Discrete Data

Bar chart showing Number of Children (y-axis, 0 to 40) against Favourite Flavour of Crisps (x-axis): Ready Salted = 20, Salt and Vinegar ≈ 23, Cheese and Onion ≈ 31.
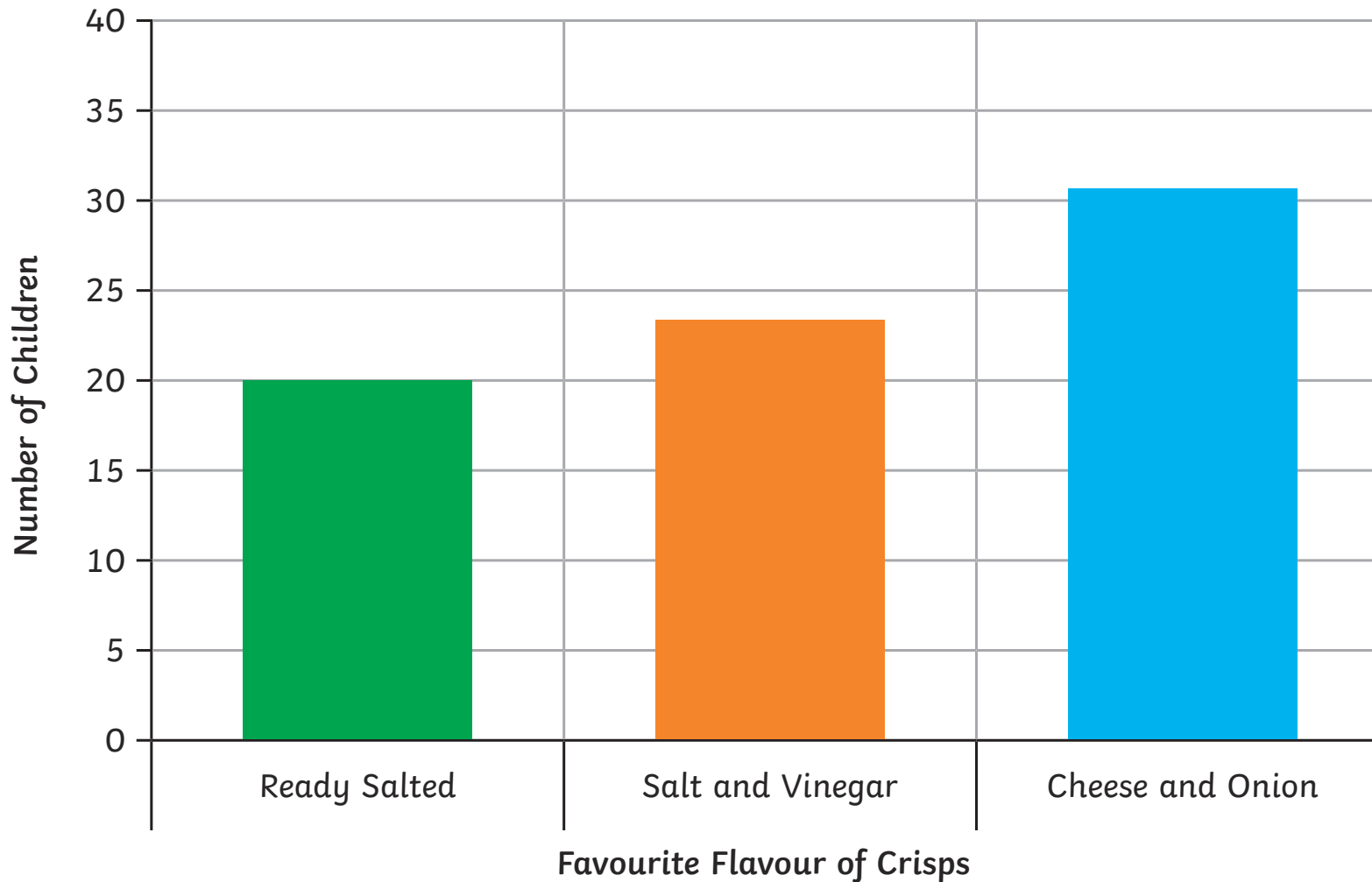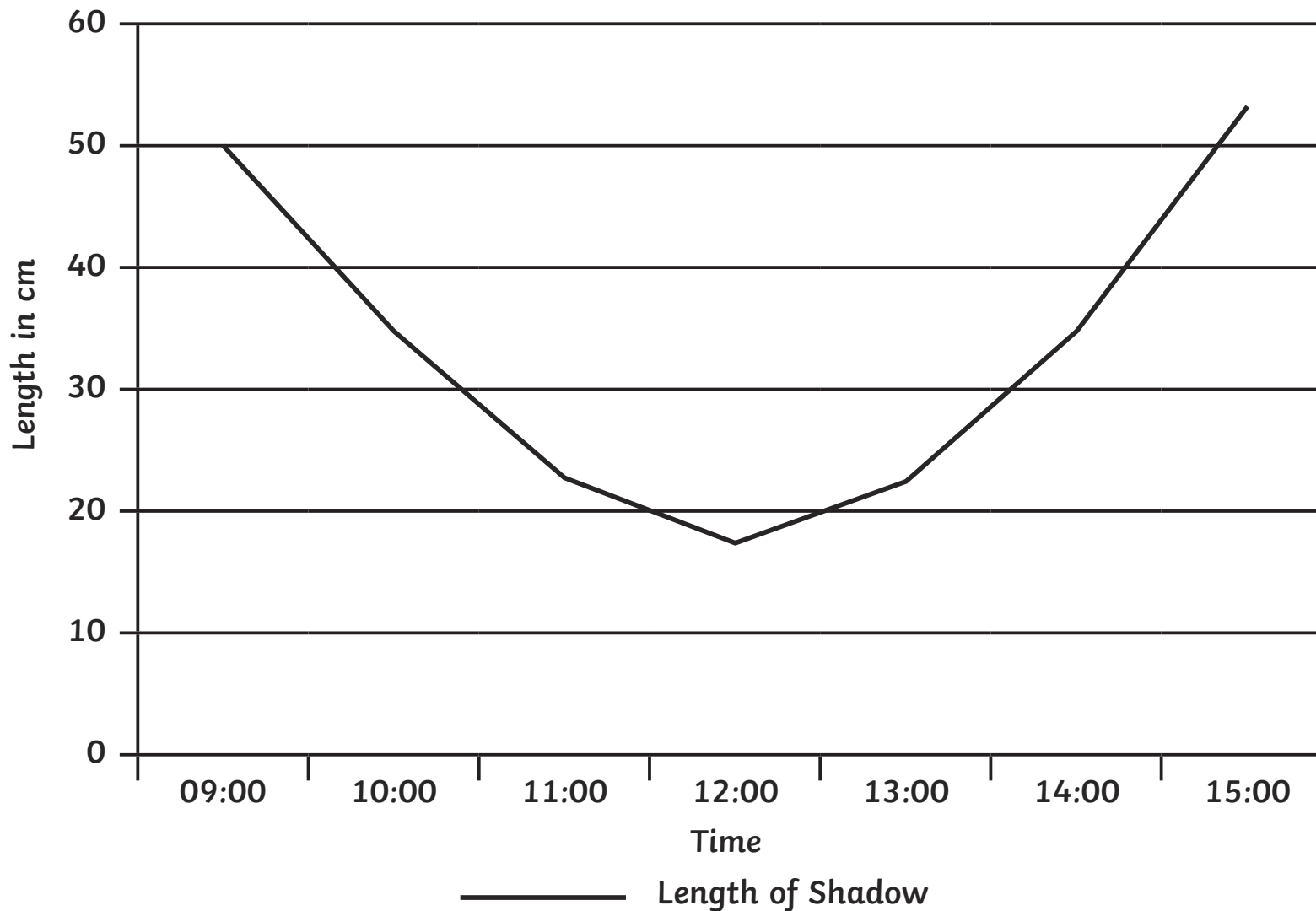
Data that is counted in whole numbers is discrete.

In discrete data, values between whole numbers cannot be counted.

In this investigation, it is the number of children that is being counted. This is discrete data because it is not possible to count 0.5 or 0.25 of a child.

Continuous Data

Data that is measured and therefore can take on infinite values is continuous.

In continuous data, values between whole numbers can be counted.

In this investigation, it is the length of the shadow that is being measured. This is continuous data because it is possible to record the length as 20.5cm, etc.