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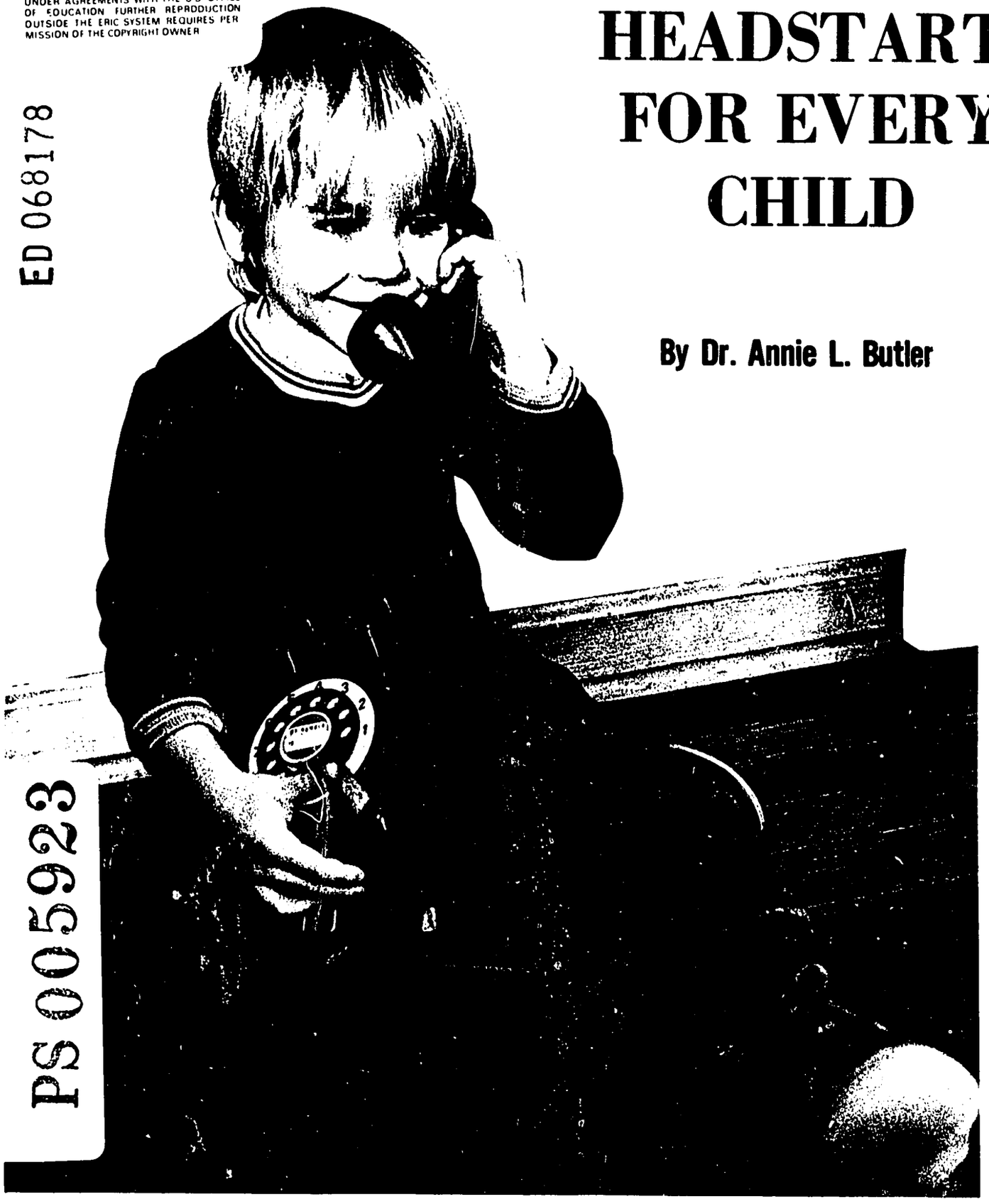
ABSTRACT

An early learning kit provides a booklet of ten articles on educational head starts for children along with an activity packet for classroom use. The articles deal with: the crucial early school years; emotional preparation of the child; broadening a child's background; selecting toys and games; reading readiness; mathematical skills; learning to listen; special help for both the slow and fast learner; and advice for after the child begins school. These are directed at the parent. The activity packet includes recipes for snacks and for special projects (e.g., play dough, finger paint, vegetable printing, paste) and directions for various games. They include an Alphabet-Object Lotto, The Manuscript Alphabet, A Trip to the Zoo, The Number Games, Shapes and Colors Puzzle, and listening games. (LH)

HEADSTART FOR EVERY CHILD



By Dr. Annie L. Butler

The Amplified Version of the Ten Articles

HEADSTART FOR EVERY CHILD

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The Associated Press

– One –
The Crucial Years

The early years of school are crucial. These are the years when your child acquires his initial attitudes toward school and the experiences he finds there. If he gets off on the right foot, school is a happy place and learning is a joy. If a child feels comfortable with the teacher and with other children, he will be more interested and more teachable, and his chances of success will be greatly improved.

If, on the other hand, he gets off to a bad start, he may be a long time learning to adjust, and have problems all the way through school.

There is much you can do to help your child get ready for school, and you should do everything in your power to prepare him so that he looks forward with anticipation to the experience. A child who comes to school eager to learn has a tremendous head start. Some of these things you may do naturally, but others you may need to think about, and deliberately plan.

