# The Language Pyramid!

Kristin Patterson-Maas MS CCC-SLP Melissa Montes-Pagan, MEd ESL

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### **Background:**

This game was developed by a Speech Therapist and an English as a Second Language teacher. In attempting to create our schedules in the beginning of the school year, we discovered that we shared many of the same students. Instead of throwing our hands up in despair at the impossibility of creating schedules that did not conflict, we decided to group our students together and provide collaborative lessons. During our group sessions, it quickly became apparent that our students lacked the ability to describe objects and events, to make inferences, and to spontaneously categorize objects. In order to remediate these skills in a dynamic and interesting way, we developed *The Language Pyramid*. Creating a tournament between two classes gave the students a sense of purpose and something to strive for. The entire unit, from the preliminary activities to the *Language Pyramid Tournament* filled one marking period and kept our students interested and excited throughout the process.

### **Preliminary Activities:**

Before playing the game, students need to practice skills such as identifying categories, naming objects in categories, and describing objects.

Copy the clip art pictures onto card stock and cut them apart. Begin by discussing what a *category* is. A **category** is a **group of different things that go together because they have something in common.** Give several examples of basic categories. For example: food, animals, vehicles, etc. Allow students to sort pictures into the appropriate categories. Once the pictures are sorted, explain that they can be divided into even more categories. Vehicles can be sorted into land vehicles, air vehicles, and water vehicles. Land vehicles can be sorted into land vehicles with two wheels, with four wheels, and with more than four wheels. Encourage students to develop their own system to categorize groups of pictures.

During this activity, point out that one item can often belong to several different categories. For instance, a seagull can be grouped with a penguin, an eagle, and a robin because they are all birds. But a seagull can also be grouped with an airplane, a kite, and a butterfly because they are all things that fly. It is very important for students to be able to recognize and utilize this concept during game play.

Students also need to practice naming objects in categories. Choose a category, for instance "things you drink," and have the students name things that belong in that category. Write down the categories and their responses on the Categories worksheet for visual reinforcement.

Once students are competent in their ability to recognize and name categories and the objects in them, they need to learn to describe objects accurately. Begin by showing them four pictures in one category – for instance: a bird, an airplane, a butterfly, and a kite. Have them guess what object you are describing while giving the following clues:

This is something you can see in the sky. (This is not a good clue because you can see all 4 items in the sky.)

*It has wings*. (This clue is a little bit better; the kite does not have wings, so remove that picture from the group.)

*It is alive.* (This clue is also a little bit better; the airplane is not alive, so remove it from the group.)

This is a kind of bug. (This last clue tells you without a doubt that the object you're describing is a butterfly.)

Place several picture cards face down on the table. One at a time, have each student choose a card and describe it to the group. Remind the students that if someone guesses incorrectly, they have to <u>keep describing the object</u> until it is guessed. Additionally, if their description is not effective, they need to find other aspects of the object to describe. This will probably be very difficult at first!

Once students are able to name categories and the objects in them, as well as describe objects, they are ready to play the Language Pyramid!

### **PLAY THE GAME!**

This game works best with groups of two or more students who have some ability to read. It is really fun to set up a competition between classes that culminates in a *Language Pyramid* Tournament!

### You will need:

1 tri-fold presentation board

Colored card stock

Stikki Clips (available at teacher-supply stores)

# 1 coin envelopes (optional – available at office supply stores)

### **Game Setup:**

- 1. Copy the game cards onto cardstock. Use different colors for the Qualifying Round cards and the Winner's Circle cards. For the Qualifying Round cards, cut on the dotted line. Then cut out the target words and store them in #1 coin envelopes labeled with the category. For the Winner's Circle cards, cut on the dotted line.
- 2. Affix the Stikki Clips to the presentation board so that they will hold 6 cards in a pyramid shape: one card in the top row; two cards in the middle row; three cards on the bottom row.
- 3. Copy the target word folder onto card stock. Cut on the dotted line and fold each folder in half. Use a razor blade or the edge of your scissors to create slits on the diagonal lines. Insert the bottom corners of the target word cards into the slits for game play. It's easiest to have at least 6 folders during game play so that you can set up the entire round in advance.

### **Game Play:**

Before you begin, you may want to allow your students to watch clips of the game show *The* \$100,000 Pyramid to better understand the concept of the game. If you are able to access You Tube, you can play the following clips:

### Qualifying Rounds:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQouzDMaWKY

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zaM-VZZE2oQ

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9impNpVXU4

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SnTerxp0\_gQ

### Winner's Circle:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JceopMkjWSQ

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWuZ7ffCRpI

<u>http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtF\_B7JU9sY</u> (In this clip, the players are buzzed and do not win the game.)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTBQ63VeG-c

### **Play the Qualifying Round:**

To begin, select 6 Qualifying Round cards and place them on the presentation board face up. Place the corresponding target words into target word folders and keep them out of sight. Divide the students into teams of two, or designate two students to play. For each team decide which student will "give" (give the clues) and which student will "receive" (guess the answers.) Remind students that the giver cannot say the target word or any part of the target word – if the target word is "Hot Chocolate," the giver cannot say, "This is a drink that is *hot*."

Allow the first group to choose a Qualifying Round Card and ask the students to guess what they think they will be talking about. If the students do not guess the meaning of the topic, tell them what they will be describing. Remove that card from the presentation board, then give the target word folder to the student who is giving. Allow the student to look at the words and privately ask you questions if he is not able to read a word, or does not know what a word means.

Decide on a time limit for each round. When you first begin playing, allow a generous amount of time. As students improve, decrease the amount of time allowed to make the game more challenging. The timer begins when the student who is giving begins to give the first clue. As soon as the student who is receiving guesses the target word correctly, the card should be removed from the folder and a point is scored. If the student who is giving inadvertently says the target word, then that card is removed from the folder, but no point is scored. At the end of the round, the number of points earned will be equal to the number of words guessed correctly.

When the first team has completed their first Qualifying Round card, the next team will choose a card. The game continues until all of the cards have been used. The team with the highest score goes on to the Winner's Circle!

