

1

Heavy hands

Give every student two objects that are close in size but clearly different in mass, such as an empty and a full water bottle, and put one into each hand yourself. Hands out flat, still, then moving up and down together. Mass is felt, so nobody answers while the objects are still sitting on the table.

"Hold one in each hand. Keep them still, then move them up and down."

"Which hand is pushing down more? That one is heavier."

Have students swap objects between hands and say it again. A student who names the same hand both times has attached the word to the hand rather than to the object.

2

Does the bigger one always feel heavier

Hold up an empty shoebox and a small tin of food and ask which is heavier before anyone touches them. Take the first answer without correcting it, then pass both around and ask again. Size is what students answer from until they are made to hold something.

"Which one is heavier? Now hold them both. Which one is heavier?"

"What told you, your eyes or your hands?"

Put a balance on the table beside the pair and set them on it. The balance says the same thing the hands said, which is what makes it worth trusting later when two objects are too close to call by hefting.