If a child is to be a good learner, he needs to be in top physical condition. Most parents, of course, are well aware of this, but they often overlook the necessity of having a thorough physical examination before the start of school, particularly with regard to vision and hearing.

With preschool youngsters it is often difficult to know when a child has poor vision or hearing, but these problems are magnified many times over in a school setting. How can a child learn to read if the words on the page are a blur? How can he follow instructions if he is never sure what the teacher has said?

Most schools expect a health checkup before school entrance, and many schools provide this service. If the school does provide the checkup, find out if it includes vision and hearing tests.

It is a good idea to prepare a child for what will take place at such an examination. Emphasize that anything the doctor does, he does to help the child stay well. If there is going to be a shot of some kind, tell him it will hurt – but not for long. You want to build confidence with the child, and it's better to level with him, for if you tell him it won't hurt, and it does, he may not believe you after that.

Another thing you should do is help the child learn to take more and more responsibility at home before he starts school. This would include learning to fasten and unfasten his clothes, putting on his coat, putting away

his toys, hanging up his clothes. If these things become automatic for him, it will come naturally for him to take even more responsibility in a school setting.

If your tendency has been to do all these things for him, start now to shift the responsibility gradually over to him.

You also should consider how much experience he has had playing with other children. Perhaps he has only one or two friends – in school he will have many more. You don't want your child to feel lost and alone in school, and you should help him learn to develop warm relationships with as many children as possible.

Having brothers and sisters helps, but this is not quite the same as being with children of his own age group. Some children may have attended nursery school, day care centers or the like. These are all important experiences in helping him develop the widening relationships needed for school.

If, however, your child has been only inside his own neighborhood, or inside his own back yard, you may want to take him to visit other children his age, or invite them to your home. It might be well to start with one new friend at a time, and see how he reacts. It is important to keep this casual, and fun. Keep in mind that gradual growth is the idea, and move just one step at a time beyond the familiar.

Because the teacher will be playing such a big role in your child's new life at school, you also should consider how he reacts to adults. Here again, if his experiences have been limited, help him to branch out by meeting new, unfamiliar grown-ups. Perhaps a friend would be willing to take him on an outing to the park, or just come to visit. Make this gradual and easy for your child. You want it to be an enjoyable experience so he will want to do it again.

If a child has a nice, warm feeling about a number of adults, it will be much easier for him to develop the same kind of feeling for the teacher. If, however, the child has had no meaningful relationships with any adults other than his parents, he might be frightened by the starting-to-school experience.

Drive past the school with your child, and show him where his room will be, if you know, or which door he will use. If he is to walk to school, walk there and back with him several times. If he is to ride in a car pool, it would help him to know the other children he will be riding with. If he is to take a bus, show him the bus stop and tell him what it will be like.

There is no need to make a big production out of any of this. It is just a matter of showing the child, and casually referring to the fact that this is what he will be doing. The fewer surprises he has later, the better.

Many schools hold what they call a "spring orientation" or "spring round-up" for children entering the next fall. If your school does this, be sure to take advantage of it. Learn what you

can expect from the school, and what the school expects from you. If there is no such formalized program, perhaps you can arrange to visit the school before your child starts in the fall, to learn how you and the teachers can best cooperate.

Remember, teachers are accustomed to working with children of varying abilities and different interests. As a matter of fact, for many teachers, it is the differences in children which make them all delightful. It is true that teachers probably work best with children who are interested in new activities, and who can accept reasonable limits.

However, your child does not have to be perfect, and his teacher won't expect him to be. For your child's sake, it is better that he is comfortable and natural, than that he go to school feeling uneasy or afraid.

Going to school is a big step for children, but most will take this step with a feeling that they are more grown-up if you have anticipated well, and planned to help them get ready.

— Two —

Prepare Your Child Emotionally

When your child starts school, he is embarking upon a rich, new experience, but he is also venturing into the unknown. He is setting forth on the path to independence. But he is also leaving behind the snug, comfortable world he has known.

There are many things you can do as a parent in the years and months prior to school which will help your child build his self-esteem and prepare him to take new situations in stride.

One way to discover how a child may react to school is to observe how he explores the world around him.

Some children reach out eagerly to new experiences. Others are disturbed by the slightest departure from the familiar. Some children may engage in a frenzied effort to explore everything at once. Others may feel uncertain of themselves and withdraw, because by doing nothing, they run no risk of doing the wrong thing.

If a conference is planned with the teacher before school starts, you may be able to provide her with some information about how your child characteristically responds to new situations. With this information, the teacher may be able to adjust the demands the school makes in terms of what the child is ready to do.

It is important that you accept your child as he is, and show respect for his own individual growth patterns. Be realistic in your expectations.

For instance, if he wishes to put a difficult, new puzzle together by himself, stand by to offer a helping hand if the task is a little too difficult. But help him only to be successful himself.

If, however, he is the type who won't try anything new and difficult, give him help getting started, and lots of encouragement. Show him you are willing to help him if he needs it but, with a good deal of reassurance over a period of time, gradually withdraw from what you know he can do himself.

All this is not as easy as it may sound. Of course, it is quicker and easier if you just jump in and do it for him. Also, it is often difficult to know when a child can really do something on his own or whether he needs help. Your task is to keep your expectations in accord with his growing abilities. Don't expect too much, don't settle for too little.

Consider your child's individuality as an asset and try to help him develop and extend his interests. Often his interests will be a reflection of family interests, and this will be a real joy to him and to you, because you'll be happy in the sharing. If yours is a family where collections are popular as hobbies, even a five-year-old can be helped to start his own collection. But the things he collects should be those things which interest him.

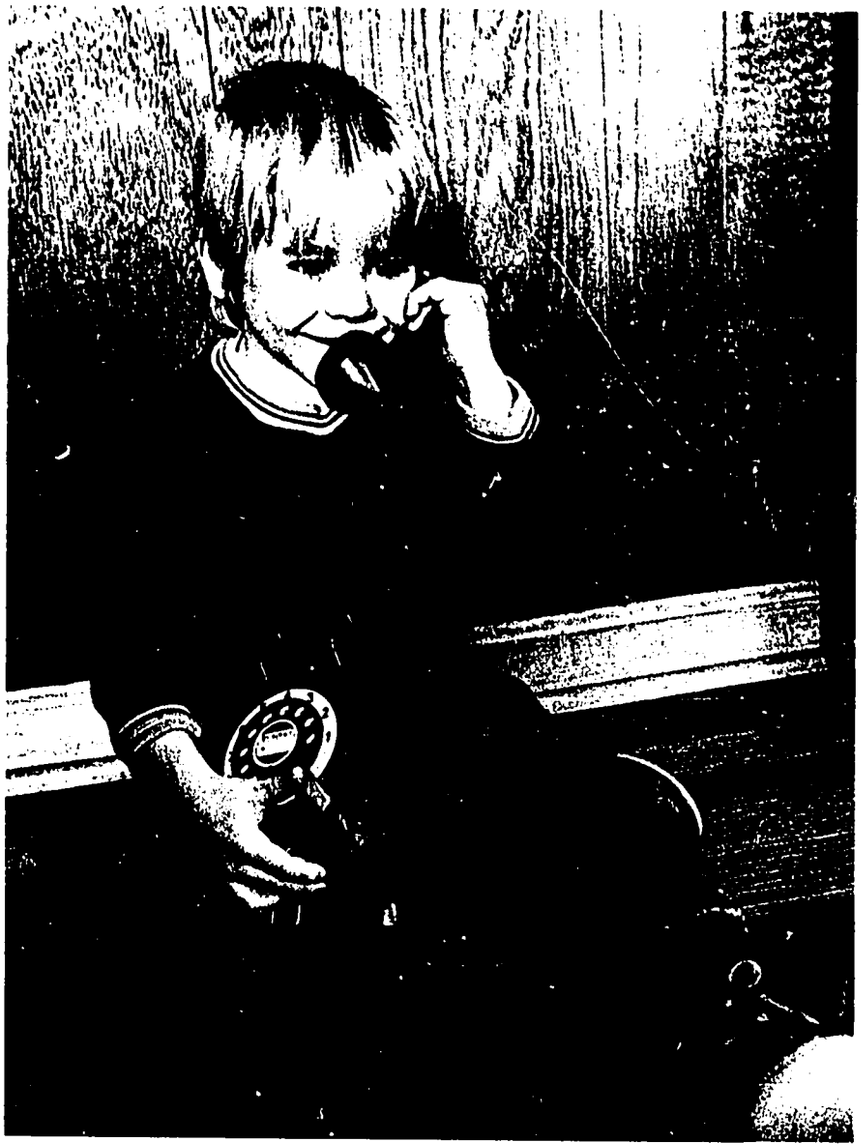
It is a good idea to keep an ear cocked to what other youngsters tell your child about school.

Some youngsters like to scare children with statements such as, "They won't let you do that in school" or, "If you act that way in school, they'll think you're a baby." Sometimes youngsters like to describe school as a hard, unhappy place where you have to work all the time and someone is waiting to pounce on you if you step out of line.

Try to avoid having this kind of talk around your preschooler, and certainly do not permit your older children to use school as some sort of threat.

At the same time, avoid using such comments as "You'll soon be going to school, and boys who are big enough to go to school don't do things like that." These kinds of comments raise doubts in the child's mind about his ability to cope with school when he gets there.

It is important, too, in the words of the old song, to "accentuate the positive." Assume from the beginning that your child will want to go to school. Never even mention the idea that he might not want to go, or that he might not like it when he gets there.



Going to school should be considered by the child as a normal, everyday activity. Father goes to work, perhaps mother goes to work, the older children go to school, and *he* goes to school, too. It needs to be accepted that this is what he will do.

It may very well be that after he starts school, he will come home one day and tell you he doesn't want to go again. This happens, but don't make a big thing of it. You will, of course, ask him why, but don't be surprised if he has trouble explaining.

It is usually a very good idea to talk with the teacher to see if anything may have happened in school which could have caused this reaction. The teacher may be as surprised as you are. Hopefully, she will be able to help you think through the situation and look for clues, either in what happened at school or on the way there.

One thing you should be very firm about is that the decision as to whether or not he goes to school is yours and not his. By all means avoid a discussion of the problem in his presence.

If you decide that he should

go, then be matter-of-fact about it, and take him there with as little objection and further discussion as possible.

If you decide that staying home for one day might be a good idea, then by all means, do not entertain him throughout the day. Let him discover that his playmates are all at school and everyone else is busy and it's boring to stay home. This may be all it takes to have him ready for school the next day.

No matter how well you plan, things do happen. It is a bit unfortunate if starting to school coincides with the family moving to a new home, or to a new city, or with mother taking a job, or with the birth of a new baby.

It is not always possible to time these things as you might choose, but it is well to know they can make a big difference, and you will have to make allowances. Under these circumstances, you should be prepared to set aside some extra time for undivided attention to your preschooler, even though your time may already be limited by other demands.

Many parents feel mixed emotions when their child (particularly a first-born child) is ready for school. There is the urge to see the child grow strong and independent, but also the urge to hold onto him. Although such feelings are perfectly normal, they can cause distress.

Whatever you may feel, whether it is gladness or sorrow, the time does come when your child must go. If you have prepared him and prepared yourself for the inevitable day, then it can be a truly wonderful experience for you both.

— Three —
Broadening Your Child's Background

The child's world begins to expand as soon as he is born. Just how much it expands, and in which directions, depends on you. It depends on the experiences you plan for him, the places you take him, the materials you provide for his use.

Creating new interests and broadening your child's experiences is one of the most delightful aspects of parenthood. It also is the best possible way to prepare him for entering school.

This requires thought and planning, and it certainly means more than just plumping him down in front of a television set to keep him quiet and out from underfoot. There is much to be learned from watching television, of course. It brings the entire world right into your living room. However, too much of that learning is passive, and you want your child to be actively engaged in the process.

The famed French pyschologist Piaget says the more experiences a child has, the more responsive he is to even more experiences, and the more he can assimilate from these events into his background.

This does not mean you should rush around and provide a lot of experiences just before your child starts school. The process is a long-term activity. It really begins when your child is an infant and begins to explore those things in his environment which attract his attention.

Let us begin with one of the first things a parent notices about a child – his often insatiable curiosity. Encourage it,

by all means. It is through curiosity that we all learn.

Respond to your child's curiosity in a positive way. For instance, if the family has a new pet kitten, encourage him to pet the kitten, pet it yourself, and then talk to him about the way the kitten's fur feels.

As long as he is interested in finding out more about the kitten, gently encourage him with a reassuring smile and an occasional question. Frequently you can prolong his curiosity and his interest with questions such as these: "Have you noticed his nose?" "Did you see that funny tail?"

But continue the questions only as long as the child is interested. Remember, if you try to make a "lesson" out of the situation, he may lose all interest.

Remember, too, that there is a real art in answering questions. A straight "yes" or "no" does little to enlarge a child's background. Try to phrase your answer so that it provides a little more information than the child has, and perhaps follow that with a question of your own: "What do you think?" or "Why do you ask?"

Always try to avoid putting off a child's questions with "I don't have time," or "Wait until Daddy (or Mommy) comes home." When you finally have time, or when Daddy comes home, your child probably won't care what the answer is, but he may very well remember that you didn't answer the question when he wanted you to, and he may decide not to bother you again.

Take care to avoid answering a child's question so completely that you bore him with too

much detail. If you tell him more than he wants to know, he will tune you out before you finish.

It's a good idea, too, to go to your encyclopedia or another reference book occasionally to answer a child's question. Whether you really need to do this or not, you ARE showing the child that books are a source of information – and this is part of the motivation you want your child to have for learning to read.

Every parent knows, of course, that when a child goes to school, he must spend a great deal of time just listening. What isn't so obvious is that a child must be taught to listen, and in order to learn to listen he must be listened to. **(We will deal with this in greater detail in a later article.)**

When you talk with your child, be sure you have his attention. Do not make a practice of saying everything twice, otherwise he will learn to listen only the second time. Expect him to listen the first time.

Similarly, when your child talks, be sure you give him your attention. Don't make him say everything twice. In order to learn to listen, he needs to know how it feels to be listened to, and to know that the things he has to say are important to other people as well as to himself.

The more you make your preschool child a fully participating member of the family, the more mind-stretching experiences he is certain to have.

Within the limits of his endurance, take him with you on trips . . . on family excursions to the zoo or museum . . . to grocery stores where he can help with the shopping . . . to the post office . . . to the shoe repair shop . . . to the woods to pick wild flowers, or to the park.

Wherever you take him, the world can be a wonderful place for a child, full of questions to be answered and new things to learn.

Small children like to help around the house (unfortunately, many outgrow this!!). While it may seem that what they do is more hindrance than help, it is important that they be given the opportunity to help, and to begin sharing in small responsibilities as soon as they are able.

Both girls and boys like to help with the cooking. They can help Mother with all the simple recipes, such as gelatine or pudding or uncooked frosting. They particularly like cooking when there is action involved – stirring, beating, scraping or spreading. They also enjoy measuring, and like to talk about the color of ingredients, and feel their textures.

And, if you read to him from a recipe, it will demonstrate another way that reading is useful.

It is just as important that both boys and girls learn to help Father.

They can help wash the car, rake the leaves, work in the garden, and learn to handle simple tools.

Granted, pre-schoolers aren't much help, and whatever tasks they do you may have to do over again. But that isn't important. What *is* important is that the child is learning more about the world he lives in, he is learning new words, and he is learning the meaning of responsibility.

All of these things will be invaluable when he starts school.

– Four –
Selecting Toys and Games

The toys and other play materials you select for your child can make a tremendous difference in preparing him for the experiences he will have when he starts school.

Children develop in many ways between birth and the start of school, and toys should be provided which spur this development and help them learn and gain understanding about their world.

This raises a double-edged question: what does the toy do for the child, and what will the child do with the toy? It does no good to buy the most educational toy on the market unless the child likes it well enough to play with it. By the same token, Dad may get a tremendous kick out of an electric train, but it just isn't appropriate for a preschool child.

