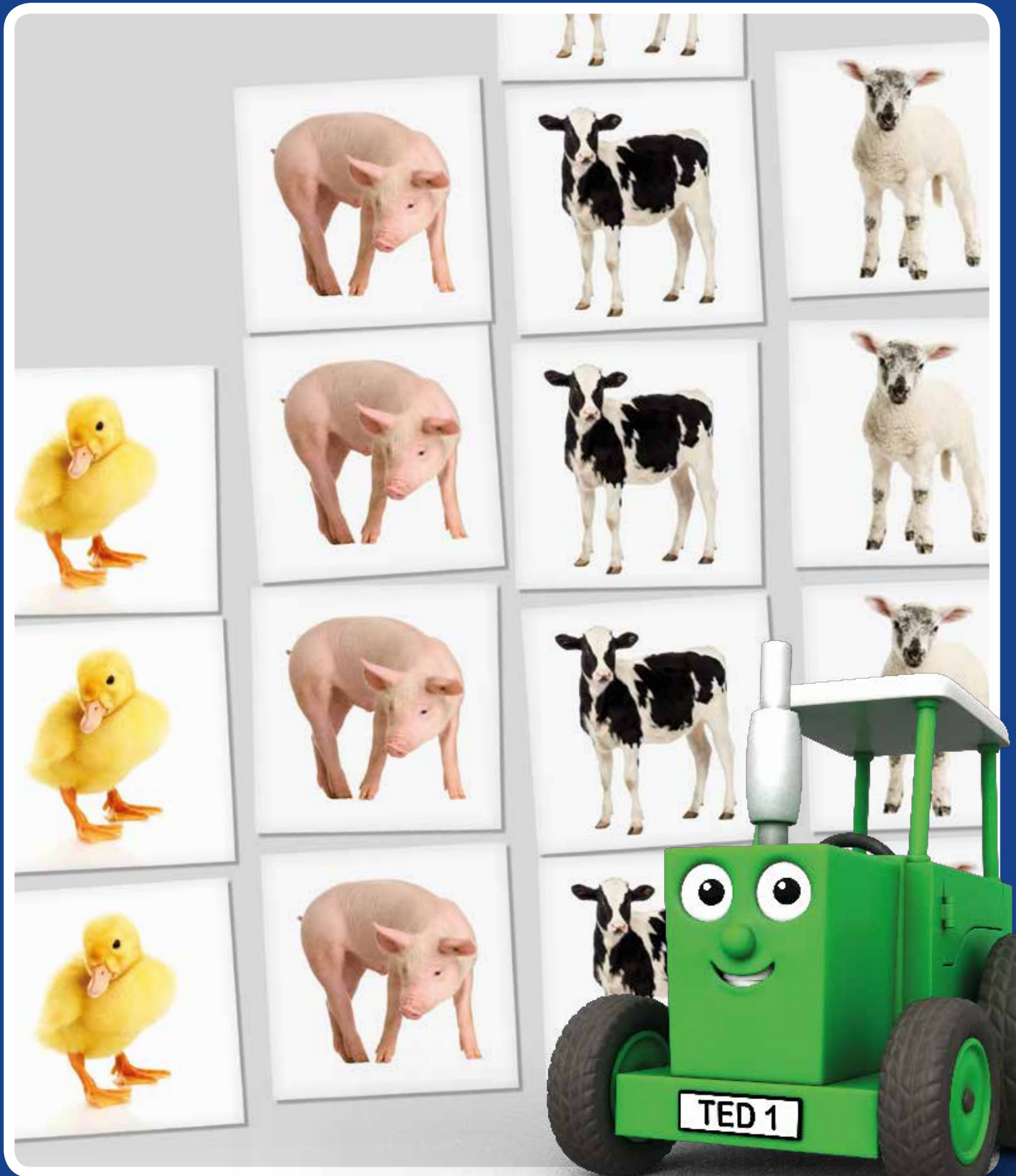




Baby Animal Bar Chart



Baby farm animals are always a favourite with young children. Try this simple, hands on bar chart activity to introduce a mathematical way of recording the most and least popular baby animals in your setting.

THIS ACTIVITY...

- make and their physical features
- encourages use of descriptive vocabulary and adjectives, e.g. cute, fluffy, soft, woolly
- broadens vocabulary for verbs, e.g. gambol, hop, trot, jump
- shows children that baby farm animals have different names from adult farm animals
- introduces the bar chart as a simple statistical method of recording
- encourages children to think critically about baby farm animals, and decide which is their favourite
- gives children the opportunity to count and compare the length of the columns on the bar chart
- allows the children to work together to create a group chart

WHAT TO DO

Introducing the baby animals

Choose three or four baby animals to focus on, such as a calf, a lamb, a chick and a piglet. Show the children online footage and photos of the animals with their mothers. Name each baby and link them with the adult animals (calf/cow, lamb/sheep, chick/hen, piglet/pig). Talk about their colours and features (tails, woolly coats, markings and so on). Encourage the children to try out animal noises (moo, baa, cheep, oink) and role play movements such as lambs gambolling, chicks hopping and piglets trotting.

Making the bar chart

Prepare four large card strips. Using a black marker pen, divide each strip into equal sections to create a column of squares. Photocopy pictures of a lamb, a calf, a chick and a piglet, and cut them out. Fix the four columns to the wall, side by side, and mark each one with the name and picture of a baby animal. Talk to the children about which baby animal they like best, and ask them each to choose a picture of their favourite animal. Show them how to find the matching column for their animal and blu-tac their picture to a square.

Exploring the bar chart

Once every child has chosen their favourite baby animal and attached it to the chart, look at the results. Can each child remember which animal they chose to put on the bar chart? Check out which column of pictures is the tallest and which is the shortest, and count the number of pictures in each column. Explain what this means, and talk about whether the group has a clear favourite. Are any of the animals equal in popularity, and how can we work this out?



THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- If you are able to either laminate the card strips or cover them with clear sticky-backed plastic, they can be saved and used again.
- Encourage the children to count at whatever level they have reached. Count with them or ask them to count by themselves.
- Emphasise the importance of one-to-one correspondence by touching each animal picture as you count.
- Ask older children to draw pictures of piglets, calves, chicks and lambs. Photocopy one of each picture to put on the bar chart when you display it. This helps to give the children 'ownership' of the chart.
- Make a second bar chart using other baby farm animals such as a foal (horse), a kid (goat), a gosling (goose) and a puppy (sheep dog).
- Highlight to the children that you have all worked together to find out which is the favourite/least favourite baby animal in the group.

