PreK

Materials: A scale and three objects of different weights (maybe an apple, pear, and orange), paper, and pencil.

Discussion on the rug: Teacher shows a balance scale. “What do we use this object for?” Students volunteer ideas. If students don’t know, then the teacher puts two different objects on the scale and asks the question, “What do you think it tells us now?” Students respond with ideas. The teacher asks, “Okay, which object is heavier?” Students respond. The teacher asks, “How do we know? Which one weighs the most? Which one weighs the least?”

In small groups: Each student pair has a scale and three different objects—maybe a fruit, a piece of paper, and a pencil. The teacher explains that they can use the scale to find the answer to these questions:

- Which object weighs the most?
- Which object weighs the least?
- What do we know about the third object (fruit)?
- Put the objects in order from heaviest to lightest.

At the end of the investigation, have students either discuss or dictate a response to this summary question: How did you figure out which object (fruit) weighed the most? Tell me how you figured it out and how you know for sure.