So choose your child's playthings with care. And remember always that safety is a prime consideration. Watch out for rough edges, sharp points, small parts that can be swallowed or can injure an eye. Make sure the paint used on the toy is not poisonous, for it almost certainly will find its way into the child's mouth.

All toys can be unsafe if not used properly, but the toys themselves should not present special safety hazards.

All preschool children need and enjoy the experience with toys and play equipment that develop the large muscles. The backyard gym set is a good example, but equipment this large isn't always feasible. Any kind of climbing equipment will serve the same purpose. Tricycles, wagons and wheelbarrows are other examples of toys that stimulate large muscle development and are greatly enjoyed by youngsters of this age.

Toys that develop the smaller muscles are needed, too. These would include wooden or cardboard blocks, tempera paints with large brushes, and plastic containers for water and sand. Simple put-together toys such as puzzles and peg sets also fall into this category, as well as blunt scissors, large crayons and pencils with big pieces of paper. The first puzzles should contain just a few pieces, so they can be easily put together. As the child grows older, more difficult puzzles are appropriate.

In the preschool years it is generally wise to avoid very small pieces of paper, very small pencils, and other playthings

which require a high degree of coordination. It usually is better, for instance, to let a small child scribble all over a large piece of paper with a crayon than to try to have him keep his "drawing" inside the lines of a colorbook.

Provide playthings that stimulate the child's curiosity, imagination, and creativity. Some of the best – and cheapest – things are raw materials such as sand, clay and paints. A small child can use these things to advantage at nearly every stage of his development.

In the same category are such simple things as magnifying glasses and toy magnets.

Blocks are great, too, for stimulating the imagination. For best use, the blocks should be large enough so that the child can build let's pretend houses, automobiles, and airplanes. Wooden blocks of this size are expensive, but cardboard versions are available at a reasonable price.

Large cardboard cartons from the grocery store can become houses, caves or whatever the child can imagine. And don't throw away the smaller boxes, for with a little help from you, they can become service stations, doll houses and the like.

With materials found at home you can make other stimulating toys such as stick horses, bean bags, puppets and various kinds of noise makers. Let your child help you make these things. He'll have as much fun helping you as he will in playing with these things later.

Young children like to play house, and this is something that comes quite naturally to them. The miniature household equipment given a child should be quite simple, but strong in construction.

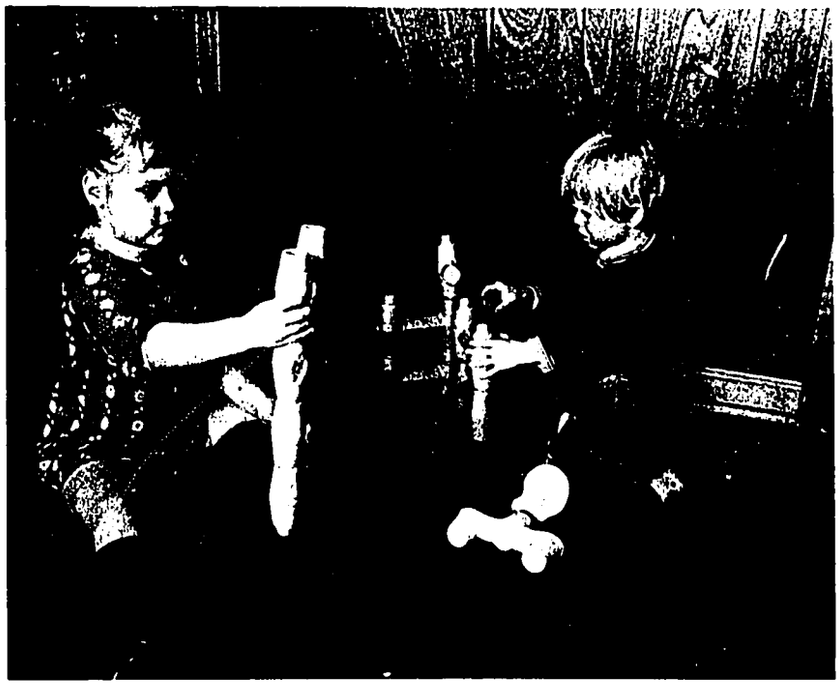
For instance, the play irons that little girls love should have no cords or heating elements. The trucks and cars for little boys should be the simple, easily manipulated kind that can be pushed along rather than the more complicated wind-up sort.

Your child should have a generous supply of toys that are helpful in building a good background for reading, writing and other school skills. We will take this up in more detail in the next installment. Meanwhile, keep in mind that books and magazines should be easily available (and don't forget to utilize your local library).

Most children enjoy a blackboard. You may be able to purchase a special paint that will turn part of the wall in a child's bedroom into a blackboard. Alphabet blocks, dominoes, peg boards, large beads, a few very simple games which one or two children can play with an adult – all of these are immensely valuable in building readiness for school.

Whenever possible, join your child at play. Give him the help he needs to be successful at putting together a puzzle. Share with him the joy he finds in making a clay bowl, or building an airport from his blocks. With your encouragement, he will undertake longer and more complex projects.

This does not mean you should always let him interrupt you when you are busy. But you should try to plan some time each day when you can help your child without that help interfering with your other responsibilities.



– Five –
Reading Readiness

As a parent, you quite naturally want to do all you can to help your child get ready to learn to read.

