

Pushes and Pulls · Conversation & classroom guide

Learning with a grown-up · Ages 4–8 · Flexible participation

How can we tell a push from a pull?

Learning aim: Explain a pictured force in relation to the helper and object, not just left or right.

A five-minute conversation

Start with the pictures before reading the labels. Gina is touching the ball to push it away; Ollie holds the cart's handle to pull it closer. A force is a push or a pull, and it can change how something moves. Ask your child to point, describe or sign what they notice. Follow each arrow together, then read the explanation. There is no need to set up an experiment or answer every question.

Remember: Choose one comfortable way to notice or describe a detail. What do you already wonder about this picture?

Start here: Find the object Gina pushes and the object Ollie pulls.

Explore further: Explain why both arrows can point right while showing different actions.

What is Gina pushing? How can you tell?

Answer cue: The ball. Her raised hoof touches its side, and the arrow points away from her.

Which object is being pulled?

Answer cue: The cart. Ollie holds its handle, and the force arrow points toward him.

Both arrows point right. Why is one action a push and the other a pull?

Answer cue: Look at where the helper is. Gina pushes away from herself; Ollie pulls toward himself. Right does not always mean push or pull.

Keep the idea clear

The arrows show the force on the objects. A push or pull can change motion; it does not guarantee that an object moves. These are two examples, not a test comparing their strength or speed.

Try: Describe an everyday force

Materials: The poster and an adult; optional paper and drawing materials. Describing or pointing is enough.

1. Choose a pictured action or imagine pushing a toy car and pulling a drawer. No physical demonstration is required.

2. Describe where the helper and object are. Trace the force arrow on the object.

3. Swap the helper's imagined side and decide whether right or left alone can name the action.

What this can show: Away from or toward the helper distinguishes these examples. A force can change motion but does not guarantee movement.

Return to it: At the Ramps poster, point to the cart and describe what is pushing it.

Pushes and Pulls · In the classroom

A 20-minute classroom lesson

Prepare: Read the poster, answer cues and misconception note. Prepare only the materials named in the activity; keep a picture-only or described option available.

Words to explore

force — A push or a pull.

direction — Which way something points or acts.

3 min · Reconnect and wonder: How can we tell a push from a pull? Invite an initial idea; record it without marking it right or wrong.

4 min · Look together: Find the object Gina pushes and the object Ollie pulls. Introduce force using the poster.

8 min · Investigate or represent: Use “Describe an everyday force.” Let pairs take turns noticing and recording, with adult help and the activity’s stated boundaries.

5 min · Explain and return: Ask the core check: How can we tell a push from a pull? Accept pointing, words, signing or a drawing. If the learner is ready, offer this optional extension: Explain why both arrows can point right while showing different actions.

Understanding check: How can we tell a push from a pull?

Answer guidance: In the pictured examples, Gina pushes the ball away from herself and Ollie pulls the cart toward himself. Left or right alone does not distinguish the two actions. Away from or toward the helper distinguishes these examples. A force can change motion but does not guarantee movement.

Accept pointing, speech, signing, a drawing or adult dictation. Describe the illustration and use labels/position as well as color. Offer one contrast first, and use the extension when the learner is ready.

A response to keep

My idea or question

What I noticed (date/time if useful)

What I think now / my next question

<https://kiddos.ai/learn/learning-with-gina-and-ollie/pushes-and-pulls>

Related story: Gina and the Great Gravity Hug — Continue their questions about how things move and fall.

Our discovery record

Use words, marks, a drawing or an adult's notes. Keep this page with you; nothing needs to be uploaded.

Date / time (if useful): _____

My question or idea

What I noticed

What I think now

What I want to explore next

Stories to continue together: <https://kiddos.ai/books>

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