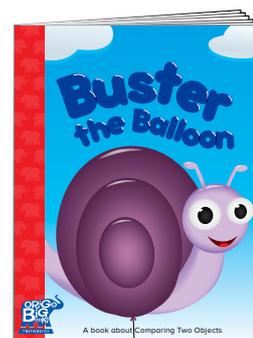


Buster the Balloon

A book about Comparing Two Objects



Aim

Buster the Balloon introduces size and length comparison words. Students explore concrete and pictorial representations of *biggest*, *taller*, *wider*, *longer*, *fatter*, and *bigger*.

These whole-class/large group and small group activities provide students with the opportunity to:

- listen to a story about size or length comparison
- listen to the accompanying story tune
- use materials to explore size or length comparison
- use the teaching tool to compare size or length
- describe the size or length of objects in the environment using comparison words

Activities

1. Listening to the story
2. Listening to the tune
3. Using characters to act out the story
4. Using the teaching tool to compare size or length 
5. Comparing object cards
6. Ordering object cards
7. Sorting found objects
8. Using task cards
9. Modeling with playdough
10. Comparing with a partner
11. Playing feel and find
12. Comparing sizes of animals

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I. Listening to the story

Resources

- *Buster the Balloon*

Activity

Display the cover of *Buster the Balloon*. Before reading, ask for predictions, **What do you think this story is going to be about? What do you think will happen?** Read the story. Then ask for possible extensions to the ending using questions such as, **What do you think will happen to Buster? What will the other balloons say or do? What will happen next?** Read the story again, pausing to ask questions during the story about the meaning of words that might need clarification, including *boast*, *sprung*, and *leak*.

2. Listening to the tune

Resources

- *Buster the Balloon*
- Big Book Tune *Buster the Balloon*

Activity

Play the Big Book Tune while following along with the Big Book. Encourage a student to turn the pages of the book along with the song. They can also point to the characters of the book as they are mentioned in the song. Play the song again, encouraging the students to engage in one or more of the following ways:

- singing along with music
- “floating” like a balloon
- using their arms to make themselves taller, wider, or longer along with the story
- using their mouths to hold air and then “spring a leak”.



3. Using the characters to act out the story

Resources

- *Buster the Balloon*
- Support 1 (3 pages) — see attached
- Coloring materials
- Scissors
- Glue
- Lunch-sized paper bags
- Craft sticks (optional)

Preparation

Print a copy of Support 1. Encourage students to be involved in the preparation by allowing them to cut out and color the characters. The characters can be attached to craft sticks or paper bags as puppets.

Activity

Ask for volunteers to each hold one of the characters from the story. Read the story, encouraging the volunteers to act it out with the character pictures. Read the story again, allowing different students to act as the characters. Then allow the students to create dialogue for the characters. Ask, **What would your character say to Buster? Why? How does the otter feel about Buster having a fatter tail? How does your character feel about Buster leaking? What would Buster say to Marge the moose?**

4. Using the teaching tool to compare size

Resources

- *Teaching Tool*



Activity

Invite a student to move two characters to the work area. Have the student compare the size or length of the characters. Then have the student use an *-er* word from the teaching tool to label one of the characters. Repeat the process by placing two new characters on the work area, comparing them, and labeling one with a comparison word. Extend the activity by using balloons that are not characters.



5. Comparing object cards

Resources

- Support 2 — see attached
- Scissors
- Bowl or other container for holding the cards (optional)

Preparation

Print copies of Support 2 so there is a pair of cards for each student. Cut out the cards.

Activity

Place the cards in a container. Instruct each student to draw two cards from the container without looking. Have the students compare their cards. Ask, **Are your cards the same or different? How are they different?** Place the cards back into the bowl and repeat.

6. Ordering object cards

Resources

- Sequencing and Comparing Cards from Activity 5

Activity

Choose a set of the sequencing cards. Place the cards in random order, face up, on a table. Ask, **Are all of the cards the same? How are they different?** Encourage the students to use comparison language. Using the language that the students say, encourage the use of *-er* words. If appropriate, also encourage the use of *-est* words. For example, ask, **If this one is tall, and this is taller, what could we call this one?** (tallest)



7. Sorting found objects

Resources

- Support 3 — see attached

Preparation

Print copies of Support 3 so there is a comparison strip for each pair of students. Cut out the cards so the opposite comparison words are connected in a strip.

