



# Paper Clip Measurement

## Purpose:

Students will explore the compensatory principle.

## Materials

Small paper clips  
Large paper clips  
Recording Sheet

## Activity

1. Choose something in the room to measure.
2. Demonstrate how to measure it with the small paper clips and the large paper clips.
3. Explain that partners will measure 6 things in the classroom. The teacher can designate what is to be measured, or the students can choose the six items (desks, books, hands, pencils, etc.)
4. The students are to list the six things on the recording sheet and record the length in small paper clips and large paper clips.
5. Some items will not measure in whole paper clips. You may want to discuss how to record parts of paper clip before the students actually measure, or you may want to let the students figure out how to handle this situation.
6. After groups finish have them share some of their measurements. List these on the board.
7. Focus the discussion on the **compensatory principle** (the smaller the unit used to measure the distance, the more of those units will be needed). For example, measuring a distance in inches will result in a larger number of that unit than measuring the same distance in feet.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Paper Clip Measurement

Choose 6 items in the room to measure. Measure them with small paper clips and then measure them again with large paper clips.

Item	Number of small paper clips	Number of large paper clips

Does it take more small paper clips to measure an object or does it take more large paper clips? \_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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