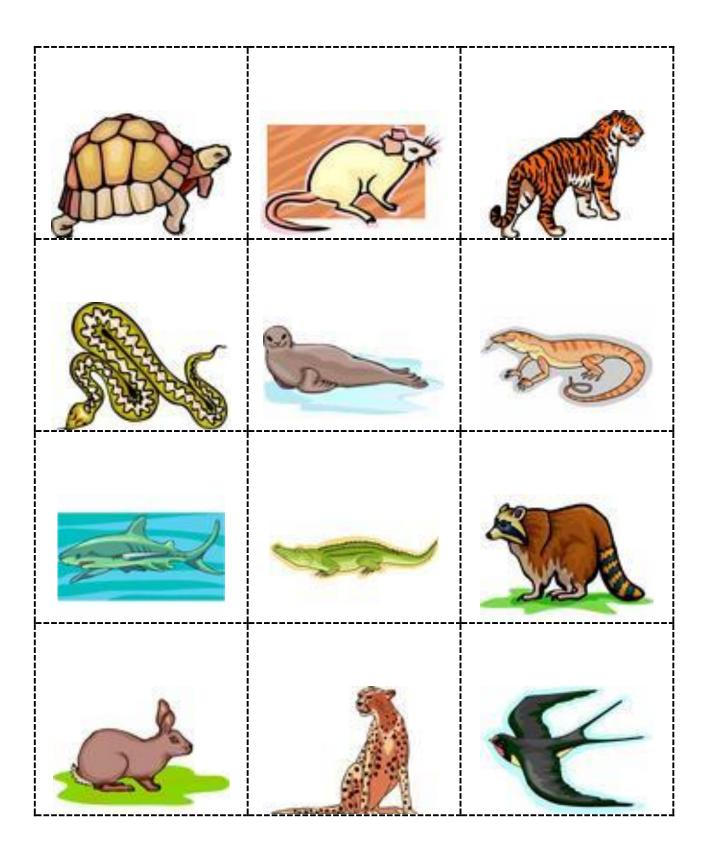
### Play the Winner's Circle:

In the Winner's Circle round, remind students that they are no longer describing objects, but providing their partner with a list of objects that fit into a category. Also, they are not allowed to say any word that is written on the Winner's Circle card – so if the subject is "Things That Are Hot," the student who gives cannot say "hot chocolate." Remind students that if the receiver guesses incorrectly, the giver must <u>keep giving clues!</u>

To play the Winner's Circle, choose 6 Winner's Circle cards and place them <u>face down</u> on the presentation board. Decide which student will give and which student will receive. The student who receives will sit directly in front of the presentation board, facing away from it so that he cannot see the cards. The student who gives will sit across from the student who receives so that the giver is able to see the presentation board (placing the presentation board on a desk or table behind the receiver's chair is very helpful.)

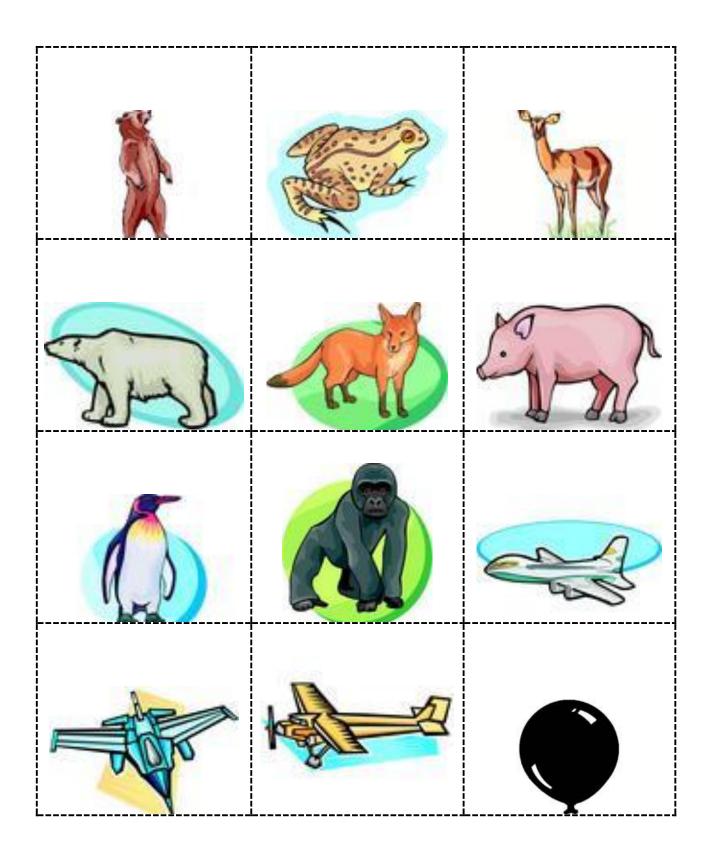
When the timer begins, turn the bottom left Winner's Circle card over so that the giver can read it. The giver will give clues until the receiver correctly guesses the topic, or until one of the team members says, "Pass." If the topic is guessed correctly, the card is removed from the board, a point is scored and the next Winner's Circle card (bottom middle) is turned over. If one of the students decides to pass, the card is left where it is, no point is scored, and the next card is turned over. If time allows, the students can return to this topic when the other cards have been finished. If the giver inadvertently says any word that is written on the Winner's Circle card, the card is removed from the board, no point is scored, and the next card is turned over. A score of 6 wins the game!

