



Measurement Matters

People have always used parts of their bodies to help them measure the world around them—the length of the FOOT, the breadth of the HAND, the width of the FINGER (DIGIT), the distance from the end of the thumb to the tip of the pinky, the SPAN, the length of the forearm from the elbow point to the tip of the middle finger, the CUBIT, the distance from the tip of the nose to the end of the thumb when the arm is outstretched, the YARD, and the distance from finger tip to finger tip when arms are outstretched, the FATHOM. Even today, the height of horses is still measured in hands.

Standard units of measure were first based on these human measures. You may want students to experience measuring parts of their bodies—using feet or hands—and compare their results with other students to illustrate the need for standard units. *How Big Is a Foot?* By Rolf Myller is a story about a carpenter who finds out that he needs a standard foot when filling the king's order for a bed for the queen.

Listed below are some linear measurement activities to apply and extend students' linear measurement skills while at the Farm using both non-standard and standard units (US and Metric).

- Taller Than You/Shorter Than You Hunt
- Yard Search/Meter Search
- Foot Finder/Decimeter Detective
- Inch Investigation/Centimeter Search
- Farm Measurement Hunt
- Perimeter Pursuit

Resources:

The Measurement Book by Marvin L. Sohns and Audry V. Buffington, Enrich. FOSS (Full Option Science System), Measurement unit, University of California.

Measurement Matters, A and B by Carne Barnett, Addison Wesley.

