

1

Four pairs on a tray

Set out four pairs of objects on a tray. Students heft every pair, one in each hand, and name the heavier one before moving to the next. The tray is worked through in order so that no pair is judged by looking on the way past.

"Heft each pair. Tell me which one is heavier."

"Did you pick that pair up, or did you look at it?"

2

Too close to call

Put out two objects close in mass with a balance on the table. Students heft first and reach for the balance when hefting is not enough. Reaching for the balance is the thing being looked for here, so do not suggest it.

"Which is heavier? Use the balance if you need it."

"What made you decide to use it?"

3

Say which side went down

With a pair settled on the balance, ask for the reason. The answer names what happened, that the heavier object sent its side of the balance down, or that its hand went down.

"Explain how you know which one is heavier."

"Point to the side that went down."

4

Sand and paper

Fill one of two identical containers with sand and the other with scrunched paper, so that the two look the same from the outside. Students heft the pair, then check on the balance, and say whether the balance agreed with their hands.

"These two look the same. Heft them, then check on the balance."

"Did the balance agree with your hands?"

Pair cards

a stapler and a pencil

an apple and an orange

a tin and an empty box

a book and a tissue box

a full bottle and an empty bottle

a rock and a sponge

a shoe and a sock

two identical tins

a soft toy and a tin

a bag of sand and a bag of paper

a block and a foam block

a glue stick and a marker

Blank cards for pairs the class chooses