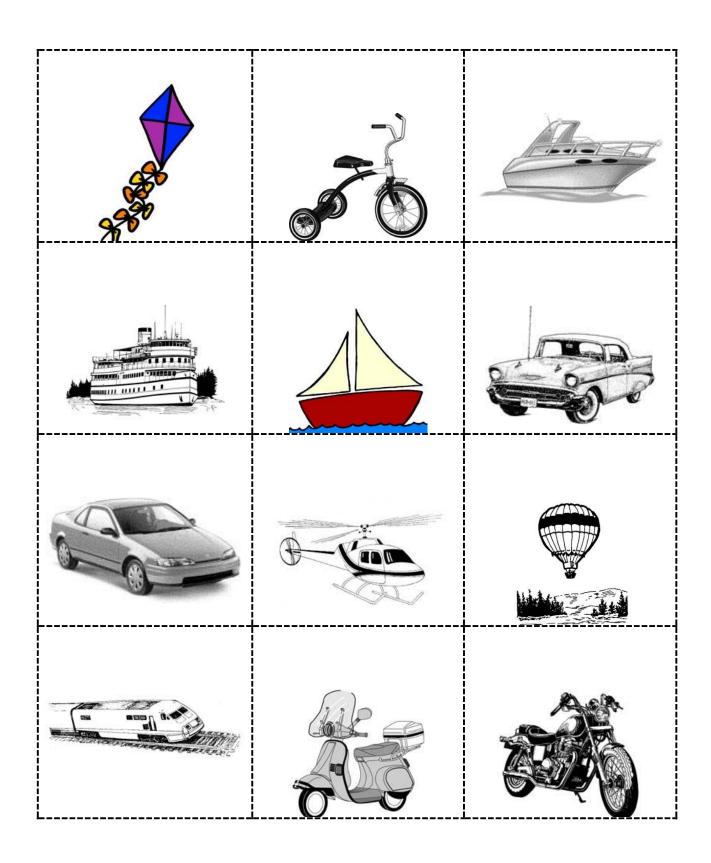
### Picture Cards

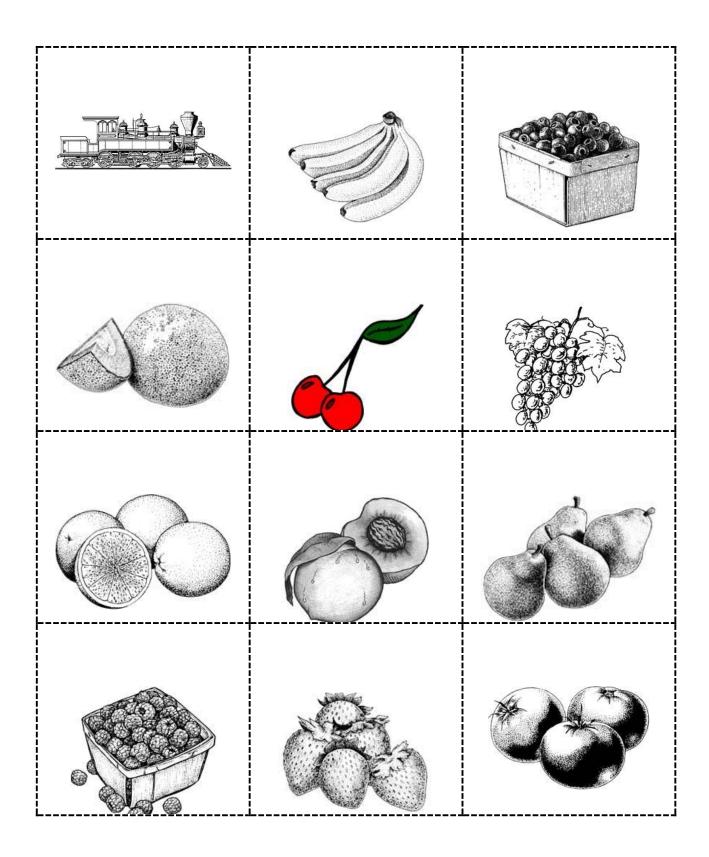


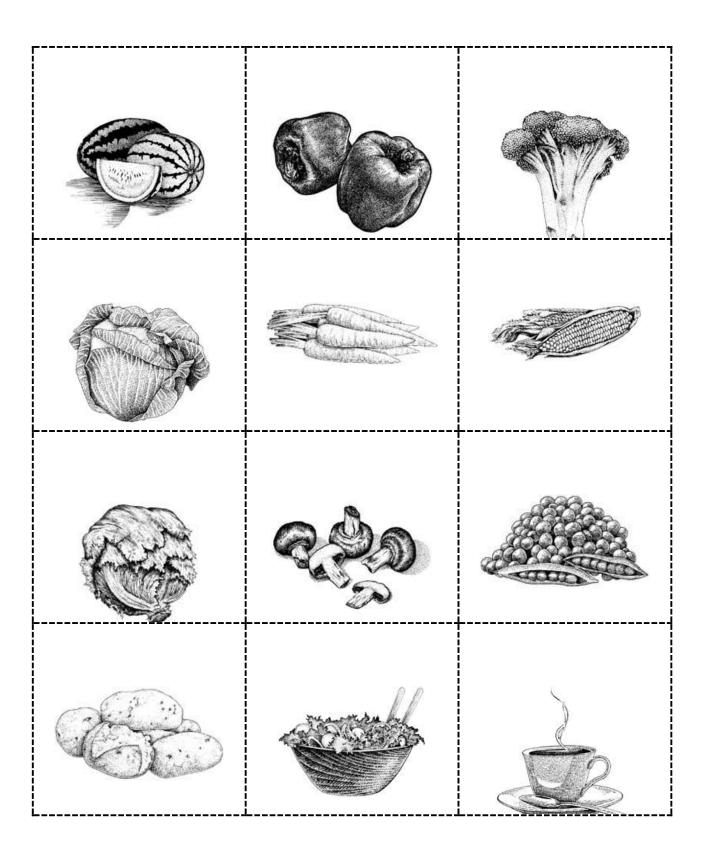


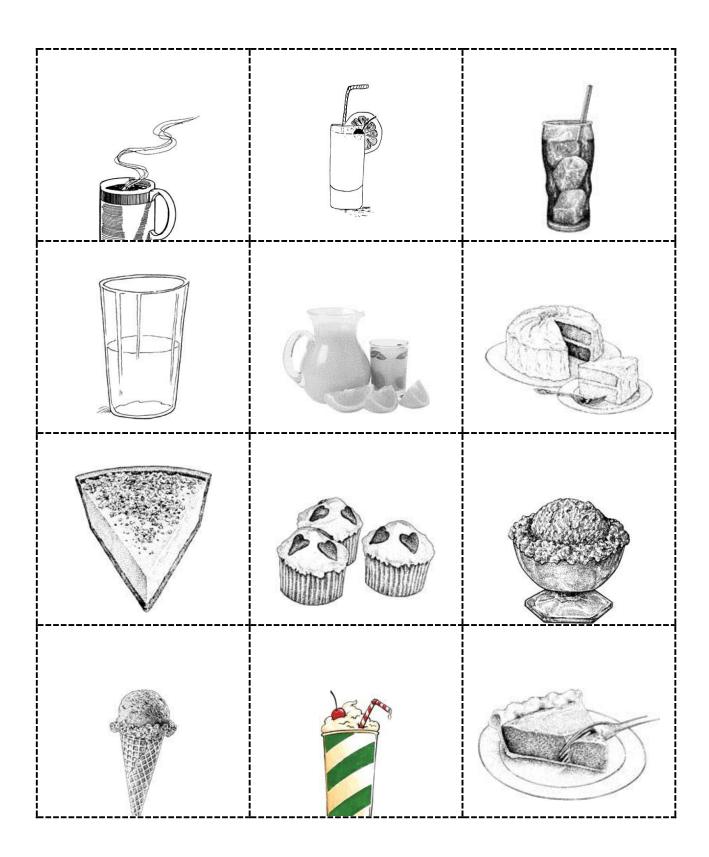


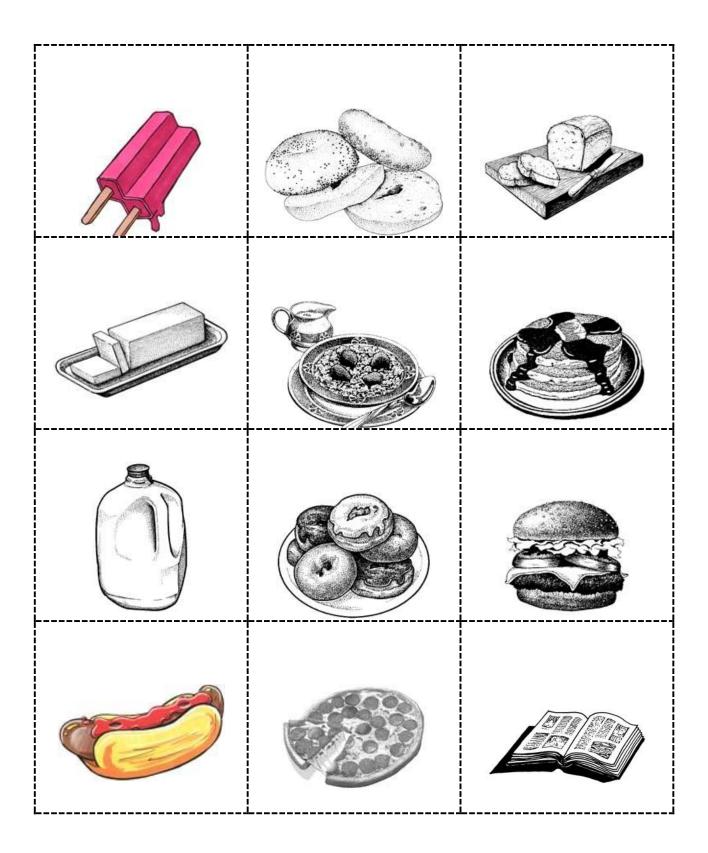


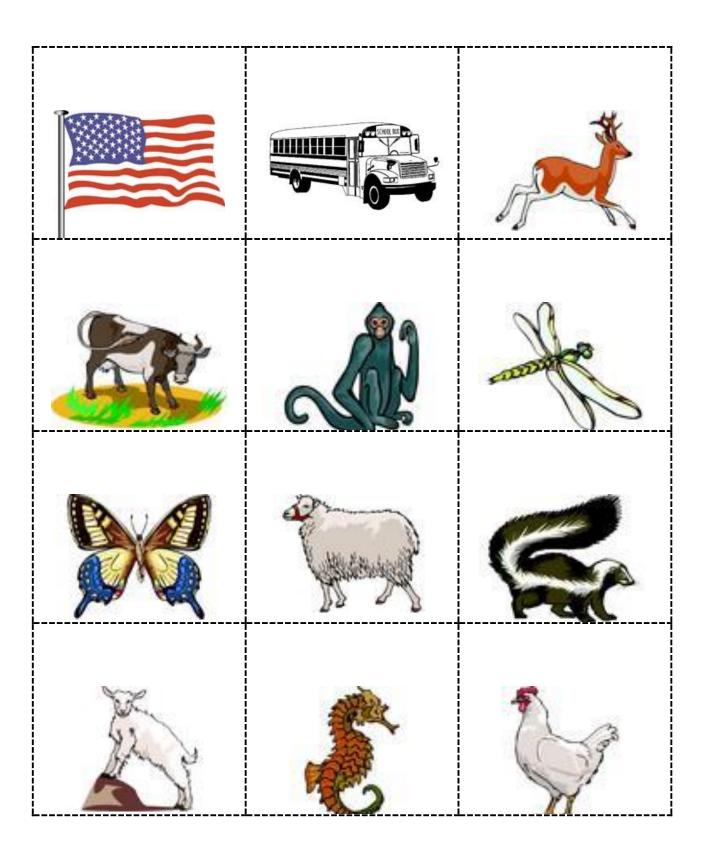


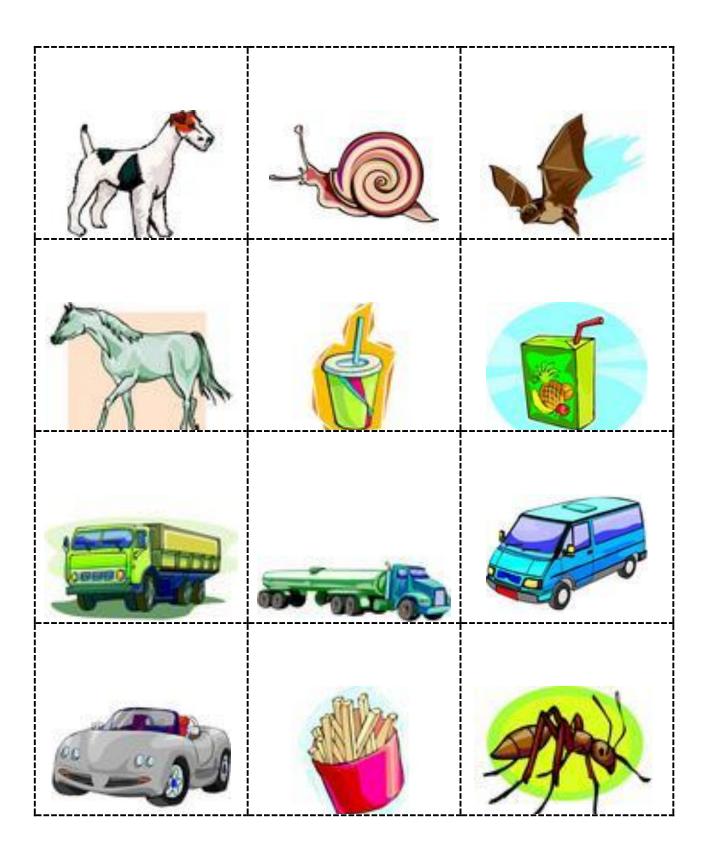












### Categorization Worksheets

THINGS YOU DRINK		TOYS	
1. Hot chocolate	6. <del>Ice Cream</del>	1. Doll	6. Stuffed Animal
2. Şoda	7. Milk shake	2. <del>Puppy</del>	7.
3. <del>Pudding</del>	8. Water	3. Video game	8.
4. Coffee	9.	4. Football	9.
5. Lemonade	10.	5. Legos	10.
THINGS YOU WEAR		SPICY FOODS	
1. Shoes	6. Coat	1. Tacos	6.
2. Shirt	7. Hat	2. Şausage	7.
3. Pants	8. Gloves	3. Pepper	8.
4. Socks	9. Underwear	4. Jalapenos	9.
5. Dress	10. Sweater	5.	10.

