference in their density. During the sharing and discussion time, make sure that this idea is brought up.

One of the most important goals in teaching and learning of measurement is for students to have some familiar referents for common units. In this task, children are asked to identify various objects around them that weigh approximately 1 pound (or 1 kilogram) so that they can use them as their personal referents. This task may be adjusted for other weight units, *gram* and *ounce*. However, these are rather small amount, particularly 1 *gram*. Therefore, you may want students to find objects that weigh about 100 *grams* instead of 1 *gram*.

There are many different possible arrangements to implement this task. You may have everyone (or every group) look for objects that weigh the same amount (1 *pound* or 1 *kilogram*, for example). Or, you may assign different groups different amounts. Students may go around the room with a 1-*pound* (or *kilogram*) weight to compare objects on the spot. You may adjust the exact arrangement to suits to needs of your particular class.

You may also consider having a scale that students can carry around as they hunt for objects. However, if students take a scale with them, some may simply pick objects at random to weigh instead of holding an object and asking, “Does this feel like

about 1 *pound*?” Developing a sense of how it feels to hold 1 *pound* (or *kilogram*) is an important aspect of this task, and you need to keep this aspect in mind as you decide how you want students to use the scales.

Extension:

In addition to having referents for units of weight, sometimes it will be helpful for us to have some referents for other weights, as well. For example, a bag of sugar or flour is about 5 pounds, a bag of potatoes may weigh 10 pounds, etc..

As a project, you may want to have students create a poster of common everyday objects that weigh specific amount. You do need to be careful about weights indicated on a product package as that will not include the weight of the container, which may be significant in some situations.