Activity

Place the students in pairs and give each pair one language comparison strip. Take the students on a walk outdoors and ask each pair to find two objects — e.g. sticks, leaves, small rocks — that match the words on their comparison strip. Back in the classroom, have the student pairs find all the other pairs with the same language strip. Those pairs then form into groups, and arrange their objects with the language strips. During a sharing time, students can walk around to view the sorting for the other language strips. Talk about the sorting, and encourage students to explain their thinking. Ask, **Why did you put this leaf in the taller group?** Extend the activity by having the students collect different objects and then identify and describe their own sorting categories. Label the categories that the students create with words.

8. Using task cards

Resources

- Support 4 — see attached

Preparation

Print copies of Support 4 and cut out the cards. Make the tasks personal to your classroom setting and playground by adding your own cards.

Activity

Separate the students into small groups, and instruct them to take turns drawing a card from the set. Read the first card aloud and ask all the students in the group to complete the task. If necessary, simplify the directions or provide the commands one step at a time. When the students return to their group, talk about the objects that they found. Encourage volunteers to help think of more tasks that could be added using comparison words. Repeat so each task is completed. For a challenge, make comparisons to everyday objects that students might have, using pictures such as a car, apple, refrigerator, telephone, or bike.



9. Modeling with playdough

Resources

- Playdough
- Tools to shape playdough (optional), such as scissors and craft sticks
- Cards from Activity 7

Activity

Provide each student with playdough. Ask a student to choose a card strip. Read the words on the first strip and ask the students to create two objects to represent each of the comparison words. Repeat the process with a new pair of comparison words. Ask open-ended questions and prompts about the sculptures. Ask, **Tell me about your sculptures. What do you notice about the sculptures that are wide? What could you say about the two snakes? What other words could we write about this group?**

10. Comparing with a partner

Activity

Ask students to pair up. Have the students compare themselves by asking questions such as, **Who is taller? Who has longer legs? Whose hand is wider?** For a challenge, ask students to form groups of three. Prompt the students to sequence themselves in order using *-er* and *-est* words. Ask, **Who is shorter? Who is the shortest?**



II. Playing feel and find

Resources

- Long athletic sock or a “feely box” per pair of students
- Small objects from the classroom or environment, for example, a number cube, crayon, ball, bean, penny

Activity

Secretly place two of the objects into the box or sock. Ask a student to place their hand into the box or sock and feel the objects. Then use a comparison word as a prompt to remove one of the objects. For example, say, **Pull out the wider object. Show me the longer one.** Then ask the student to remove the other object, and check and discuss the comparison. After modeling this activity, encourage students to work in pairs, taking turns to feel the objects and ask each other questions.



12. Comparing sizes of animals

Resources

- Large sheets of paper or sidewalk
- Chalk
- *Buster the Balloon*

Preparation

Using the measurements listed below, draw shapes to represent some of the characters in *Buster the Balloon* on paper, or with chalk on a sidewalk. Write the animal's name underneath.