THINGS YOU DRINK		<u>TOYS</u>	
1.	6.	1.	6.
2.	7.	2.	7.
3.	8.	3.	8.
4.	9.	4.	9.
5.	10.	5.	10.
THINGS YOU WEAR		SPICY FOODS	
1.	6.	1.	6.
2.	7.	2.	7.
3.	8.	3.	8.
4.	9.	4.	9.
5.	10.	5.	10.

REASONS YOU CRY		THINGS THAT MAKE YOU HAPPY	
1.	6.	1.	6.
2.	7.	2.	7.
3.	8.	3.	8.
4.	9.	4.	9.
5.	10.	5.	10.
ANIMALS THAT LIVE IN TREES		THINGS THAT CAN CUT	
1.	6.	1.	6.
2.	7.	2.	7.
3.	8.	3.	8.
4.	9.	4.	9.
5.	10.	5.	10.

THINGS THAT SCARE YOU		THINGS THAT ARE RED		
1.	6.	1.	6.	
2.	7.	2.	7.	
3.	8.	3.	8.	
4.	9.	4.	9.	
5.	10.	5.	10.	
PEOPLE IN A HOSPITAL	PEOPLE IN A HOSPITAL		PLACES YOU CAN HIDE	
1.	6.	1.	6.	
2.	7.	2.	7.	
3.	8.	3.	8.	
4.	9.	4.	9.	
5.	10.	5.	10.	

KIDS' BOOKS/STORIES		PEOPLE IN A SCHOOL	
1.	6.	1.	6.
2.	7.	2.	7.
3.	8.	3.	8.
4.	9.	4.	9.
5.	10.	5.	10.
SWEET FOODS		THINGS YOU SEE AT THE VETRINARIAN	
1.	6.	1.	6.
2.	7.	2.	7.
3.	8.	3.	8.
4.	9.	4.	9.
5.	10.	5.	10.

THINGS YOU SEE IN A MOVIE THEATER		OCCUPATIONS		
1.	6.	1.	6.	
2.	7.	2.	7.	
3.	8.	3.	8.	
4.	9.	4.	9.	
5.	10.	5.	10.	
REASONS KIDS GET IN T	REASONS KIDS GET IN TROUBLE		ANIMALS IN THE JUNGLE	
1.	6.	1.	6.	
2.	7.	2.	7.	
3.	8.	3.	8.	
4.	9.	4.	9.	
5.	10.	5.	10.	

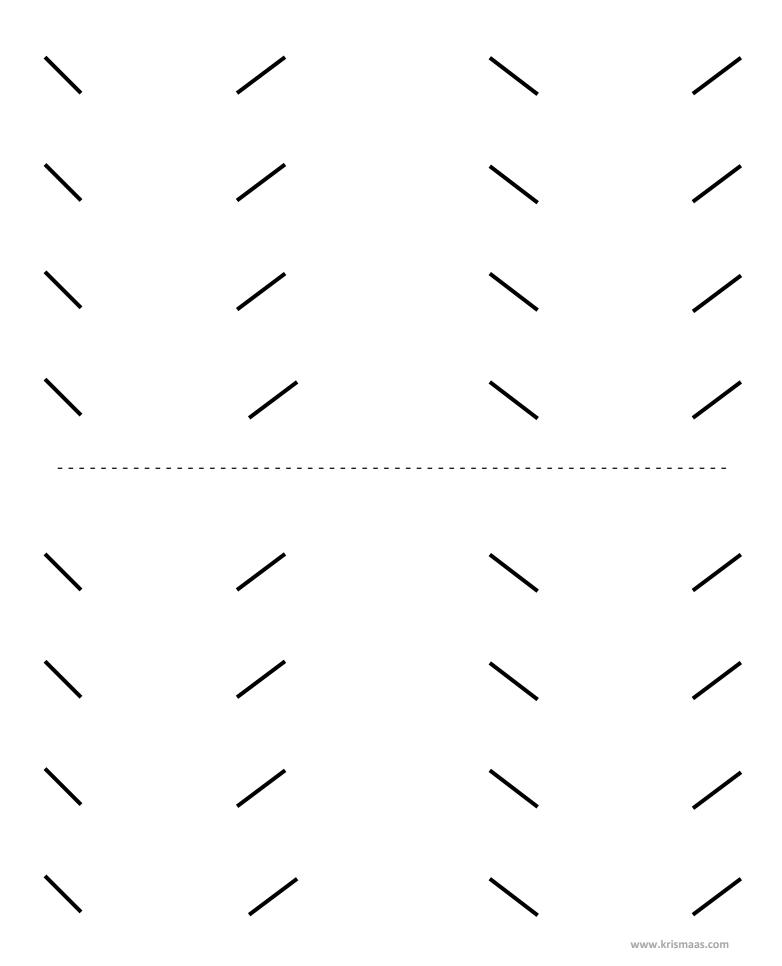
_		_	
1.	6.	1.	6.
2.	7.	2.	7.
3.	8.	3.	8.
4.	9.	4.	9.
5.	10.	5.	10.
1.	6.	1.	6.
2.	7.	2.	7.
3.	8.	3.	8.
4.	9.	4.	9.
5.	10.	5.	10.

