

# Information for parents

## Learning about measure

Dad, Aoife and Orla are out for a walk in the park. As the children climb a tree Dad uses words like **high** and **low**, **far** and **near**. When they pick up sticks he draws their attention to **differences in length** and **size**. A couple of days later as he reads them their bedtime story 'Spot Bakes a Cake' he explores measure words like **tall** and **long**. Looking at the cover they chat about Spot being up on a **high** stool and wearing a **tall** chef's hat and using a spoon with a **very long** handle in order to stir the cake.

As can be seen from the example above, maths is everywhere around us. This tip sheet focuses on one area of maths: **measure**. During the pre-school and early primary school years it is important that children learn to use a range of measure words especially when comparing the height, length and size of people and objects.

### Using the language of measure

The table on the next page gives some ideas of language you might use to help your child talk about measure during play and every day activities. Encourage your child to **compare** the **height**, **length** and **size of people and objects**. Talk about how things are the same and how they are different and introduce measure words like **higher**, **longer**, **lightest**, **tallest** rather than using terms like big and small.

Activity	Language you might use
Playing with toys	<i>What a lovely <b>little</b> teddy! You have the <b>smallest</b> one in the box.</i>
Exploring water	<i>Look, the jug is <b>overflowing</b>.</i>
Drawing a picture	<i>This crayon is <b>thick</b> but the pencil is <b>thin</b>.</i>
Making shapes with play dough	<i>That snake is very <b>long</b>. But this snake is really <b>short</b>.</i>
Building with the blocks	<i>That tower is so <b>tall</b>. Look it's even <b>taller</b> than you!</i>
Tidying the toys away	<i>The cars go in the <b>largest</b> box.</i>
Getting dressed	<i>These socks are the <b>same</b> size.</i>
Getting a drink	<i>Oops, the cup is nearly <b>full</b>!</i>
Carrying the groceries	<i>This bag is very <b>heavy</b>.</i>
Baking bread	<i>I don't have <b>enough</b> flour to make the bread. Look the bag is nearly <b>empty</b>!</i>
Getting ready to buy something	<i>There are <b>lots of</b> coins but only a <b>few</b> notes in my purse.</i>
Getting the rubbish ready for the bin	<i>A <b>longer</b> piece of string would be better to tie the bag.</i>

## Saying nursery rhymes and enjoying books about measure

Saying **counting** and **nursery rhymes** is another good way to learn about measure, for example, *Twinkle, twinkle little star*, *Humpty Dumpty* or *One, two buckle my shoe*.

Sharing and talking about **books** also gives children opportunities to hear and use the language of measure. As well as reading the book together, give your child lots of opportunities to talk about the pictures and the story with you. The bookshelf shows some suggestions for books which can help your child learn about measure. There are many others! Ask at your local library or search online for more suggestions.



When talking with your child about the stories:

- use measure words like **tall, high, long, full, empty**.
- compare heights and sizes – **smaller than/taller than/longest**.
- introduce new measure words like **thickest, loudest, fastest**.

Your interest in your child's activities and the fun you have together in talking about them will help your child enjoy and learn about the ideas and words that relate to measure.

Go to [www.aistearsiolta.ie](http://www.aistearsiolta.ie) for more ideas to help your child learn and develop.