

Digital or not digital

Lesson at a glance

Open by holding up a tablet and a wooden spoon and asking which has a screen. Bring the full tray into view and have children look for screens or electronic buttons on each helper. Pairs place objects into two floor hoops labelled with picture cues, giving a short reason each time. A quick IWB picture-sort checks four cards, then children draw one helper from each group in the Investigation Journal and say what each is for before a display-only make-sense talk names both kinds as useful.

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, wooden spoon, hand bell, child-safe scissors; two hoops or trays with screen-or-buttons and hand-tool picture labels; Investigation Journal sorting pages. Cue the picture-sort interactive on the IWB. Prefer a real-microwave photo over a toy.

**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	provided printable	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	provided printable	simple drawings of each object on scrap card
Investigation Journal page	1	pupil	provided printable	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 lids in sight during the hoop sort. Bring objects along the front row if safe, then hold high for the back — no free handling scramble.

Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Hold up only the tablet and wooden spoon. Ask which has a screen and which does not — one light question, two objects. Keep the full tray nearby but out of main view until the next step. Do not say digital or non-digital yet.
- **Look and wonder:** Bring the full tray into clear view. Put only the short child rule on the board: screen or buttons / no screen, no buttons. Point and ask orally whether each helper has a screen or buttons. If using a toy microwave, say once that it stands for a real one that plugs in.
- **Look for screens and buttons:** Teacher-held show-and-tell: hold each object high so every child sees. Ask Can you see a screen? Can you see buttons? Partners point and whisper first, then take a few whole-class answers. Keep it spoken and short — no sorting or recording yet.
- **Sort with screen or buttons:** Lay two picture-labelled hoops on the floor. Model placing the remote with a reason, then invite pairs to place the rest. Before each place, run a choral screen or buttons, or not? or thumbs signal. After two or three places, pause: What is the remote for? What is the spoon for? Only after the sort, gently name the groups digital and non-digital.
- **Board check together:** Open the picture-sort interactive in explore mode for about three minutes. Read Has it got a screen or buttons? Drag microwave, tablet, book and scissors as the class decides. A wrong hoop is a look-again conversation, not a score. Finish with one purpose question.
- **Show and draw:** Hand out the Investigation Journal sorting grid. Point to the two picture cues 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? — jot one good reason with the child's name to read back later.
- **Make-sense talk:** Show one prompt at a time. Read back hoop and journal talk in the children's words, then invite two children to name one helper from each group and say what it is for. Read the tablet-and-spoon line and add: So we need both kinds. Keep digital / non-digital beside the child-rule wording.

What it should show

Expect tablet, remote and microwave in the screen-or-buttons group; spoon, bell, scissors (and book on the IWB) in the other. Most children spot tablet and remote first; some miss the microwave's buttons and small display because it is a kitchen machine — point to them and re-sort together. Affirm short purpose talk (remote changes channel; spoon scoops) rather than long lists.

**Misconceptions & interventions**

- **The microwave isn't like the tablet because it's in the kitchen, so it doesn't count.** — Hold the microwave picture close and point to the buttons and little display. Ask again: screen or buttons, or not? — then place it with the class watching.
- **Screen or buttons means new or fancy, so a shiny spoon might go with the tablet.** — Put the spoon beside the remote and compare: Does the spoon have a screen? Electronic buttons? Power? Lead the choral no and move it to the hand-tool hoop.
- **Any powered thing counts, so a simple on/off torch would be digital.** — Do not use a basic torch as an example. Stick to screen or electronic buttons as the child rule so electrical alone is not enough at this age.

**Differentiation**

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Pair at the teacher hoop and offer a choice of two objects with a point-prompt: screen or buttons? before they place. • Accept a drawing plus a whispered reason; scribe one word or first letter only if the child wants a label.	• Ask a second purpose prompt after they place: What is this helper for? in one short sentence. • On the journal page, invite a simple mark or picture-cue copy under each drawing.	• After finishing, add one more classroom helper on the back of the journal page and whisper which hoop it belongs in and why. • Invite them to be the watcher who gives the thumbs signal and a reason before another pair places.

**Cross-curricular hook**

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

