

‘Does it balance?’ Instructions for Teachers

Goal: This is a very basic lesson which allows students to explore how common objects compare in terms of weight (actually, they are comparing mass, but weight and mass are functionally the same on Earth’s surface!). This will be their first experience with the balance.

Vocabulary:

pan balance weight equal

Students should pick a common object which will fit in one of the pans. A good choice might be a small stuffed animal or toy. The goal is to find an object or objects which will balance the first object. Students draw what they put in each pan as their ‘data’. AIMS ‘Bears’ or ‘Spacemen’ are good objects to use as counter balances.

Debriefing is simple: how many pencils/blocks/legos does a ‘Webkinz’ weigh?

This can be expanded to use gram-stackers for quantification and charting.