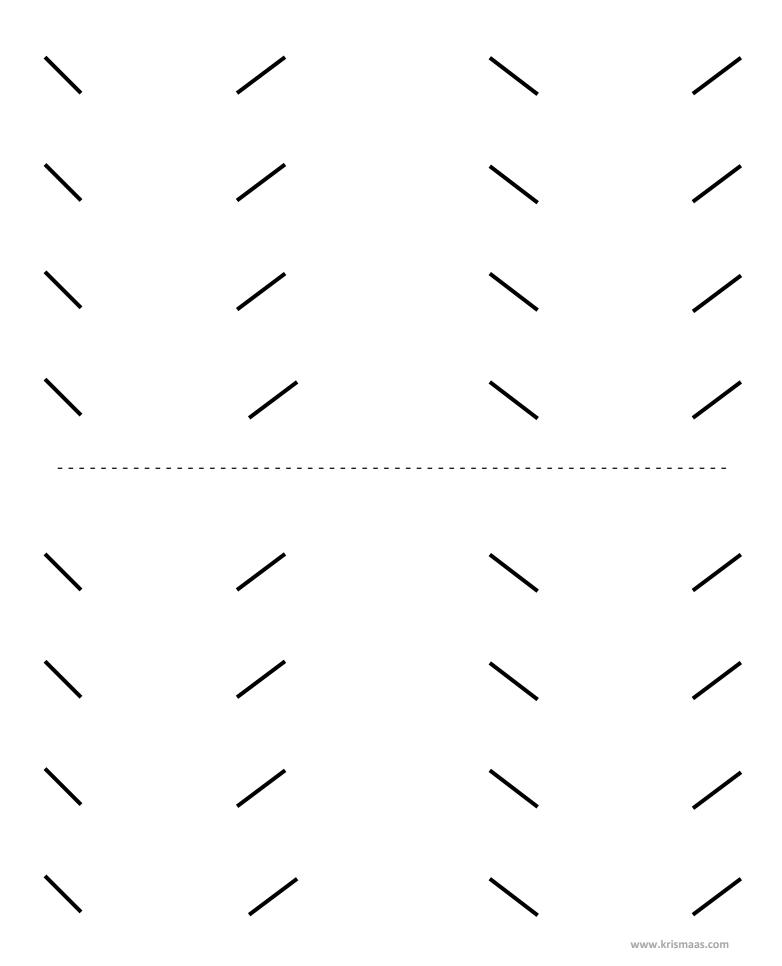
ANIMALS ON A FARM		THINGS THAT CAN FLY		
1.	6.	1.	6.	
2.	7.	2.	7.	
3.	8.	3.	8.	
4.	9.	4.	9.	
5.	10.	5.	10.	
WAYS TO COMMUNICA	WAYS TO COMMUNICATE		THINGS YOU SEE IN A KITCHEN	
1.	6.	1.	6.	
2.	7.	2.	7.	
3.	8.	3.	8.	
4.	9.	4.	9.	
5.	10.	5.	10.	

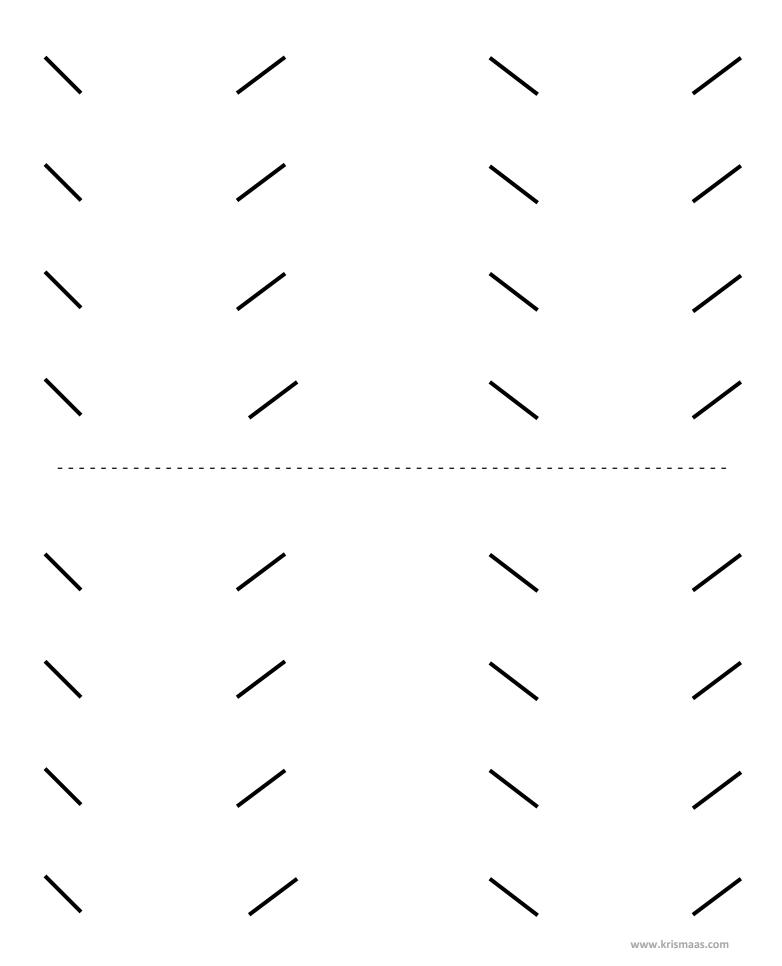
1.	6.	1.	6.
2.	7.	2.	7.
3.	8.	3.	8.
4.	9.	4.	9.
5.	10.	5.	10.
1.	6.	1.	6.
2.	7.	2.	7.
3.	8.	3.	8.
4.	9.	4.	9.
5.	10.	5.	10.

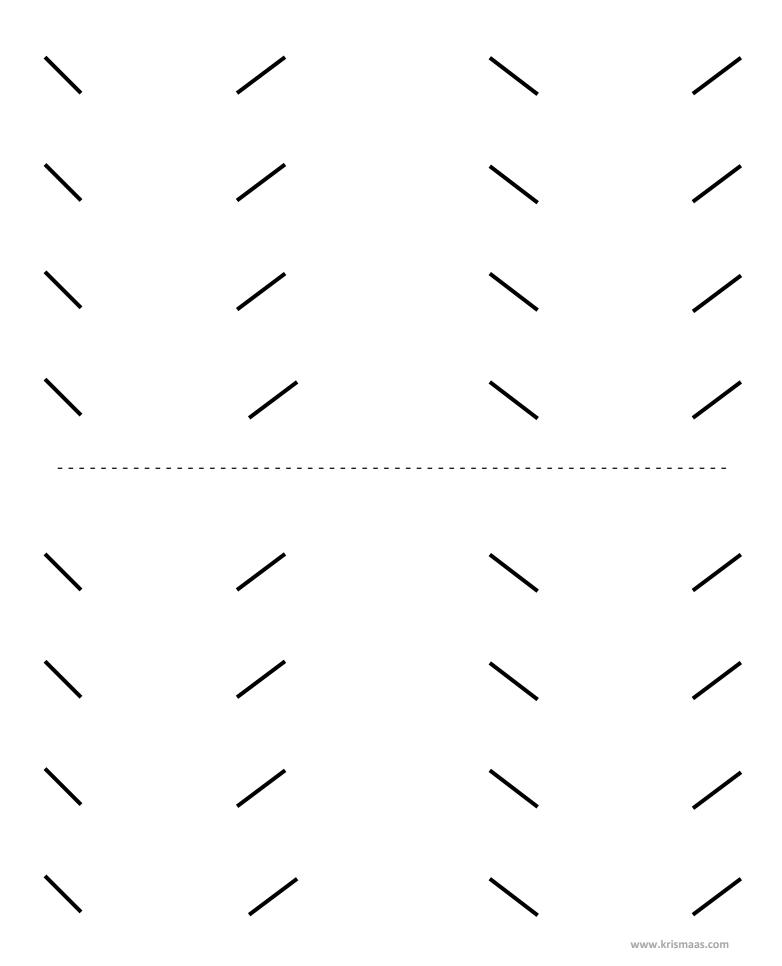
		_	
1.	6.	1.	6.
2.	7.	2.	7.
3.	8.	3.	8.
4.	9.	4.	9.
5.	10.	5.	10.
1.	6.	1.	6.
2.	7.	2.	7.
3.	8.	3.	8.
4.	9.	4.	9.
5.	10.	5.	10.

