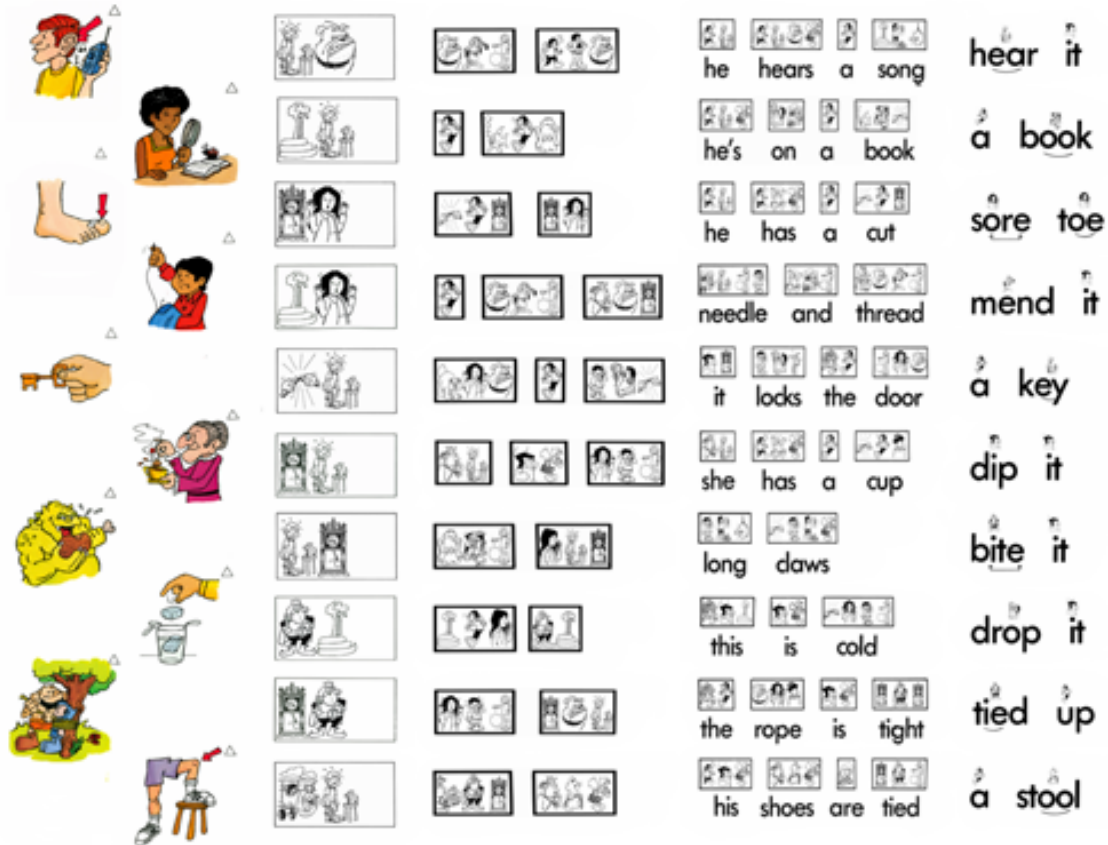


The Reading Program - What It Is and Why It Works for Everyone Picture Packets Station

The Picture Packets



The Picture Packets are a set of forty-four envelopes, thirty-eight of which contain sets of ten pictures. Eighteen sets of ten pictures at the two-sound level and twenty sets of ten pictures at the three-sound level.

Within both the two and three-sound levels, the packets are broken into Triangle, Circle, Square, Rectangle and Star levels. The three-sound Picture Packets and words have a happy face added to their Triangles, Circles, Squares, Rectangles and Stars, to distinguish three-sound activities from two-sound activities.

Children work in groups of twos and threes. Each group selects a Picture Packet at the appropriate level along with its corresponding Word Packet. The children spread the packet's ten pictures out and, with each other's help, match each word to its picture. Once the pictures and words have been matched, they are returned to their envelopes, the group then selects a new set of pictures and words, and the group's matching of words to pictures is repeated.

