

Mary Wore Her Red Dress: A Lesson in Counting Attributes

A Lesson for Grades PreK–2

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Overview of Lesson

Mary Wore Her Red Dress and Harry Wore His Green Sneakers is a favorite book to share with students at the beginning of the school year. In the book, animals in assorted brightly colored clothes assemble for their friend Katy's grand birthday gala. After reading the book, students look closely at attributes of their own clothing. They then sort and count to discover how many classmates are wearing something in common with one another. Students learn to make observations and strengthen their vocabulary to describe their ideas (for example, color words). As an added bonus, this lesson helps students learn each other's names and is a great community builder.

Materials

- *Mary Wore Her Red Dress and Henry Wore His Green Sneakers* by Merle Peek
- *How to Assess While You Teach Math: Formative Assessment Practices and Lessons, Grades K–2: A Multimedia Professional Learning Resource* by Dana Islas
- *Mary Wore Her Red Dress* Teacher Checklist
- *Mary Wore Her Red Dress* Student Checklist, one copy per student

Common Core State Standards for Mathematics

Measurement and Data: Standard K.MD

Describe and compare measurable attributes.

Classify objects and count the number of objects in each category, and sort the categories by count.

Counting and Cardinality: Standard K.CC

Know number names and the count sequence.

Count to tell the number of objects.

Mathematical Practices

Model with mathematics.

Compare numbers.



Related Lesson

As a follow-up lesson, consider G-1 *The Attribute Game* in Dana Islas's resource *How to Assess While You Teach Math: Formative Assessment Practices and Lessons*.

Vocabulary

attribute, same, different, have, do not have, sorting, count, organize



Teaching Directions

Part 1: Reading the Book

1. Gather students in the whole-group area of your classroom. Introduce (or reread) the familiar book *Mary Wore Her Red Dress and Henry Wore His Green Sneakers*.
2. After reading the story, bring students' attention to the fact that throughout the story they discovered different attributes or characteristics of the clothes that the characters are wearing. Ask students, "What was something that the author told us about each character's clothes?"

Teaching Tip: The Word Attribute

When introducing new vocabulary, say the new word and ask students to repeat the word. Then define the word and use it in a sentence. Next, ask students to use the word in a sentence. Whenever possible, use visuals or physical examples to make the experience multisensory. In the case of the word *attribute*, define it as "a characteristic that someone or something has." Tell students, "My attribute is black pants because I am wearing black pants today. Can you use the word *attribute* in a sentence as you describe an attribute you have?"

Part 2: Sharing Attributes through Song

3. Explain to students that they are now going to think about the clothes they are wearing. Tell students, "We are going to sing a song about the attributes of our clothes." Ask a student to come up and stand next to you. Ask the student, "What attribute of your clothing would you like to sing about?" For example, Isabella says, "Color."
4. Sing about the student's chosen attribute of his or her clothing. (The melody to the song is included in the book.) For example, if Isabella identifies the color of her shirt as pink, sing: "Isabella wore her pink shirt, pink shirt, pink shirt. Isabella wore her pink shirt all day long."

Teaching Tip: Student Participation

Students are even more engaged when they become part of the song—in this case, whether they are the individual in the song or they share the attribute. As students realize that you are customizing the song, they'll each want a turn! Adapt activities with this idea in mind.

5. After singing about the student's attribute, in this case Isabella's pink shirt, ask students who else has the attribute. For example, say, "Who else is wearing a pink shirt today? Please stand up if you share the attribute of a pink shirt with Isabella. We have friends who have a pink shirt and friends who do not have a pink shirt."

Part 3: Sharing Attributes through Counting

6. Now incorporate counting into the activity. In the example of Isabella's pink shirt, ask students, "How many friends in this sorting are wearing a pink shirt today?" Model one-to-one correspondence by gently touching each student's head as you count aloud.

Teaching Tip: Modeling Organization

If there are more than three students standing with a similar attribute, model being organized when you count. Ask those students who are standing to line up before you count them. You might say, "I think we need all of the friends with pink shirts to make a line so we can keep track as we count all of you!"

7. After counting to find out how many friends share the common attribute, share your findings. For example, say, "Five friends have pink shirts on today!"



- Repeat steps 3 through 7 with a different student volunteer and attribute. Ask for a student to do the counting with support from you and the class.

Extensions

Who Doesn't Have the Attribute?

First graders and students with more counting experience may also be able to find out how many students do not share the attribute. For example, ask students, “I wonder . . . how many friends do not have pink shirts on today?”

Comparing Groups

Compare the groups of students sorted by the attribute. For example, ask students, “Which group has more people—the group of friends who have a pink shirt or the group of friends who do not have a pink shirt? How many more? Which group has fewer people? How many fewer?”

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Mary Wore Her Red Dress Teacher Checklist

Checklists are invaluable in helping you to focus your observations and document student behaviors, responses, and reactions to lessons. Each column in the checklist specifies what to observe while students are engaged in the mathematical activity. Having the checklist ready on a clipboard, and easily accessible, helps to ensure that necessary documentation and recording take place. To create a teacher checklist for the previous lesson, use Reproducible A: Teacher Checklist Template from Dana Islas’s resource *How to Assess While You Teach Math: Formative Assessment Practices and Lessons*. Write the following headings in each column:

Attribute Shared / Vocabulary Used

Counts to Tell the Number of Objects

Knows Number Names

Knows Count Sequence

Models with Mathematics

For more on using teacher checklists as a successful formative assessment practice, see page 15 in *How to Assess While You Teach Math: Formative Assessment Practices and Lessons*.



Mary Wore Her Red Dress Student Checklist

This checklist helps students monitor their own learning, set math goals, and ultimately share academic progress with their parents. Each child should have his or her own student checklist and should keep it in his or her student notebook. To create a student checklist for the previous lesson, use Reproducible B: Student Checklist Template from Dana Islas’s resource *How to Assess While You Teach Math: Formative Assessment Practices and Lessons*. Write the following headings in each column:

I share an attribute.

I count how many friends have the same attribute.

I know the number names.

I know the order of the numbers.

I show my thinking using math.

For more on using student checklists (including video clips) as a successful formative assessment practice, see page 20 in *How to Assess While You Teach Math: Formative Assessment Practices and Lessons*.

