Give Me a Minute

Goal: Pick a category such as animals and list as many as you can in a minute

Before beginning

Decide on category for the lists.

Easy. Use a general, familiar topic such as animals or foods.

Medium. Choose a more specific topic, such as vegetables or mammals.

Hard. Pick a narrow topic, such as vegetables that grow in the ground or mammals with hooves.

1 Ready, set, list!

Explain that you’ll call out a category. Everyone will have 1 minute to list as many things as they can that fit that category.

Distribute pencils and paper, and try it.
2 Compare lists with a partner

Ask children to:

Cross off items that both partners listed.

Go through the items that only one person listed and discuss: Do you both agree that those items fit the category?

3 What fits the category?

Gather the group to discuss how they decided what fits. For instance, if the category was cereals:

How did you decide what counts as a cereal? Does it need to come in a box? Does it count if you need to cook it?

4 Play again (optional)

As a group, decide whether to revise the category.

Before starting, give children time to get some new ideas by paging through a book on the category.

Variations

Write for me (easier). One child says things that fit in a category, and an adult or older child records.

Time it together (harder). Play in pairs. Together, children choose a category and time a minute while making lists.
Grades
2-6+
Minimum number of participants
2
Suggested grouping
divide into pairs
Time
10 minutes or less
Math
data; categorizing
Materials
paper and pencils
watch or clock that shows minutes
Prerequisites
writing quickly