

Digital or not digital

Lesson at a glance

Open by holding up a tablet (or picture) beside a wooden spoon and asking which has a screen. Bring the full tray into view — remote, microwave picture, spoon, hand bell, child-safe scissors — and have children look for screens or electronic buttons. Pairs place each helper into two picture-cued hoops, saying a reason and what it is for. A short picture-sort interactive on the IWB checks four cards, then children draw one helper of each kind on the Investigation Journal page and tell a partner its job.

Learning objectives

- Sort technologies into digital and non-digital with a reason
- Say whether a familiar object has a screen or buttons
- Talk about what one digital and one non-digital helper is for

Before the bell – prep

Day before: gather tablet or picture, remote, microwave picture (buttons and display visible), wooden spoon, hand bell, child-safe scissors, plus two floor hoops with screen-or-buttons and hand-tool picture labels. Stack Investigation Journal sorting pages. Cue the picture-sort interactive on the IWB.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
tablet or picture of a tablet	1	class	school kit	a clear printed picture of a tablet
remote control (batteries sealed)	1	class	classroom	a picture of a remote control
picture of a real microwave with buttons and display visible	1	class	classroom	toy microwave only if needed; say it stands for a real microwave that plugs in and uses power
wooden spoon	1	class	classroom	any safe kitchen spoon
hand bell	1	class	classroom	a small shaker or jingle bells
child-safe scissors	1	class	classroom	a picture of scissors if real ones are not suitable for passing around
sorting hoops (or two labelled trays)	2	class	classroom	two cardboard boxes or trays with simple picture labels
technology picture cards (tablet, remote, microwave, spoon, bell, scissors)	1	class	classroom	simple drawings of each object on scrap card
Investigation Journal page	1	pupil	classroom	a blank page with a screen-or-buttons picture cue on one half and a hand-tool picture cue on the other

Safety watch-point

Child-safe scissors only; keep small parts and any toy lids in sight. Pass objects along the front row if safe, then hold high for the back.

Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Hold only the tablet and the wooden spoon. Ask one light question — which has a screen, which does not — and take a few voices. Do not say digital or non-digital yet; keep the full tray out of sight until the next beat.
- **Look and wonder:** Bring the full tray into clear view and point to the screen-and-buttons and hand-tool picture cues. Keep board language to the child rule only. If a child thinks the microwave does not belong because it is a kitchen machine, gently point to its buttons and little display.
- **Look for screens and buttons:** Teacher-held show-and-tell: hold each helper high so the back row sees. Ask screen? buttons? Partners point and whisper first, then take a few whole-class answers. Look for children pointing at the feature, not only naming the object.
- **Sort with screen or buttons:** Model one place with the remote — buttons and power, so screen-or-buttons hoop — then invite pairs to place the rest. Fold watchers in with a choral screen or buttons, or not? or thumbs before each place. After two or three places, pause for short purpose sentences: What is the remote for? What is the spoon for?
- **Board check together:** Open the picture-sort interactive in explore mode. Read Has it got a screen or buttons? and drag microwave, tablet, book and scissors as the class decides. A wrong hoop is a look-again talk, not a score. Finish with one purpose question.
- **Show and draw:** Point to the two picture cues on the Investigation Journal page so here and there map to the groups. Children draw one helper with a screen or buttons and one without. Circulate asking Why there? and What is it for? Capture a strong reason and purpose line to revoice next.
- **Make-sense talk:** Display-only oral circle — one prompt at a time. Revoice the hoop and journal sorts, then gently name digital and non-digital beside the child rule. Two children name one of each kind and what it is for. Read the tablet-and-spoon line and warm close: we need both kinds.

What it should show

Expect tablet, remote and microwave in screen-or-buttons; spoon, bell, scissors and book in no screen, no buttons. The microwave often needs a second look — children may sort it by kitchen place, not by buttons and display. A shiny spoon still belongs with non-digital. Affirm both kinds help every day.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **Children think digital means new or fancy, so a plain remote does not count and a shiny spoon might.** — Hold the remote and spoon side by side. Point: electronic buttons and power go in one hoop; no screen and no electronic buttons go in the other — shiny or plain does not matter.
- **Some say the microwave is not like the others because it lives in the kitchen.** — Use the real-microwave picture and point to the buttons and little display. Ask again: screen or buttons, or not? Place it only after the class names the features.

**Differentiation**

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Sit at the teacher table with the two picture-cue cards in hand; child points to screen or buttons before the pair places the object. • On the journal page, offer a choice of two drawn examples to copy under each picture cue rather than inventing from scratch.	• After placing, ask the pair to say one more classroom helper that would go in the same hoop and why. • On the journal page, add a first-letter or simple mark label beside each drawing.	• Invite a fair critique of a disputed place: look again together and revoice the child rule before the object stays. • Early finishers draw one more classroom helper on the back and whisper which group and what it is for.

Cross-curricular hook

Links to oral language — children give a short reason and a one-sentence purpose for each helper they place or draw.

