Coin Jar Shopkeeper

Category: USA Knowledge | Ages: 4–6 | Time: 15 min | Prep: 3 minutes | Mess: Low | Indoor

Why it matters

Recognizing US coins—especially knowing that a copper penny is 1¢ while the tiny silver dime is worth 10¢—is a classic US kindergarten milestone. Pretend shopkeeping turns coin sorting into a joyful game that builds math confidence and real-world vocabulary.

Materials checklist

[ ] Real US coins (pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters), a muffin tin or bowls, and 3–4 snack items with paper price tags (1¢, 5¢, 10¢, 25¢)

Step-by-step instructions

1. Place one penny, nickel, dime, and quarter on the table and compare their colors, sizes, and edges.
2. Sort a small handful of coins into separate cups or muffin-tin sections.
3. Put simple price tags on three snacks or toys: 1¢ (a cracker), 5¢ (an apple), or 10¢ (a toy car).
4. Take turns being the friendly shopkeeper and the shopper counting out the matching coin.
5. Ask your child which coin is copper-colored and which silver coin is the smallest yet worth 10 cents!

What to say

- “Let’s feel the edge of this quarter—it has tiny ridges, while the nickel is smooth!”
- “That apple costs 5 cents. Which coin is a nickel?”
- “Even though the dime is tiny, it’s worth 10 whole pennies!”

Notes & observations: