

Making Beds

NAME _____

The king in *How Big is a Foot?* orders an apprentice to make a bed that is 3 (king's) feet wide, and 6 (king's) feet long. But the apprentice uses his own foot to measure the bed. When the bed is finished, it's the wrong size. Why? Let's measure and find out.

Get into groups with other classmates. Each person in the group should do the following:

- trace his or her foot on a piece of paper
 - cut out the tracing carefully
 - make eight more copies of the footprint
 - place the footprint end to end on the floor to make two sides of a bed that is 6 footprints long and 3 footprints wide
 - be sure to label each footprint with the name of the person
1. Are all of the beds the same size? Why or why not?
 2. Whose footprints made the largest bed? Do you notice anything about their footprints?
 3. Whose footprints made the smallest bed? Do you notice anything about their footprints?
 4. Are any of the beds too small for any members of your class?
 5. Why do you think the ruler was invented?
 6. The preface of the book says, "To the wonderful metric system without whose absence in this country this book would not have been possible." What do you think the author means by this statement?

