

Digital or not digital

Lesson at a glance

Hold up a tablet and a wooden spoon and ask which has a screen. Bring out the full tray (tablet, remote, microwave picture, spoon, hand bell, child-safe scissors) and look for screens or electronic buttons. Pairs help place each helper into two floor hoops — screen-or-buttons versus none — saying a short reason and what it is for. A quick picture-sort interactive checks four cards, then children draw one of each kind on the Investigation Journal page and close with a talk that both kinds help every day.

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 with buttons/display visible, wooden spoon, hand bell, child-safe scissors, and a book for the board check. Set two hoops with picture-cue labels ready. Prefer a real-microwave picture over an unpowered 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 the remote in sight. Lids stay on any toy devices. Bring objects close along the front row if safe, then hold high for the back.

Teaching moves

- **Look and wonder:** Bring the full tray into view and point to the screen-and-buttons cue and the hand-tool cue. Keep the IWB to the child rule only — screen or buttons / no screen, no buttons. Hold digital and non-digital as optional oral labels for after the sort. If you only have a toy microwave, say once that it stands for a real one that plugs in.
- **Look for screens and buttons:** Hold each helper high so every child can see. Ask: Can you see a screen? Can you see buttons? Partners point and whisper first, then take a few whole-class answers. Watch that children point to the feature, not only name the object. Keep it short and oral — no sorting yet.
- **Sort with screen or buttons:** Model placing the remote in the screen-or-buttons hoop with a reason. Pairs take turns placing the rest while the class choruses screen or buttons, or not? or shows thumbs. After two or three places, pause: What is the remote for? What is the spoon for? One short sentence each. If two children disagree, look again together before you decide.
- **Board check together:** Open the picture-sort interactive in explore mode. Read Has it got a screen or buttons? Drag microwave, tablet, book and scissors as the class calls. Wrong hoop is a look-again talk, not a score. End with one purpose question: What is one of these helpers for?
- **Show and draw:** Hand out the Investigation Journal sorting grid and point to the two picture cues. Children draw one helper with a screen or buttons and one without. Circulate asking Why did you put that one there? What is it for? Capture one strong reason and one purpose sentence to revoice in the make-sense talk.
- **Make-sense talk:** One prompt at a time. Revoice the hoop sort and journal: tablet, remote and microwave as screen-or-buttons (digital); spoon, bell, scissors and book as none (non-digital). Two children name one of each and say what it is for. Read the tablet-and-spoon line, then warm close: So we need both kinds — isn't that clever?

What it should show

Most children place tablet, remote and microwave in screen-or-buttons, and spoon, bell, scissors (and book on the board) in no screen, no buttons. Microwave often needs a second look — affirm kitchen helpers can still have buttons and a little display. A shiny spoon or fancy scissors still belong in the no-screen hoop. Expect short purpose talk: remote changes the channel; spoon scoops food.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **Some children think digital means new or fancy, so a shiny spoon goes with the tablet.** — Hold the spoon beside the remote and ask again: Can you see a screen? Can you see electronic buttons? Lead with the child rule, not the fancy look.
- **Some think a microwave is not like the others because it lives in the kitchen.** — Point to the buttons and little display on the microwave picture. Ask: Does this one have a screen or buttons, or not? Kitchen helpers can still be screen-or-buttons.

**Differentiation**

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Sit at the teacher table with the two picture-cue labels; child points to screen or buttons on the object before you place it together. • On the journal page, offer a simple mark or copied picture cue under the matching group instead of a full drawing.	• After placing, ask the pair to say both the group and one purpose sentence before the next object moves. • Early finishers add one more classroom helper on the back of the journal page and whisper which group it belongs in.	• Invite them to explain why the microwave belongs with the tablet even though it is a kitchen machine. • Ask them to name another place (shop or school office) that might use both kinds of helper.

Cross-curricular hook

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

