

Time and chronology activities for infants – second classes

1. Old and new – sorting

Children are asked to bring in a variety of objects from home. The class can then discuss differences between the objects. The children are asked to place each object in one of two hoops labelled 'old' and 'new'. The children can also have specific collections of artefacts, such as toys or household objects, which they can sort in the same way.

2. Sequencing artefacts

Children are presented with three or four artefacts such as teddy bears, toys or household objects from distinct periods that are distant from each other. Children are asked to organise the objects by placing the oldest one on the left through to the newest object on the right.

3. Sequencing photographs

The children are presented with a collection of four photographs of familiar objects such as toys, clothes, household objects, cars and other modes of transport from distinct periods that are distant from each other. Children are asked to organise the objects by placing the oldest one on the left through to the newest object on the right. This same activity can be used with 3rd to 6th classes by increasing the number of photographs and showing objects that are closer together in time.

4. Old/ Modern

Create a timeline using a sheet of wallpaper. Divide in half. Label each half respectively: old, modern. This timeline can be used throughout the year. Children can place photographs, pictures from books or magazines, drawings etc in the appropriate sides.

5. Sequence a story

Infants can order pictures to record the sequence of events in a story. These pictures can provide excellent opportunities for the introduction and use of simple vocabulary related to time: 'before', 'after', 'then', etc. Later the pictures can be displayed in 'washing line' style.

6. Timeline of Myself

The children can bring in photographs of themselves as a baby and a recent photograph. The class can discuss differences between babies and 4 and 5 year olds. The children can arrange the photographs of themselves chronologically on a timeline. Children can bring in old birthday cards and arrange these in order with the photographs.

7. Timeline of Class teacher

The class teacher can bring in photographs as well of him/herself at different stages in their lives. The teacher can arrange the photographs chronologically on a timeline. They can discuss with the class how they have grown and changed over time by looking at how hair and clothing styles have changed. (see example)

8. Timeline of a Parent or a person known to me

The children are asked to bring in photographs of their parents or a familiar adult at different stages of their lives. Alternatively the children can be asked to sequence pictures of babies, schoolchildren, young adults, middle-aged people and elderly people. The children should be asked to organise the pictures by placing the oldest on the left through to the most modern on the right.

9. Placing personal artefacts in chronological order and/or physically placing them on a timeline

The children are asked to sequence personal artefacts that they have brought in and place them on their own timeline marked in increasing age. Teacher encourages them to handle, examine and ask questions about toys, clothes, or books used at different ages. Typical questions could be

- How is this toy different to what you play with now?
- Is it the same in any way as something you play with now?
- Who do you know would wear this?

10. My day/week/year

Children are asked to sort a variety of pictures under the headings: morning, afternoon and evening. Link this with day and night in Geography. Children can discuss what happens on different days in school. Children can make chronological charts showing the activities that happen on different days of the week. The teacher

can take photographs of events that are happening in the class / school from the start of the school year in September, for example, first day at school, visit to class of doctor/nurse, any school outings, school concerts, tree day. These photos can be arranged horizontally on a timeline in chronological order. The months of the year can be placed above the photographs. These events should be referred to throughout the year using the language of time ; before, after, later, next and so on.

11. Seasons: timeline of seasons

Children can draw pictures showing what happens during different seasons. They can sort pictures of the seasons and relate these to the months of the year. Poems, songs and stories can be used to extend pupils' ability to describe what happens at different times of years. Further work could involve children linking feasts and festivals with seasons, followed by a study of the festivals using a variety of stories/myths/legends.

12. Timeline: months of the year

The children can tell the class the month of their birthday. The teacher discusses how many children have a birthday in each month. A class time line can be made of the months of the year and each child's birthday marked chronologically on each particular month. The class can add other data to this such as weather, holidays, and famous feasts/festivals.

13. Washing line and chronology

Use a "washing line" as a way of displaying a timeline. This provides a valuable resource that can be used to sequence all manner of objects and pictures.