# Target Word Folders









### Qualifying Round Cards

## UP, UP, AND AWAY!

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CLOUDS	SUN
MOON	AIRPLANE
BALLOON	KITE
BIRD	Up, Up, and Away!  Describe these things you might see in the sky

# WATER YOU WAITING FOR?

WHALE	BOAT
SAND	OCTOPUS
BEACH BALL	WAVES
SHARK	Water You Waiting For?  Describe these things you might see in or near the ocean

#### HUSH!

BUS	BABY
ALARM	SIREN
CHILDREN	DOG
A SCREAM	Hush!  Describe these things that are loud

#### BIG TOP!

CLOWNS	ELEPHANT
POPCORN	COTTON CANDY
HORSES	CHILDREN
TRAPEZE	Big Top!  Describe these things you might see at the circus

## MUY CALIENTE!

SUN	FIRE
COFFEE	SOUP
SUMMER	TEA
OVEN	Muy Caliente!  Describe these things that are hot

## WE WISH YOU A MERRY

SANTA	REINDEER
CHRISTMAS TREE	PRESENTS
SNOW	ELF
STOCKING	We Wish You a Merry Describe these things you might see at Christmas time

#### HOLD IT!

HANDS	YOUR BREATH
A PHONE	A BABY
BALL	A PET
A HANDLE	Hold It Describe these things you can hold

# CLOTHES CALL

SHOES	SOCKS
UNDERWEAR	PANTS
SHIRT	DRESS
COAT	Clothes Call Describe these clothes

#### HELP!

POLICEMAN	FIREMAN
MAILMAN	TEACHER
DOCTOR	NURSE
CROSSING GUARD	Help! Describe these community helpers

#### GOTTA GO

TOILET	SINK
SOAP	TOWELS
TISSUES (KLEENEX)	SHAMPOO
BATHTUB	Gotta Go Describe these things you find in a bathroom

#### **ZOO-TASTIC**

GIRAFFE	ZEBRA
ELEPHANT	MONKEY
SNAKE	FISH
TURTLE	Zoo-Tastic Describe these animals at the zoo

## IT'S IN THE BAG

LIPSTICK	WALLET
MONEY	CAR KEYS
CREDIT CARDS	PHOTOS
PHONE	It's in the Bag  Describe these things you might find in a purse

# LET'S DO LUNCH

SANDWICH	CHIPS
APPLE	SOUP
SALAD	CARROTS
PIZZA	Let's Do Lunch Describe these things you can eat for lunch

## SEED YOU LATER

ORANGES	PUMPKINS
APPLES	WATERMELON
FLOWERS	CORN
STRAWBERRY	Seed You Later Describe these things that have seeds

## HOME SWEET HOME

HOUSE	APARTMENT
TEEPEE	IGLOO
DOG HOUSE	CASTLE
LOG CABIN	Home Sweet Home Describe these types of homes

## GOING MY WAY?

CAR	HOT AIR BALLOON
BUS	BOAT
TRAIN	BIKE
PLANE	Going My Way? Describe these vehicles

# TIS THE SEASON

CHRISTMAS	HALLOWEEN
EASTER	VALENTINE'S DAY
FOURTH OF JULY	THANKSGIVING
NEW YEARS	'Tis the Season Describe these holidays

# WHAT CHEW TALKING ABOUT?

BONES FURNITURE

BALLS SHOES

TOYS RUG/CARPET

**LEASH** 

Describe these things dogs chew

What Chew Talking About?

## A PRETTY PENNY

CAR	HOUSE
BIG SCREEN TV	COLLEGE
PLANE TICKETS	VACATION
JEWELRY	A Pretty Penny Describe these things that are expensive

#### SHHH!

WHISPER	TIPTOE
SLEEP	READ
THINK	CHEW
SNEAK	Shhhh!  Describe these things you do quietly

#### PACK RAT

BOOKS	NOTEBOOKS
PENCIL	PEN
CRAYONS	JACKET
HOMEWORK	Pack Rat  Describe these things you might find in a backpack

# LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

SHREK	BOLT
FINDING NEMO	MADAGASCAR
HARRY POTTER	STAR WARS
ICE AGE	Lights, Camera, Action!  Describe these movies

## ALL PREPARED

GLUE	CRAYONS
SCISSORS	MARKERS
STAPLER	PAPER
PENCIL	All Prepared Describe these school supplies

#### POWER-FUL

PHONE	CAMERA
TV REMOTE	CAR
PSP	iPOD
ELECTRIC TOOTHBRUSH	Power-ful Describe these things that have batteries

### OLD MacDONALD

COWS	HORSES
CHICKENS	BARN
HAY	PIGS
TRACTOR	Old MacDonald Describe these things you see on a farm

#### KABOOM!

BUBBLES	VOLCANO
RAFT	TIRE
BALLOON	BEACH BALL
DYNAMITE	Kaboom!  Describe these things that blow up

#### MOOVELOUS

ICE CREAM	YOGURT
BUTTER	CHEESE
MILKSHAKE	PUDDING
CHOCOLATE	Moovelous  Describe these things made  with milk

