



Stone Collector

Look for stones on a walk. As your child touches, compares, and chooses a favorite, they can notice how objects are alike and different.

Helps Your Child Grow



Emergent Mathematical Thinking

Comparing stones by size, pattern, shape, and other visible features gives your child early experience sorting objects by what they notice.



Gross Motor

Pushing a stroller and bending or squatting to collect stones gives your child practice using leg strength and balance.



What You'll Need



A stroller with an under-seat basket

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1. A child-size toy stroller or push cart



Collect a Stone

When a roadside stone catches your child's attention, let them explore it. They can touch its hard, cool surface and tap two stones to hear the sound. Put the new sensations into simple words as you explore together.

Observations

- Uses more than one sense to explore a stone
- Squats to pick up a stone and places it in the cart

Tips

- If your child starts to throw a stone, stop the motion and say, "Stones stay on the ground."
- Offer texture and shape words such as hard, cool, bumpy, smooth, or pointed.
- At 18 months, looking and touching help your child notice concrete features such as pattern, edge, and texture, supporting #PMP-Per.



Compare and Choose

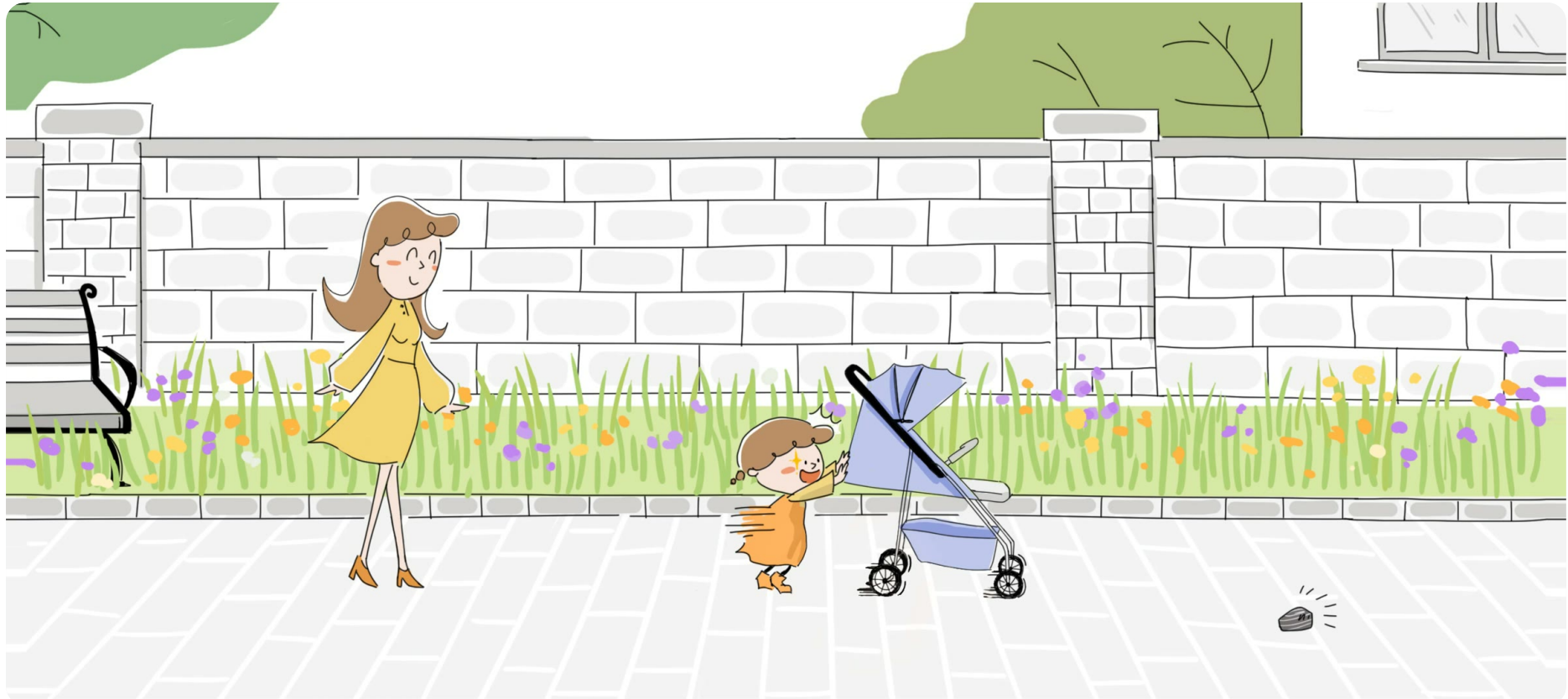
Place one of your stones beside your child's and compare them. Use a few words for differences in size, pattern, color, or shape. Then invite your child to choose a favorite as today's collection stone.

Observations

- Looks between two stones while comparing their size, shape, or color
- Picks up a stone and shows you the one they chose

Tips

- If the size difference is hard to see, line up the stones side by side.
- Compare two patterns: "This one has dots. That one has stripes. They look different."
- Let your child decide which stone to keep. A point or reach can communicate the choice even before they can explain why.



Find Another Stone

Continue the walk with the push cart. When your child heads toward another stone, follow their interest and join the search. Use one feature from the comparison as a new clue.

Observations

- Searches carefully for another stone along the path
- Pushes the cart toward a stone

Tips

- Invite your child to make the judgment: “Can we find another stone with little dots?”
- Describe the find specifically: “You found a stone with lots of little dots.”