The Picture Packets contain 380 unique pictures. The two and three-sound flip books the teacher uses to introduce the children to the sounds and the sound-blending process will have introduced the children to 126 of the words represented by these pictures. This means that all the children already know 33% of the words in the Picture Packets.

There is no need for the teacher to check the picture-word matching. The children themselves will be able to tell if their matching is correct. They already know a third of the words. They are collectively capable of figuring out the other 66%, as well.

As students complete the two and three-sound levels and move on to phrases, transition and vowels-only levels, they use the same Picture Packets at each new level. The illustration at the beginning of this section shows a set of pictures and its matching words for the two-sound, phrase, transition, and vowels-only levels. Like the other four stations, the Picture Packet Station allows children to continue to learn along-side one another regardless of their current level of activity.

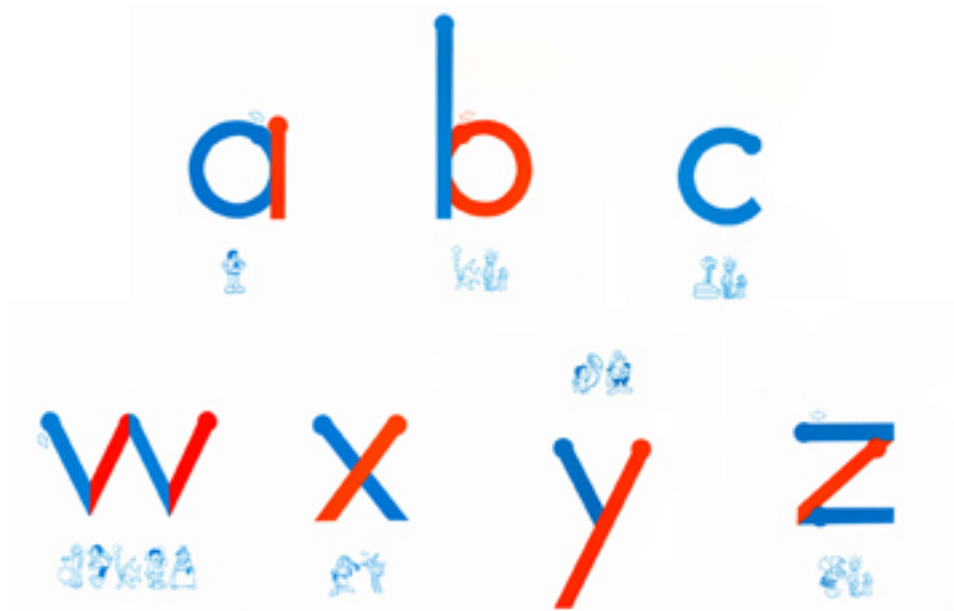
The Alphabet

I said at the start of the Picture Packets section that Picture Packets are a set of forty-four envelopes, thirty-eight of which contain sets of ten pictures. That leaves six Picture Packets unaccounted for.

Twenty-five of the twenty-six letters of the alphabet are two-sound words. The only letter with more than two sounds in its name is the letter “W”. The Red Square, Rectangle and Star Picture Packets contain twenty-five lower-case letters. The Blue Square, Rectangle and Star Picture Packets contain twenty-five upper-case letters. Each Picture Packet contains ten pictures. The Letter Packets each contain ten letters as well. The twenty-five letters become thirty by having the letters b, d, p, m, n, appearing twice each at the Star level.

As children reach the Square, Rectangle and Star levels for two-sound words, matching the names to both lower-case and upper-case letters is one of the activities that takes place at the Picture Packet Station. No special letter-naming instructions are included with the introduction of the Letter Picture Packets. The children who know the letter names can teach the names to the very few children who might not.

In addition, the teacher may have placed the twenty-six Alphabet Wall Cards that are included in the Reading Program’s kit on the classroom wall. In the Alphabet Wall-Card example that follows, the five-sound letter W is included.



The Reading Program allows children to begin reading and writing before they even know the alphabet. That does not mean the alphabet is ignored. Letters are introduced from the Program's start, and one of the five Learning Stations is Handwriting and Decoding.

Children learn to read and write with sounds. Once the sounds can be read with ease, children will connect these sounds to their letter-symbols. When that time comes, every child will already have become an expert letter-writer.