

Brick Detective: Living or Not Living?

Introduction (5 minutes):

Start with your collection of bricks! Ask your student: What are these? What do you like to do with them? What are they made of? Then, ask the big question: "Do you think this brick is alive? Why or why not?" Let's become detectives today and figure out what makes something living!

Activity 1: What Does it Mean to Be Alive? (10 minutes)

Talk about what living things do. Keep it simple! You can draw simple pictures or use gestures.

- **Grow:** Living things get bigger (like you!). Does a brick grow?
- **Need Energy (Food/Water):** Living things need fuel to move and grow (like eating breakfast!). Does a brick eat or drink? (Show the cup of water and piece of fruit as examples of energy sources).
- **Breathe:** Living things need air. (Take a deep breath together). Does a brick breathe?
- **Make More (Reproduce):** Living things can have babies or make seeds to make more like themselves (like mommy/daddy animals or plants making seeds). Can a brick make baby bricks all by itself?

Explain that non-living things don't do these things. Some non-living things are natural (like rocks), and some are made by people (like bricks!).

Activity 2: Sorting Adventure! (10-15 minutes)

Bring out the labeled bins ("Living" and "Non-Living") and the collection of items (brick, plant/leaf, rock, twig, water, animal picture, fruit).

Pick up one item at a time. Ask the student: "Is this living or non-living?" Go through the questions from Activity 1 for each item:

- "Does it grow?"
- "Does it need food or water?"
- "Does it breathe?"
- "Can it make more of itself?"

Have the student place the item in the correct bin. Discuss their choices. Pay special attention to the brick - confirm it goes in the "Non-Living" bin and review why.

Activity 3: Brick Building for Living Things! (10 minutes)

Challenge time! Ask the student: "Even though bricks aren't alive, can we use them to help something that IS alive?" Ask them to use the bricks to build something helpful for a living thing. Ideas:

- Build a small shelter or house for the animal in the picture.
- Build a little wall around the plant.
- Build a pretend water dish.

Talk about how non-living things can be useful tools or create habitats for living things.

Conclusion & Review (5 minutes):

Look at the two bins again. Ask the student to tell you one difference between the things in the "Living" bin and the things in the "Non-Living" bin. Ask again: "Why is a brick non-living?" Optional: Have the student draw one living thing and one non-living thing they learned about today.