

Ideas and Inspiration for the TTS Colour Matching Posting Pots

TTS Colour Matching Posting Pots (EY10652) (EY10653) (EY10654)

Colour Matching Posting Pots – Supporting Learning in the Early Years and Beyond

In this download, you will find a collection of fun, simple and engaging activity ideas to use in your setting.

The Colour Matching Posting Pots are a simple, yet versatile resource designed to capture children's curiosity. With brightly coloured lids and matching straws and discs, these different size pots invite endless posting, tipping and sorting play.

Babies and toddlers are naturally drawn to the satisfying action of dropping the pieces through the holes and slots, while older children enjoy sorting by attributes such as shape and colour.

This resource supports exploration across many different areas of learning, making it a great addition to any early year's setting.



Communication and Language

Conversations and Interacting

Sit alongside the children/child and comment as they drop the straws/discs through the holes and slots in the lids.

Use short playful phrases to describe the play, for example, “In it goes...plop!” or comment on the shapes, “Long one, round one.”

Babies enjoy the interactions and rhythms of the words while toddlers may start to repeat the words and actions.

Example vocabulary to introduce:

- In, out, drop, plop, tap, round, long, circle, gone, more, again.

Taking it further:

- Leave the pots in the home corner with pretend shopping lists so children can ‘buy’ things with the discs/straws (pretend money) or post them into other pots and pans during imaginary play (pretend food).

Taking Turns

Invite a small group of children to play together, each child posting one piece at a time into the pot. Use prompts such as “My turn, your turn” to encourage sharing and turn taking.

Children quickly catch onto the pattern with the repetition, making the activity feel like a little game.

Example vocabulary to introduce:

- My turn, your turn, sharing, wait, next, finished, swap, go.

Taking it further:

- When reading a story, can the children post a disc or a straw each time a new character is introduced?
- Use the posting pots to help older children in early years make choices together. For example, place two storybooks on display and invite the children to vote for which one they’d like to hear. They can do this by posting a coloured straw/disc in the pot next to their chosen book – perhaps a yellow disc for Goldilocks or a blue disc for The Three Little Pigs.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Celebrating Little Wins

For a baby or toddler, managing to post a piece is a genuine triumph.

Smile, clap and give encouragement and praise such as 'You did it!' and observe how proud they are of their achievements.

Celebrate the moments of success such as posting a disc, emptying out the tub or putting the lid on the container as this will make them feel good about their achievements and make them want to try again. Remember to praise effort as much as the outcome.

Example vocabulary to introduce:

- Well done, you did it, good try, try again, happy, proud.

Taking it further:

- Keep a pot in an area where the children can access the pots, straws and/or discs so that they can repeat familiar play independently.

Helping Each Other

Sometimes, even placing the lids on top of the containers can be tricky if children are still developing their coordination skills.

Encourage the children to watch each other to see if they can find a solution. Why doesn't the lid fit? Have they chosen the right lid size for the pot?

Help but only when necessary (e.g. by scaffolding, reorientating the resource and helping them to think and experiment to find the solution).

Example vocabulary to introduce:

- Help, stuck, swap, turn, push, try this way.

Taking it further:

- Encourage children who have got the coordination and motor skills to model these to their friends as they play with the posting pots. Can they help their friends to succeed?

Physical Play

Posting Practice

Steadying the pot with one hand while posting with the other looks simple but takes concentration and practise, especially for our babies and toddlers.

Give children time to repeat the action as often as they want.

If holding the pot while posting with the other hand is a bit tricky for the child, start by holding the pot steady for them so they can concentrate on developing and securing the posting action first.

Having different shaped objects to post into the pots such as discs and straws, helps children to explore and develop different grasps and fine motor skills. Will they use their pincer grip to pick up the straws and discs, or will they grasp the objects with their hand?

Example vocabulary to introduce:

- Push, drop, turn, hold, in, out.

Taking it further:

- Can the children use their skills and interest in posting to post other items, for example, a letter into a post-box, or a ball down a tube?

Tip it Out

Many children delight in filling the pots and immediately emptying them again.

