Describing Objects Worksheet

Saying more than the name: group, parts, function, looks, size and place.



MASTERED BY
Naming one or two features from about 3

ITEMS
6

Name: _____ Date: _____

Semantic feature analysis is the practice of describing a thing by its features rather than reaching for its name. A child who can only produce the name has one route to the word, so when the name will not come there is nothing to fall back on; a child who can say "it is an animal, it has four legs, it gives milk" can get the idea across without the word, and the word itself is easier to retrieve next time because it is attached to more. That is why this is worth doing with children who know the vocabulary perfectly well.

What to expect: A child who is not ready answers "it's a cow" and stops, or repeats the name louder. That is not a vocabulary problem - they do not yet know what counts as an answer. Naming the slot is what unlocks it: not "tell me about the cow" but "what group is a cow in?" Expect one feature at a time at first, and expect color and size long before group and function.

Which Feature Is Missing?

Read the description. The child says which kind of detail has not been said yet - group, parts, what you do with it, looks, size or where.

1. "A dog is an animal with four legs and a tail. It is furry and brown, about as big as a chair, and it lives in a house." What have we not said?



2. "A cup is a dish. It is small and round. You drink out of it. It is in the kitchen." What have we not said?



3. "A bike is a thing that goes. It has two wheels and handlebars. It is red and shiny. You ride it. It is bigger than a cat." What have we not said?



4. "An apple is a food. It has a stem and seeds. It is red and round, small enough to hold, and it grows on a tree." What have we not said?



5. "A spoon is in the kitchen. It has a handle. It is shiny and silver. You eat with it. It is small." What have we not said?



6 "A cow is a farm animal with four legs. It is black and white. It gives milk." What have we not said?



Answer Key

Which Feature Is Missing?

1. What you do with it
2. What parts it has
3. Where you find it
4. What you do with it
5. What group it is in
6. How big it is