

Category Books

Purpose: To teach children to categorize and subcategorize information. The books can also be used to teach wh-questioning skills, labeling, defining, functions, descriptions, comparing and contrasting skills and much more!

Materials needed:

- Appliances or Foods category pictures, or your own pictures that can be subdivided into four subcategories (animals, vehicles, etc.). You will need a minimum of 16 pictures.
- An 8" by 11" piece of construction paper for each student. Fold in half with the short ends together to look like a booklet.
- Glue and scissors

Directions:

- Print out the category page you would like to use, or develop your own. I chose Appliances to start with.
- Have the children cut apart the pictures. Arrange the pictures so they can see them all.
- Label all the pictures and then ask one child to find a picture that belongs in one of the subcategories, like "find a big, kitchen appliance (stove, refrigerator, microwave, dishwasher). Continue with the other subcategories (small kitchen, clothes and entertainment).
- Have the children glue the pictures in the book, using one page for each subcategory.
- Review the booklets with the children by having them label each category, answer questions about each appliance, describe the appliances, guess which appliance you are describing, blend the word when you segment the sounds (i.e., t-oa-s-t-er makes "toaster"), compare and contrast the appliances (i.e., how are a stove and a refrigerator alike/different), etc.
- Have the children "memorize" the booklets. I select a student to recite their book, and give books to the other children in the group. I keep one book and the students ask the memorizer to state the items in each subcategory. The students get practice in asking and listening for the responses while the memorizer tells the information. If a student is struggling with items, they may ask for a clue. I teach the children to give various clues, like telling the first sound in a word, telling the function, giving a description, anything but telling the name of the appliance.
- When the student successfully memorizes the book and can tell all items with no clues, they earn a sticker on the front of the book. When each child has two stickers, we make a treat that has something to do with the book. For appliances, we might make cinnamon toast, popcorn, or milkshakes in a blender. Have fun!

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