

Short or Long

Aspect

Shape, space and measures

Development matters

Order two or three items by length or height (40–60+ months).

Early learning goal

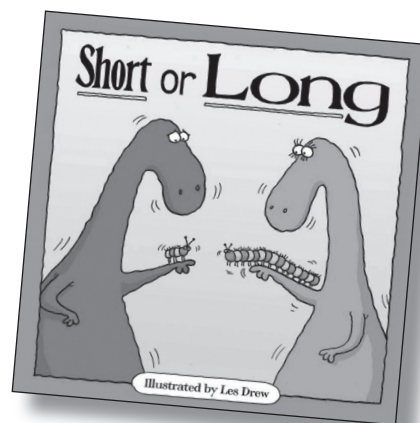
I can use language, such as 'greater', 'smaller', 'heavier' or 'lighter', to compare quantities.

Key vocabulary

length, long, short, longer, shorter, longest, shortest, measure, compare

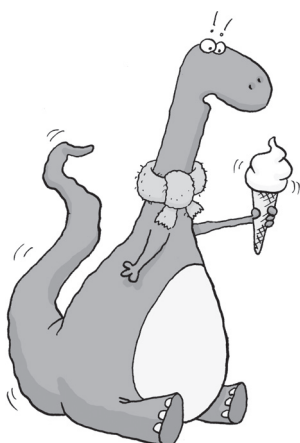
Read and talk maths

- Look at the front cover of *Short or Long*. Ask the children to describe the caterpillars. How are they the same/different? Read the title and talk about the way that the text has been presented. If you are using the CD-ROM version of the book, use the whiteboard pen to join the words 'short' and 'long' to the correct caterpillars.
- As you read *Short or Long*, ask the children to identify the long and short object(s) on each page. Encourage them to describe and compare the objects, using appropriate mathematical vocabulary. For example: *The blue dinosaur's ski poles are shorter than the pink dinosaur's. The pink dinosaur's straw is longer than the blue dinosaur's.*
- On the last pages, ask the children to identify what is 'the same' (the lengths of the dinosaur's tongues). How do they know?



Read and do maths

- Ask the children to find examples of long and short objects in the indoor and the outdoor environment (for example, a flower with a short stem, a long pencil). Encourage them to use language (such as 'long', 'short', 'longer than' and 'shorter than') to describe and compare the lengths of different objects they find.
- Look at the second illustration. Ask: *Which dinosaur is wearing the long scarf? How do you know?* Give two children in the group a scarf to wear (one long and one short) and invite the rest of the group to guess which of the two scarves is longer. Demonstrate how to lay the two scarves side by side to allow a direct comparison of their lengths to be made. Label the scarves 'short' and 'long'. Repeat the activity, choosing different children to wear the scarves. You could also do this activity using long and short belts, skirts or trousers.
- Set up a clothes shop in the role-play area. Provide boxes labelled 'long belts', 'short belts', 'long scarves' and so on. Encourage the children to sort the clothes into the correct boxes.
- Ask the children to draw and paint pictures of animals (such as a dog with short ears or an elephant with a long trunk), or paint patterns using long and short brush strokes.
- Make and label short and long caterpillars using play dough, by threading beads onto a string or by printing or sticking coloured circles onto paper. Compare the caterpillars. Ask: *Which is longest/shortest? How do you know?*



Practise maths

- Hand out copies of the photocopiable page 'Short or long'. Ask the children to identify different pictures (for example: *Which rabbit has long ears?*). Ask them to join each of the pictures to the correct label.