

Needs, Wants & It Depends

12 picture cards + 3 sorting mats

Ages 4-7 with a grown-up | About 10 minutes

1. Get ready

Print on US Letter at actual size (100%). Use pages 2-4 for cards and pages 5-7 as sorting mats. A grown-up cuts the cards on the dashed lines. No two-sided printing is needed.

2. Sort and tell why

Read a card together. Put it on NEED, WANT or IT DEPENDS. Ask, "Why here?" You can move a card after talking. Start with four cards, then add more.

3. Change the situation

Try the bicycle: a fun extra ride may be a want; a way to reach school may help meet a need. Glasses may be a need for someone who uses them to see. What information changes your answer?

4. Keep the conversation kind

Food, water, rest, shelter, suitable clothing and health support meet basic needs. Play, learning and connection matter too. Families may choose differently. Do not grade another family's choices or ask for private money details.

Read together: Mateo Buys a Bike

A story about comparing prices and choosing what fits.
See the book on Amazon - the activity works without it.

Free to download. No email, signup or purchase required. You may print copies for your home or classroom. Share the website link; do not resell or repost the PDF.

Look. Sort. Tell why.

There can be more than one thoughtful answer.

1



A drink of water

You are thirsty.

2



A meal

You are hungry.

3



A warm coat

It is cold outside.

4



Shoes that fit

Your old shoes are too small.

Look. Sort. Tell why.

There can be more than one thoughtful answer.

5



Glasses to see

These help you see clearly.

6



A safe place to sleep

It is time to rest.

7



A bicycle

Is it for a trip or for play?

8



A ball

You want a game with a friend.

Look. Sort. Tell why.

There can be more than one thoughtful answer.

9



A new toy

You already have toys to enjoy.

10



A book

Is it for learning or for fun?

11



Drawing supplies

What could you make with these?

12



A special treat

You have eaten and want a treat.

NEED

Something that helps us stay safe and healthy.

Place cards here.

Move them if your thinking changes.

What need does this help with?

WANT

Something we would enjoy but do not need in this situation.

Place cards here.

Move them if your thinking changes.

What makes this something you would enjoy?

IT DEPENDS

The person or situation can change the answer.

Place cards here.

Move them if your thinking changes.

What else would you need to know?