

1

Line up the ends

Hold two pencils of clearly different length apart from each other and ask which is longer, then bring them together against the edge of the table so both ends start on the same line. Objects lying apart cannot be compared, so the first move is always to bring them together.

"Both ends start on this line. Which one sticks out further?"

"That one is longer. Show me the end that told you."

Do it a second time with the longer object placed further to the left, so the object that starts further along is not the one that wins. Students who are answering from position rather than from length will change their answer here.

2

Back to back

Stand two students of similar height apart from each other and ask who is taller, then move them together back to back on the same floor. Take shoes, the mat and standing on tiptoe as things that have to be fixed before anyone answers.

"Both of you on the same floor, backs together, heels down."

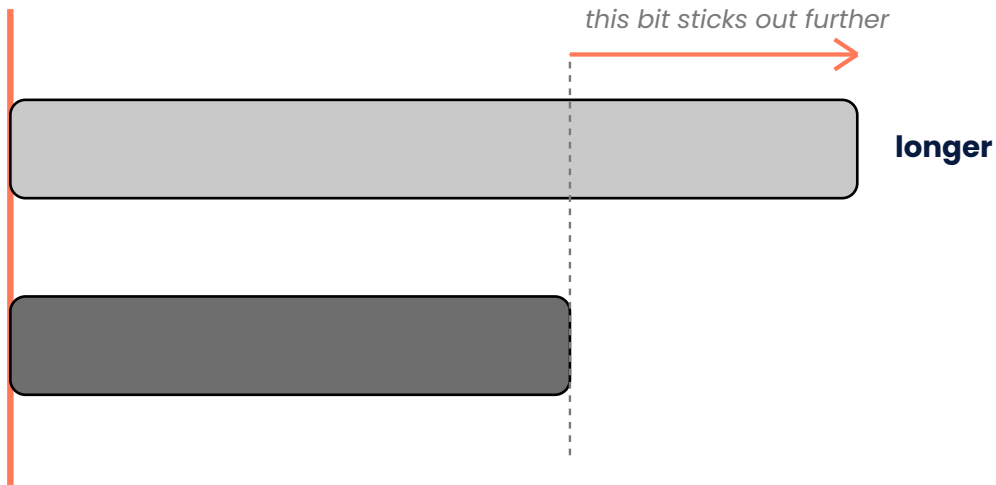
"Now, who is taller? What did we have to fix first?"

The same rule holds for both activities. Two things can only be compared when they start from the same place, whether that is a line on the table or the floor under their feet.

How to compare length

Keep this on the table while you work.

start here



- 1 Put one end of each object against the same line.
- 2 Hold both of them straight.
- 3 Look at the far ends. The one that sticks out further is longer.

Not like this

The ends do not start together, so the far ends tell you nothing.

