

ACTIVITY 8.5**Guess and Measure**

Make lists of things in the room to measure (see Figure 8.3). For younger children, run a piece of masking tape along the dimension of each object to be measured. On the list, designate the units to be used. Do not forget to include curves or other distances that are not straight lines. Include estimates before the measures. Young children will not be very good at estimating distances at first.

For students in the second or third grade, the "Guess and Measure" activity can easily be done with standard units. For students beginning to learn about two-digit numbers, add the following task to the activity: Have students make a row or chain of exactly ten units to use in helping them with their estimates. They first lay ten units against the object and then make their guess.

Rather than try to explain to young students that larger units will create a smaller measure and vice versa (an idea that is often confusing to them), create an activity where this issue is a focus.

ACTIVITY 8.6**Changing Units**

Have students measure a length with one unit; then provide them with a different unit and see if they can predict the measure of the same length with the new unit. Students should write down their predictions and explanations of how they were made. Then have them make the actual measurement. In the class discussions that follow, the predictions and explanations will be the most educational part of the activity.

Name _____

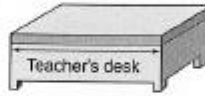


Around your outline

Unit:  straw

Guess _____ straws

Measured _____ straws

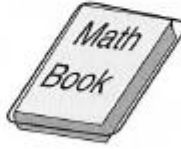


The teacher's desk

Unit: orange rod

Guess _____ rods

Measured _____ rods



Around math book

Unit: paper clip

Guess _____ clips

Measured _____ clips

FIGURE 8.3

Record sheet for measuring with informal length units.

From Van de Walle, J. A. & Lovin, L.H. (2006). *Teaching Student-Centered Mathematics Grades K – 3*. Toronto: Pearson Education, Inc. (p. 231).