

HOW DO WE CLASSIFY MATERIALS?



by Yvonne Pearson



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Words in **bold** are in the glossary.

FINDING OUT ABOUT MATERIALS

Think about getting ready for school in the morning. You brushed your teeth with a plastic toothbrush. You ate cereal using a metal spoon. You put books into your backpack. Books are made of paper. Your backpack is made of fabric.

All the objects you use every day are made of different materials. Different materials have different characteristics. They could be hard or soft. They could be different colors. In science these are called **properties**.





Different properties make materials useful for different things. Imagine you and your neighbor want to build a birdhouse. What do you need to make it? You need to find the right materials.

First, you need something to make the walls and roof. Then you will need something to hold everything together. And don't forget a tape measure. You'll use it to make sure everything is the right size.

CLASSIFYING MATERIALS

Let's do an investigation about materials. Look at the pictures on page 9. Make **observations**. Why do some objects go together? Are some the same color? Are others a different color?

Draw a line down the middle of a piece of paper. Write *red* on one side. Write *blue* on the other. List objects under the word *red*. List objects under the word *blue*.

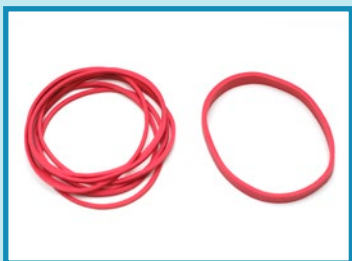
You have just grouped the materials by color. It is one of the characteristics they share. This is called **classification**.



paper bag



brick



rubberbands



metal bottle



glass jar



wooden sticks



plastic bowl



cotton T-shirt