If you are giving your child the experiences that will broaden his world and increase his curiosity, and are encouraging him to look forward to starting school, as we have discussed in earlier articles, then you already are doing much to prepare him for reading.

There are, however, three specific things you can do:

– Help him increase his attention span (the time he is willing to devote to a specific activity).

– Help him develop an interest in books.

– Help him build his vocabulary.

The time that a child will spend with a single toy, or give to a single activity, is quite limited when he is only two or three years old. He probably won't spend more than a few minutes at a time on any one thing.

However, as he grows older, this time should gradually increase. This is an important factor in what teachers call "reading readiness." In learning to read, a child must be able to sit quietly and pay attention to the teacher, give careful attention to what is in the book, and watch what the teacher may write on the blackboard.

You can use everyday activities around the home to help your child increase his attention span.

First, it is important to learn which things are especially interesting to your child. Most children begin to show their special and individual interests quite early, so if you give your child a variety of experiences, you should have no trouble discovering what he particularly likes.

Help him expand these interests in a way that continues not only on one day, but over a period of time.

For instance, if he is especially fond of animals, take him to visit a zoo or a farm, or to see the neighbor's kitten or puppy, or to a pet store. Get him some books, perhaps from the library, with lots of animal pictures. Get some toy animals. Perhaps you can help him build a toy barn from a cardboard box, which he then can paint.

Whatever his special interest is, encourage him to expand that interest. But be casual about it,

don't turn these experiences into lessons or chores – and don't allow the child to become bored. Encourage his interest, don't stifle it.

The use of books and magazines provides an important way to increase your child's attention span. Learning to enjoy books begins as early as the first time you tell him a nursery rhyme or show him a picture on a printed page.

Most children like being read to even before they can talk very much. Reading to your child regularly – or taking him to the story hour at your local library – helps teach him that reading is a delightful experience. This is an essential step in developing his interest in reading. It is a good idea to build the "library habit" early in childhood.

When your child is able to handle books, you can check them out of the library or buy him some of the attractive, inexpensive books available in almost any supermarket or bookstore. Excellent books for children are also often available at rummage sales or shops.

You may be surprised at how quickly your preschooler finds favorite books and stories, and how often he will say, "Read it again." Chances are, you'll become tired of the story long before he does, but you should let his interests prevail.

Do more than just read the stories. Talk with him about the characters, explain words he might not understand, and see if he can tell you the story just by looking at the pictures. Help him find where the same word is used in different places. Play simple games with him that involve letters and easy words.

The written word is all around us – on television, on signs, in newspapers, magazines and books, on his toys, on cereal boxes. Usually the first letters a child is interested in are those in his own name, and he soon will recognize these letters in other places, too. ABC picture books, toy blocks and plastic letters are interesting and important to your preschooler.

The third important factor in reading readiness is vocabulary development. As mentioned earlier in this series, there are many ways you can provide your child the experiences that will help him increase his ability with words.

For instance, his trips to the grocery store may give him an opportunity to learn such words as shelf, sack, cart, bag, carton, butcher, clerk, and the names of different foodstuffs. But this will be true only if someone talks with him.

Wherever you go with your child, be alert to the potential for teaching him new words. Encourage questions, and answer them. And always encourage your child to talk with you.

He will undoubtedly make mistakes, particularly with pronouns and plurals. Avoid making an issue of these mistakes – merely respond, using the proper words. Your child will gradually begin to use the proper words without having been made uncomfortable about the way he talks.

Some children practically teach themselves to read through their insatiable curiosity. If your child is like this, by all means give him all the help he wants. But, don't try to push him faster and farther than he wants to go.

You want your child to be a good reader, certainly, but he also needs a wide variety of experiences with other children his age.

There is a great difference between encouraging your child, and pushing him. You are pushing when you show off to a neighbor how well he can do, when the only time you spend with him is on reading, and when you buy for him only the kinds of toys that are geared toward teaching reading concepts.

Encourage, but don't push!

– Six –
Mathematical Skills

Children establish the beginnings of mathematical skills and understanding long before they enter school.

Some of the judgments a child has been making for several years represent the beginning of the reasoning process, as when he gauges the space he needs to get his tricycle through the door, or when he takes a chair to climb up to the cookie jar in the cupboard.

When a child first learns to chant "one, two, three," he is using numbers but he is not really counting. Repeating the numbers shows an interest in the words, but they will not have a real numerical meaning for him until he uses them to count the marbles in his hand or the apples on a plate.

When a youngster holds up four fingers to show his age, he may know how many four is, but he will have no comprehension of what a "year" is.

Since a young child can best develop meanings through his own experiences, his daily play and work activities provide some of the best opportunities for the development of mathematical concepts.

He is interested in the numerals which identify the TV channel of his favorite program. He wants to learn to dial the telephone, and does so with his toy phone long before he can actually dial a real telephone. He soon learns that numbers identify houses and apartments and automobiles, and that they appear on clocks and on calendars.

Almost all young children have an early interest in counting which you can stimulate by such counting rhymes as "One, Two, Buckle My Shoe," and with the simple counting books available at the library, supermarket, or dime store.

Familiarity with number names is important for actual counting, of course, and it will be helpful to a child when he starts to count the number of pieces of candy in a bag, or the number of candles on a birthday cake.

Some children learn to count by playing games with adults or older brothers and sisters. A good example is a simple game using dice or a spinner which tells the player how many spaces to move forward.

