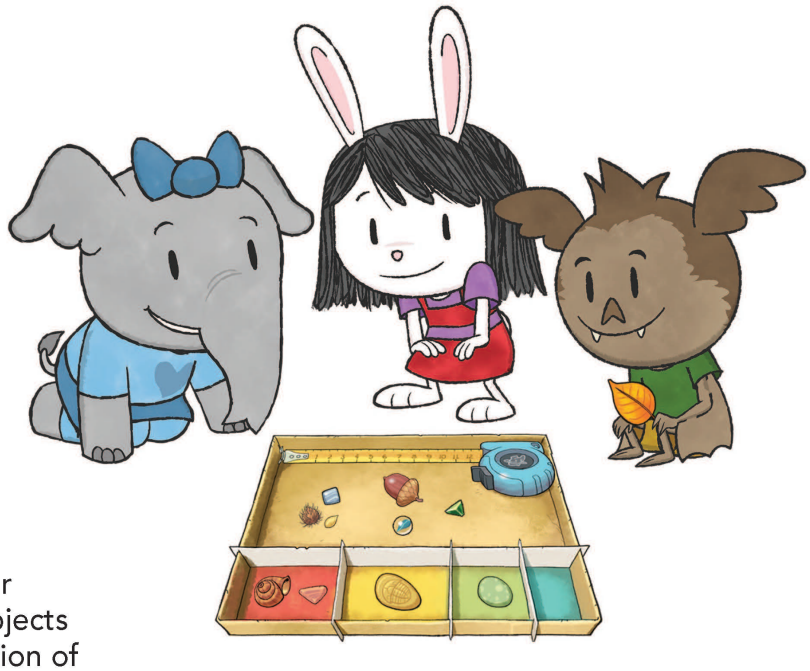
Collecting and Sorting

Children are naturally curious about the world around them, just like Elinor and her friends Ari and Olive. You can nurture that curiosity by encouraging your child to make careful observations of the things she is curious about.

A good way to do this is by collecting and sorting objects. Kids love to collect things! And sorting requires your child to look closely at the different properties of an object such as color, shape, size, smell, and texture. When deciding which ones go together, your child practices another important skill—comparing and contrasting.



Make a Sorting Box

Help your child make a sorting box by gluing the illustration on the next page to the bottom of a used, cardboard shipping box that is about the same size. You can also use a cereal box. Lay the cereal box on its side and cut away the other side so you have an open box.

Many Ways to Sort

Now go on an object hunt, either inside or outside. Ask your child to find 10 small objects to sort. Place the objects in the large section of the box with the tape measure. Have your child look at the objects and sort them by one property (e.g., color, shape, size) into the smaller compartments. The tape measure in the box will help if your child chooses to sort by size.

Once your child has sorted the objects one way, suggest that she tries sorting them a different way!

There are many other ways to sort objects:

- natural or human-made
- what they are used for
- soft or hard
- the sound they make
- found inside or outside
- ones that sink or ones that float

You can have fun sorting with your child by turning it into a guessing game. Each time your child sorts a group of objects, tell her that you will guess the property she used to sort them.

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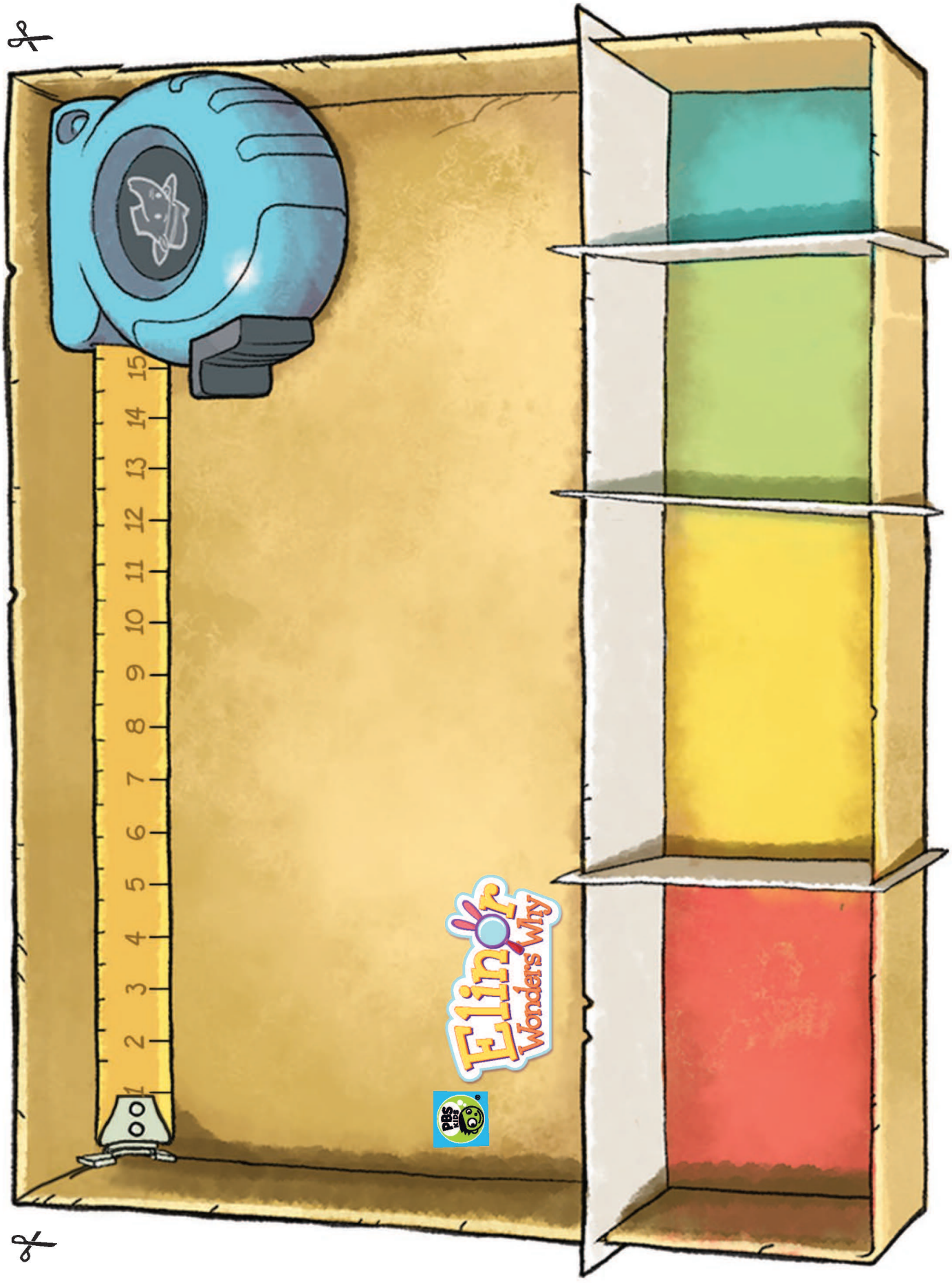
Make your own sorting box by cutting out this picture and gluing it to the bottom of a used cardboard box.



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