

Magnets help us

Lesson at a glance

Open by sticking a picture on a metal tin lid with a chunky fridge magnet and ask what is holding it. Name the idea of a magnet job, then rotate four short stations where groups try holding (fridge magnets, letter board), closing (magnetic bag or tin catch) and catching (teacher-anchored magnet fishing). On the carpet, children name one job word they noticed, then think-pair-share one way a magnet helps us before a quick tidy and thumbs-up exit check.

Learning objectives

- Explore everyday jobs magnets do (fridge magnets, catches, games)
- Say one way a magnet helps us

Before the bell – prep

Day before: gather four station kits — baking tray or biscuit-tin lid with chunky fridge magnets and small pictures; a bag, pencil case or tin with a magnetic catch; magnetic board (or tray) with chunky magnetic letters; shallow tray of paperclips plus magnet wands or magnets on string. Check every magnet is chunky and mouth-safe. Clear floor space for four short stations.

**Materials**

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
chunky fridge magnets	8	class	classroom	strong fridge magnets from a euro shop
metal baking tray or biscuit-tin lid	2	class	classroom	metal lunch tin lid
small pictures or name cards for sticking	10	class	classroom	scrap paper squares with a simple drawing
magnetic catch or bag with magnetic clasp	2	class	hardware shop	pencil case or school bag that already has a magnetic clasp
magnetic letter board with chunky magnetic letters	1	class	school kit	baking tray plus chunky fridge-magnet letters
paperclips for magnet fishing	30	class	classroom	metal bottle tops or washers
magnet wands or chunky magnets on string	4	class	school kit	chunky fridge magnet held in the hand
shallow tray for paperclip fishing	1	class	classroom	cardboard box lid

Safety watch-point

Chunky magnets only; keep away from mouths. Stay at the fishing station. No running between stations; wipe spilled paperclips so nobody slips. Keep magnets off tablets and devices at tidy-up.

Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Hold the fridge magnet so a picture sticks on the tin lid and wave it gently. Ask ‘What is holding the picture?’ Take two or three guesses only — keep the other stations out of sight until Explore.
- **Magnets that help us:** Point at the demo magnet and say one plain idea: a magnet job is a useful thing a magnet does to help us. Model aloud: I wonder... I think it is holding... I try lifting and sticking again... I noticed it holds the picture. Head off ‘magnets are only toys’ by revoicing fun and helping.
- **Magnet jobs stations:** Split into about four groups of 5–7. Rotate every three minutes on a clap. Name the job as each group arrives: Station A holding, B closing/keeping shut, C holding letters, D catching. Stay the whole time at Station D (fishing). Between turns call across: ‘What job is the magnet doing here?’ Use only holding, closing, catching.
- **What job did you notice?:** On the carpet, invite several children to name one station and its job word. Revoice in a full sentence (‘You noticed the fridge magnet’s job is holding’). Accept a point and supply the word. Keep words to holding, closing, catching — not fishing. No Investigation Journal today.
- **How magnets help us:** Think-pair-share for about one minute, then take three or four concrete ideas: holds a picture, shuts a bag, catches metal in a game. Celebrate any home link. Draw out the three helps: hold things up, keep things shut, pick up metal.

What it should show

Most children will name or point to holding at the fridge and letter stations, closing at the bag/tin catch, and catching at the fishing tray. Affirm those three job words. If a child only says ‘fishing’ or ‘sticking for fun’, revoice the magnet job (catching / holding) and link it to a real place like the fridge or school bag.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **‘Magnets are only toys / only for fun.’** — Gently revoice: magnets can be fun and they help us do jobs. Point back at the fridge magnet holding the picture or the bag that stays shut.
- **Child names the game (‘fishing’) instead of the magnet job.** — Accept the game name, then supply the job word: ‘Yes, fishing — the magnet’s job there is catching the metal paperclips.’

**Differentiation**

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Stay beside the child and offer a choice of two job words to point to (holding or closing). • Accept a gesture toward the station and supply the job word for the class to hear.	• If a group finishes a station early, ask them to show a friend how the catch opens and shuts again. • Prompt: 'What job is the magnet doing here?' using only holding, closing, catching.	• Ask which station's job is most like the fridge at home. • Invite a home link: name one magnet that helps at home and say its job.

Cross-curricular hook

Oral language: revoice children's notices into full sentences using the three job words holding, closing and catching.