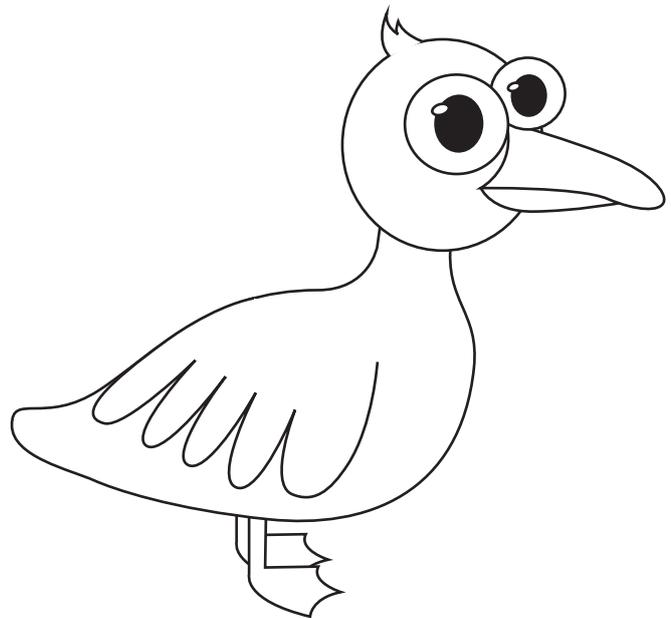
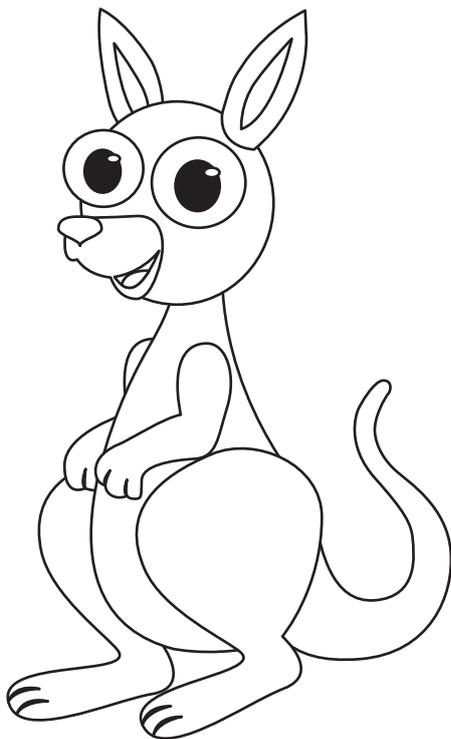
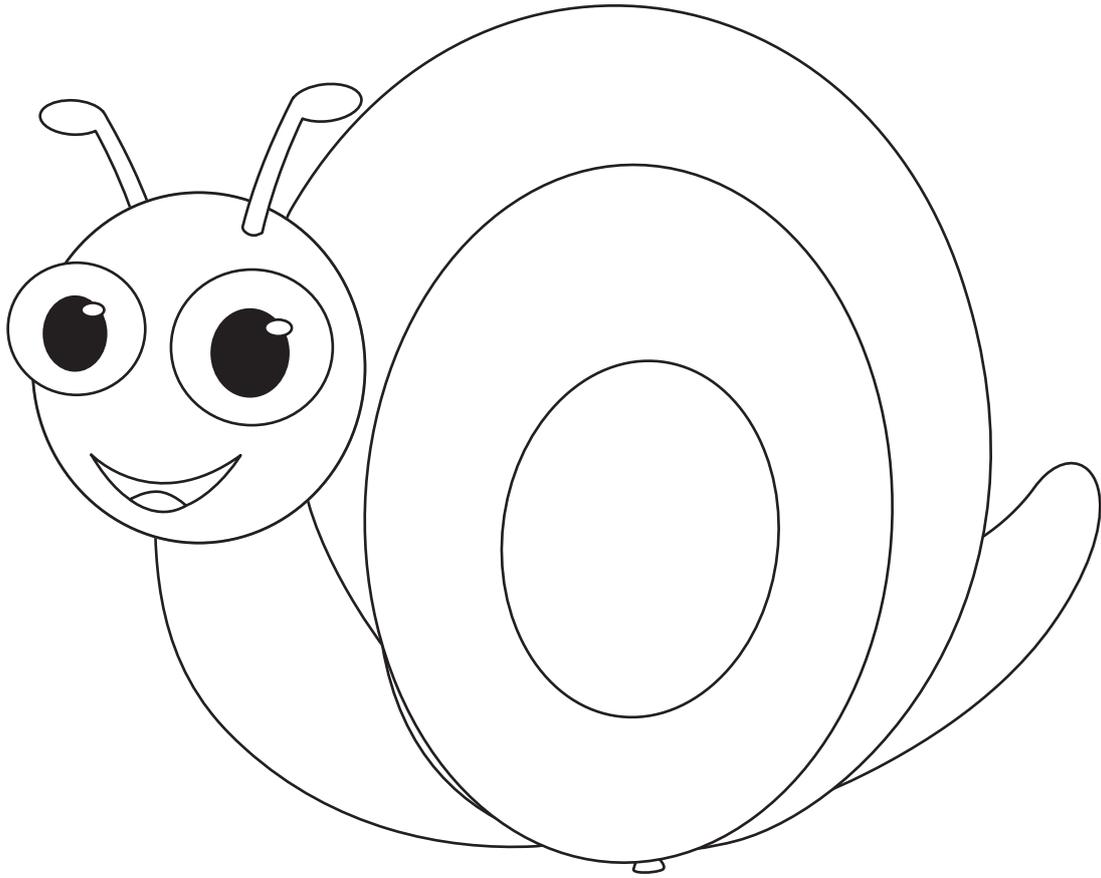
- Most snails are about an inch long, wide, and tall.
- Common tree squirrels are about 8 inches tall.
- Kangaroos are about 6 feet tall.
- Most brown rats are 13–18 inches long (not including the tail).
- House cats are about 9 inches tall, and 18 inches long (not including the tail).
- Moose are 5–6 ½ feet tall at the shoulder. Male antlers can be 6 feet wide from tip to tip.
- Geese are 2 ½–3 ½ feet long. The wingspan of a goose is 4–5 ½ feet.
- Grizzly bears are 6–7 feet long and 3–4 feet tall at the shoulder.
- Otters are about 4 feet long.