#### YIKES!

GHOST	SPIDER
MOUSE	HEIGHTS
MONSTER	DEATH
THE DARK	Yikes Describe these things that scare people

## HAVE YOU SEENMY ...?

KEYS	WALLET
TEMPER	PURSE
MIND	REMOTE
PHONE	Have You Seen My?  Describe these things  people lose

#### SUPER!

SPIDER-MAN	SUPERMAN
WONDER WOMAN	IRON MAN
WOLVERINE	BATMAN
INCREDIBLE HULK	Super!  Describe these things super heroes

## WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?

ELEVATOR	ESCALATOR
HOT AIR BALLOON	YOUR AGE
SUN	A FEVER
PRICES	What Are You Up To? Describe these things that go up

## CHANGING THE SUBJECT

READING	MATH
SCIENCE	MUSIC
SOCIAL STUDIES	SPELLING
GYM	Changing the Subject Describe these school subjects

## SPRING INTO ACTION

BABY ANIMALS	FLOWERS
RAIN	RAINBOWS
BUTTERFLIES	UMBRELLAS
EASTER	Spring Into Action  Describe these things you see in the spring

## SHIVER ME TIMBERS!

ICE CREAM	ICE
WINTER	A FREEZER
WATER	WIND
THE ARCTIC	Shiver Me Timbers  Describe these things that are, or can be, cold

## AHOY THERE, MATEY!

SHIP	THE PLANK
EYE PATCH	SKULL AND CROSSBONES
WOODEN LEG	TREASURE
MAPS	Ahoy There, Matey! Describe these things associated with pirates

#### "T" FOR TWO

TOES	TEST
TOP	TUNA
TRAIN	TAG
TURTLE	"T" For Two  Describe these words that start with the letter T

## "R" YOU READY?

RED	RUG
RACE	ROCK
RULER	RABBIT
RAINBOW	"R" You Ready?  Describe these words that start with the letter R

#### "Y" NOT?

\_\_\_\_\_

YESTERDAY	YARD
YOGURT	YELLOW
YO-YO	YEAR
YES	"Y" Not?  Describe these words that start with the letter Y

### "C" YOU LATER!

CAGE	CASH
COOK	COMB
CASTLE	COFFEE
CAREFUL	"C" You Later!  Describe these words that start with the letter C

#### D-LIGHTFUL!

DREAM	DIG
DOLLAR	DOOR
DANCE	DRINK
DIRT	D-Lightful!  Describe these words that start with the letter D

### MMM-MMM, GOOD!

MATCH	MUD
MIRROR	MONKEY
MOUNTAIN	MILK
MUMMY	Mmm-Mmm, Good!  Describe these words that start with the letter M

### THE "I"s HAVE IT!

ICE	IGLOO
INK	INSECT
INVITATION	INDIAN
ICE CREAM	The "I"s Have It!  Describe these words that start with the letter I

#### ISCREAM, YOUSCREAM

\_\_\_\_\_

CHOCLATE	VANILLA
STRAWBERRY	MINT
COOKIE DOUGH	PEANUT BUTTER
CHOCOLATE CHIP	I Scream, You Scream  Describe these ice cream flavors

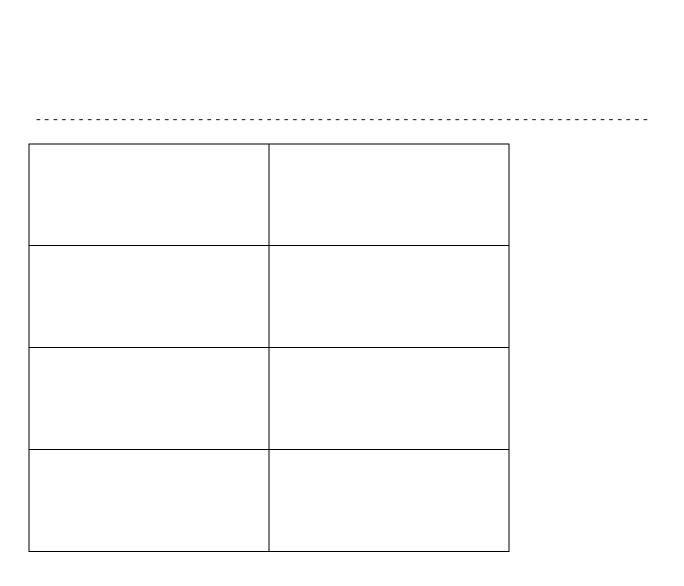
### ALL CLEANED UP

WATER	SOAP
RAGS	SPONGE
VACCUUM	FEATHER DUSTER
PAPER TOWELS	All Cleaned Up Describe these things you use to clean other things

### WHAT A CHORE!

\_\_\_\_\_\_

MAKE THE BED	TAKE OUT TRASH
PICK UP TOYS	DUST
VACCUUM	WASH DISHES
FOLD LAUNDRY	What a Chore!  Describe these chores kids  have to do



### Winner's Circle Cards

### PARTS OF A CALENDAR

**COUNTRIES** 

## THINGS THAT MAKE YOU LAUGH

## THINGS A TEACHER MIGHT SAY

### PARTS OF A CAR

REASONS
YOU GO TO
THE DOCTOR

#### **COLORS**

#### KINDS OF CANDY

### VIDEO GAMES

THINGS YOU
EAT FOR
BREAKFAST

## THINGS A BULLY MIGHT SAY

FRUITS

#### **SPORTS**

#### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

## THINGS THAT ARE COLD

## THINGS YOUSEIN ASCHOOL

#### THINGS YOU DRINK

### THINGS A BABY DOES

## THINGS THAT MAKE YOU SAD

PEOPLE IN A
FAMILY

## THINGS THAT HAVE WHEELS

## THINGS YOU EAT WITH A SPOON

### GIRLS' NAMES

BOYS'
NAMES

## TEACHERS AT THIS SCHOOL

#### SCHOOL SUPPLIES

### TYPES OF WEATHER

McDONALD'S FOOD

### PEOPLE IN A SCHOOL

PLACES TO EAT

# THINGS YOU SEE AT A BIRTHDAY PARTY

#### MONTHS OF THE YEAR

## THINGS YOUSEIN THE CITY

SHAPES

## THINGS YOU SEE ON A FARM

PARTS OF
AN
AIRPLANE

# THINGS YOUR MOTHER MIGHT SAY

#### FURNITURE

## THINGS YOU DO IN SUMMER

## THINGS YOUDOIN WINTER

