

Activity Idea

Activity	The filling station
Main Focus	Capacity

Resources	➤ A table with a range of containers of different sizes and shapes, e.g. recycled plastic trays, small boxes etc. ➤ Lots of uniformly sized items for filling, such as beads, beans, pebbles, conkers, pine cones ➤ Funnels, spoons and ladles
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Activity Outline	The aim is for children to fill up contrasting containers, initially with items which are the same. For example children can fill yoghurt pots, empty bottles and boxes with pebbles. Discuss which containers hold more or less. Discuss: How do we know which holds most? Allow children time to play and experiment with the items filling different containers. Next extended the activity to provide different things to fill the containers with, either much smaller or bigger (acorns or large pine cones) and discuss how you need only a few large things or a lot of small things to fill the same container. Children can compare two containers directly by filling one up then pouring the contents into another, explaining that when it overflows it holds less, and when there is space left, it holds more.
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Extension Opportunities	✓ Set up a range of buckets, bowls and baskets outdoors to fill with the same items, e.g. conkers or pine cones. ✓ Provide two large identical containers so children can compare two full containers indirectly by emptying each into them and comparing levels. ✓ Provide a range of litre containers of different shapes, including wide and shallow, tall and narrow, and discuss how they hold the same amount while looking very different. ✓ Challenge children to put three or more containers in order. ✓ Do the same activity with coloured water.
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