When the child first starts to play such games, he will need help. He may be able to recite the number called for, and he may pretend to count the spaces,

but he will not likely have the concept of one-to-one relationship between space and number, and will not necessarily move the number of spaces counted.

Remember, the child's enjoyment of playing the game is the important thing. Be there to help, but do not make a lesson out of the counting. If he likes the game, he will play it over and over again until he *is* able to count the spaces. Counting the spaces is just part of the game, but you can be sure it will not be long before he realizes that he can get more spaces if he gets a six on the spinner than if he gets a two.

As you know, it is difficult for children to wait their turn when playing a game they enjoy. This is a good place for you to teach the ordinal numbers by stressing that Alicia is first, Timmy is second, and Bridget is third.

As you engage in your day-to-day activities, be alert to the possibilities of helping your child with numerical concepts.

At the supermarket, you may buy a pound of butter, a dozen eggs, a quart of milk, or five pounds of apples. At the department store you may buy a pair of shoes or a yard of ribbon. Use the words in your conversation with the child so that he becomes familiar with them and gets at least an inkling of what they mean.

Another activity involving measurement that children really enjoy is getting weighed and measured. They also enjoy helping chart their own growth in pounds and inches.

Cooking is an especially enjoyable and helpful activity for preschool children, and some of the incidental learning values in cooking involve measurement. A child can begin to learn such standard measures as teaspoon, tablespoon, and cup. Later, he will enjoy using these same measures as he plays with sand, sawdust or water, pouring it back and forth from one container to another.

Young children are interested in money as soon as they learn that it enables them to obtain something they want, such as an ice cream cone, a soft drink from a vending machine, a piece of candy, or a toy. You can help a child understand money by letting him handle it for simple purchases. Tell him the names of the coins as you give them to him, and help him pick out the coin he will need for his purchase. Since sizes of coins can be confusing, it may be easier for him to learn what coins are needed for a specific purchase, rather than how many cents are actually involved.

The vocabulary of mathematics is another area where there is an opportunity for a child to learn. Important to later understanding are such relative terms as more, less, taller, shorter, larger, smaller, younger, older, and concepts such as big, little, heavy, light, over, under, above and below.

If you consciously use these words in situations where he can

readily associate them with the meaning, his comprehension will be facilitated and he will gradually begin to use these words himself.

Telling time is beyond the comprehension of most young children. However, they can begin to use a vocabulary associated with time. Words such as now, soon, night, day, week, days of the weeks, hour, minute, and so forth, can be used in relation to his activities and those of the family.

All of the experiences we have been discussing build a background for understanding, but the learning proceeds very gradually. A few experiences may not be enough to enable the child to understand the meaning of some simple mathematical concept.

Inevitably, the child will be confused, but this does not necessarily mean that the confusion will last very long. Give him time to grow and learn, help him as best you can, and one day the ideas will fit together and the concept will be complete.

– Seven –
Learning to Listen

The ability to listen, and to make distinctions between similar sounds, is very necessary to success in school.

The ability to distinguish between similar sounds may determine how quickly a child is ready to move into reading. Consider, for instance, how difficult it is for the untrained ear of a child to distinguish between the sounds of "t," "b," "p," and "d."

You can help your child develop an awareness of sound when he is very young.

When he has learned to talk and has a reasonable vocabulary, play a simple question-and-answer game: "I hear the television, what do you hear?" "I hear the refrigerator running, what do you hear?"

When you first begin to go out for walks, talk to your child about the sounds he hears, and help him listen for different sounds.

In the city, one can hear the sounds of fire engines, motorcycles, trucks and cars, or perhaps the rumble of a subway train or the swishing sound of a street cleaner.

Away from city sounds, one can hear the roar of a jet overhead, the songs of birds, or the barking of dogs. A child can listen for Dad's car to turn into the driveway, for the newspaper to hit the porch, for his brother to skate up to the doorway.

You can play a game with your child by putting various objects such as beans, rice, a block of wood and a bell in a box, and ask him to identify the objects when you shake the box.

Another way you can help is to let your child experiment with the kinds of sounds he can make by hitting a drum with his hands or a stick, and with different degrees of force. Glass tumblers filled to different levels with water will produce different sounds when tapped lightly with a spoon.

Real musical instruments offer many opportunities for distinguishing sounds. If a piano is available, the child can easily learn to identify low notes and high notes. On a smaller scale, the same thing can be learned on a toy xylophone.

And it is very important that you watch your own speech. If you say "hep" instead of "help", he cannot hear the "l." If you say "runnin", "eatin" or "playin", he cannot hear the final "g." If you run sounds together and say "guh-bye" instead of "goodbye," he cannot hear the "d."

A child develops the speech patterns that he hears in his home and in his neighborhood. It helps tremendously if what he hears is correct. If the sound of the word as he knows it is different from the sound he will hear in school, he will find learning more difficult.

Thus far we have been talking about helping children to identify differences in sound. His willingness to *listen* to sounds, as in conversation or music, is a different kind of ability.

This willingness to listen is of great importance to the preschool child because (as we pointed out in the third article). when a child goes to school he must spend a great deal of

time listening. Learning to listen is a great way to increase the all-important attention span.

Music can be a great help in teaching a child to listen. Young children can become interested in many different kinds of music. With all the recordings which are available today, almost all homes offer opportunities for listening to music. (And don't forget that you can borrow many wonderful records at most public libraries.)