This cycle of 'fill and spill' is predictable and satisfying, with the children often repeating this action for a length of time.

As children empty and fill the pots, they are exploring, using trial and error, practising their motor skills and learning how the world around them works.

Example vocabulary to introduce:

- Empty, full, post, tip, pour, gone, again.

Taking it further:

- Can the children find other things to post into the pots? Do they make a different noise when dropped into the container? What does it sound like when the pot is rattled?

Sorting into categories

Children can use the posting pots to categorise (identify how things are alike or different) and organise (put things into piles or containers that hold things that are alike).

Children may choose to sort the discs/straws by colour or by type (Is it a disc or straw? Which pot do I post this object into?)

Try using simple prompts like 'Can we post all the yellow ones first?' This helps to model the activity and checks their understanding.

Example vocabulary to introduce:

- Same, different, long, big, round, small, yellow, blue, green, disk, straw.

Taking it further:

- Can the children gather other items to be categorised and organised into groups? This may be other objects that are blue, round, yellow or long.

Counting As We Go

Encourage children to count each piece as it is posted into the pot.

Babies often enjoy listening to the pattern, while toddlers may start joining in or anticipating the next number.

For older children in the early years, the sound of each straw or disc dropping into the pot reinforces the idea that every number said matches one object – a tangible way of exploring 1:1 correspondence. Hearing and seeing the action together helps them make sense of how counting works.

Example vocabulary to introduce:

- Number names (one, two three etc), more, less.

Taking it further:

- Play number games with the pots – Either say a number aloud or roll dice. Can the children post that number of straws or discs? For older children, you could extend the game by having cards to pick from – one with colours, one with straws or discs, and one with numbers.

Exploring the World

What Happens If... What Can I Discover?

Shaking the pots when they're full reveals different sounds depending on what's inside.

Children are often curious to test this out, repeating the action to see if it changes.

What other items can they find to post? Will the different objects post into the slots/holes or are they too big/small?

Example vocabulary to introduce:

- Noise, quiet, loud, heavy, light, shake, bang, soft, surprise, hidden.

Taking it further:

- In the music area, the pots can act as shakers during songs or rhyme time.
- Place things inside the pots for the children to discover (risk assess). It could be toy creatures, balls or items of interest. With older children, they could guess what is inside based on the clues you give. Younger children will be fascinated in discovering new and different items.

Watching Play Unfold

Children may approach the pots during play in many ways – some children may carefully post piece after piece; others may tip everything out while others will be fascinated by the pots themselves.

Each approach tells us something about the children's interests and how they choose to explore.

Example vocabulary to introduce:

- Likes, dislikes, careful, quick, slow, line, roll, all gone, again, post, tip, pour, empty, fill.

Taking it further:

- If a child shows an interest in a particular type of play, can this interest be explored in different areas of learning with other resources. For example, if they enjoy posting the objects, are there other opportunities for them to post (shape sorters etc), or if they like dropping things into the pots, do you have a variety of containers available for them to explore and investigate with.

Schematic Play

For some children these Colour Matching Posting Pots really appeal to children's schematic interests. Here are a few examples of how children may use them:

Trajectory

Children with a trajectory schema may be more interested in rolling, dropping the straws and discs from a height or watching them fall through the holes and slots rather than posting them.

Containment

The pots are perfect for children fascinated by containment. They may enjoy filling and refilling, often taking just as much enjoyment in tipping everything out again. The pot lids can make these even more fascinating as they can test how things can be kept in or released.

Rotation

The round shapes of the discs and curved nature of the straws may appeal to children exploring rotation. They may spin the discs or roll the straws along the floor, turn them around in their hands before posting them, twist the lids round and round or roll the actual pots. Offer children the space to explore these interests.

Positioning

Some children will line up the pots, discs and straws in neat rows, or arrange them around the pots before deciding what to do next.

Transporting

Pots lend themselves well to transporting play. Children may carry items in the pots before posting and tipping the contents out. The idea of moving items around in the pots is as entertaining to them as the posting itself.