Activity

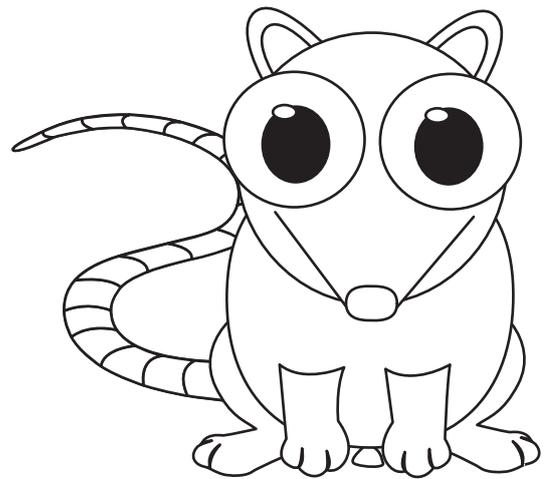
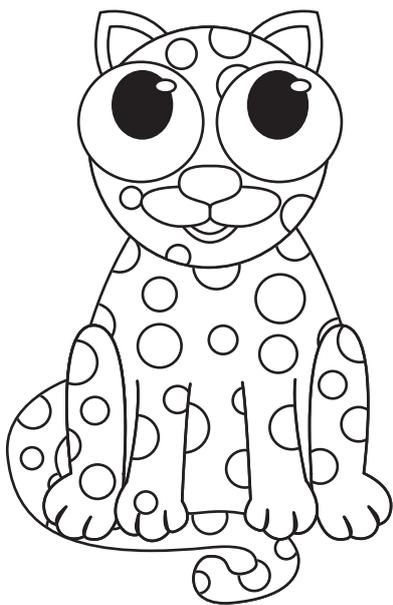
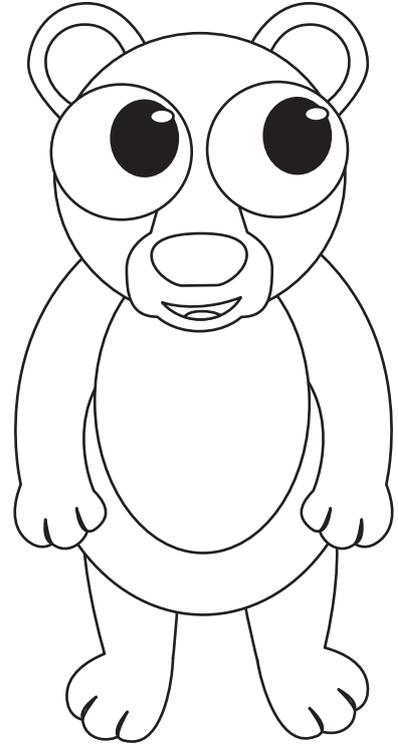
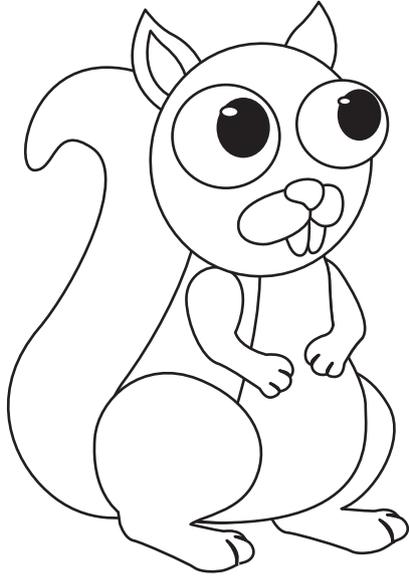
Discuss how the animals in the book are balloons and are not the same size as living animals. Ask questions about the size or length of living animals as you read the book. Ask, **Is a snail taller than a squirrel? Is a snail wider than a cat?** Use the shapes representing of the animals to ask questions related to the book. **Which is taller, the snail or the squirrel? The squirrel or kangaroo?** Encourage comparisons between the students and the living animals.



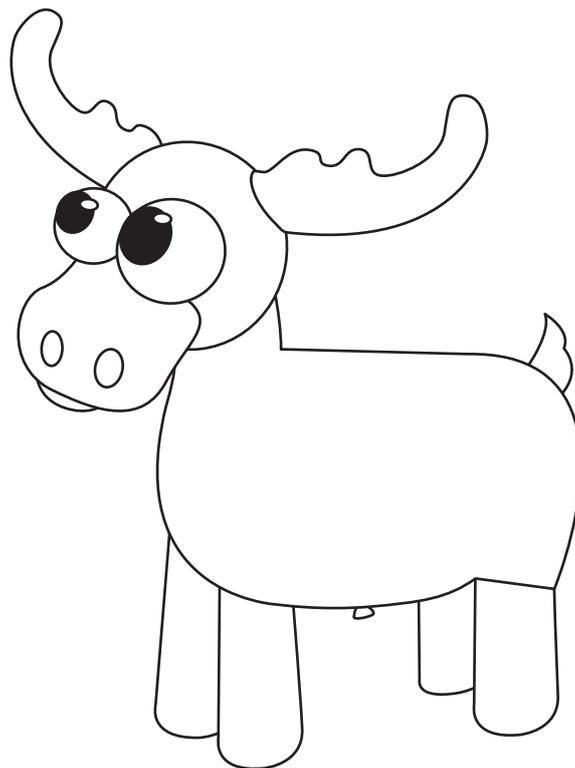
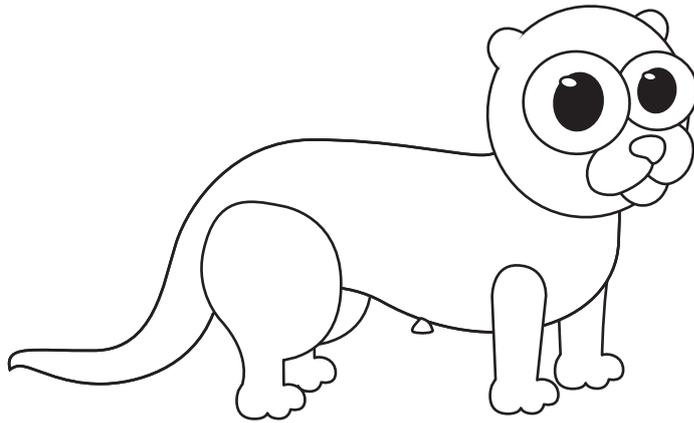
Characters



Characters



Characters



Sequencing and Comparing Cards



Scissors icon



shorter

taller

bigger

smaller

longer

shorter

thinner

wider

Task Cards



Find something **taller** than you and touch it with both hands.

Find something **longer** than your foot and put your foot on it.

Find two things **smaller** than your thumb and touch them at the same time.

Find something **bigger** than your arm and tap it.

Find something **shorter** than you and sit on it.

Find something **wider** than your hand and touch it with your leg.

Find something **thinner** than your leg and pick it up.

Find something **taller** than your teacher and sit next to it.

Find something **shorter** than a table and walk around it.