In the beginning, it is usually easier for a child to listen when the music is accompanied by a story, nursery rhymes, or songs.

The ability to listen varies greatly from child to child and from one situation to another. Try to make the music, the stories and the rhymes as interesting as possible, but be sure to stop as soon as the child's interest begins to wane. Nothing is gained by insisting that a child listen when he doesn't want to.

It will help if you choose a quiet place so that you don't have to compete with a television program or with older children. It will help, too, if you do not select a time to read or play a listening game when the child wants to do something else.

Select materials that are within the child's attention span. If in doubt, select a short story or a short record, and let him ask for more.

Sometimes, without knowing it, parents actually teach their children *not* to listen.

A parent may begin to talk too soon before getting the child's attention, or the parent may talk too much. His voice seems to go on and on, and the children simply tune him out.

It is a good idea to make what you have to say so interesting that the child will want to listen. Let him know that listening is important; do not habitually repeat explanations or directions. Avoid yelling above noise and confusion; go to the child, and get his attention before giving your message. Speak distinctly, loudly enough to be understood, but don't yell or scream at him.

As we have noted earlier, part of learning to be a good listener is being listened to – so set a good example.

Look attentively into the child's eyes when he is talking, and really listen to what he has to say. Try to understand the exact meaning, and if you don't understand, encourage him to talk further. Above all, give him a thoughtful reply so that he can have the satisfaction of a good audience.

It is important for a child to know what it means to be listened to, particularly since listening in a classroom is more difficult than in a one-to-one conversation, and since other children are less able to hold his attention than are adults. Much of his classroom listening will be to the teacher, but inevitably some will involve listening to other children.

– Eight –

Special Help for the Slow Learner

What does a parent do to help a child who seems to be developing at a slower rate than other children?

It is easy to say, "accept the child, be patient, have faith in his ability, and expect him to do as much as possible for himself." However, these words of advice are often hard to follow.

The very best attitude to help a child grow accepts him as he is and in no way infers that he should be different from what he is. One of the most important things you can do as a parent of a seemingly slow child is to identify what the child can do and help him move along to the next more difficult accomplishment.

Remember that because a child is slow in developing in one area does not mean that his ability is low in all areas. It is well to remember, too, that some world famous persons had difficulty in their early school years, such men as Winston Churchill, Albert Einstein and Thomas Edison.

We have said before that parents should not push children, nor try to force them to do things before they are ready. This is particularly important with slow learning children. Pushing and forcing will only result in less effective results than the child is actually capable of, or perhaps a withdrawal, so that he won't even try.

Being pushed gives him the idea that what he does is not good enough. This lowers his self-esteem at a time when he needs to feel self-confident and worthy of love and respect.

In his life at home, the slow learner needs a great deal of family help in being successful. He must actually feel success. Don't try to fool him. Any child can sense a false attempt to make him feel that he has accomplished something.

Expect the slow learning child to do what he is able to do and praise him for it, particularly if it represents an unusual effort on his part. If he can put on his shoes but can't tighten the laces, tighten the laces for him. If he can put on his shoes and tighten the laces, then help him with the tying.

This requires a parent to be unusually sensitive to the child's ability to withstand frustration as well as to the child's actual skills and abilities. Expecting too much, or failing to give help when it is needed, only complicates the situation. Give help patiently, just as long as it is needed.

As we have pointed out earlier, experiences that are interesting and stimulating are helpful to all children. The slow learning child may not be able to handle new experiences as quickly as other children, and he should not have to. You may find that sometimes you will have to make an extra effort to hold his attention, or you may need to keep the situation simple so as not to create confusion or overstimulate him.

Games usually are a bit too difficult for these children, and you will want to pay especial attention to their toys and other playthings. Materials like play dough or clay may be particularly good. Plain water is also a satisfying medium as it can

be poured back and forth from one container to another, it can be whipped into suds if soap flakes are added, and it can be colored.

Music, particularly music with a marked rhythm, appeals to children of all ages and ability. Toys which help develop muscular coordination are popular and valuable with slow learners. These would include peg boards, beads, hammer toys and simple puzzles with only three or four pieces.

Toys such as dolls, dishes, trucks and trains are usually popular.

The value of tricycles, wagons, climbing apparatus and simple equipment such as balls, should not be overlooked. It may take more practice to use them, but the feeling of satisfaction from large muscle activity is greater than from many other toys.

Spend a great deal of time talking with the slow learning child. Don't overwhelm him with a lot of things he can't understand, but talk about the toys he is playing with, and talk about the things you see while taking a walk. If he speaks in short phrases, such as "Danny go," you can say, "Yes, Danny may go to the store with Daddy." This provides a model that the child can imitate, without his being forced.

Help him learn to enjoy books and stories. Just because he doesn't speak much himself doesn't necessarily mean that he will not enjoy listening to stories. If his attention span is very short, try telling stories about him or his activities. Use ABC or counting books and talk about pictures, letters and numbers.

Make up simple games to play with sound. Help him enjoy the sound of words. He may enjoy silly rhymes and little poems.

Provide for companionship with other children, for one of the ways that children improve their speaking abilities is by talking to one another. He needs playmates of his own age, or just a bit younger, so that he is approximately equal with his associates. Older children may be too far ahead of him, and children who are too much younger will not provide the needed language stimulation.

The interest and stimulation of parents is an asset to all children, but children who are developing more slowly are in the greatest need of parental encouragement and approval.

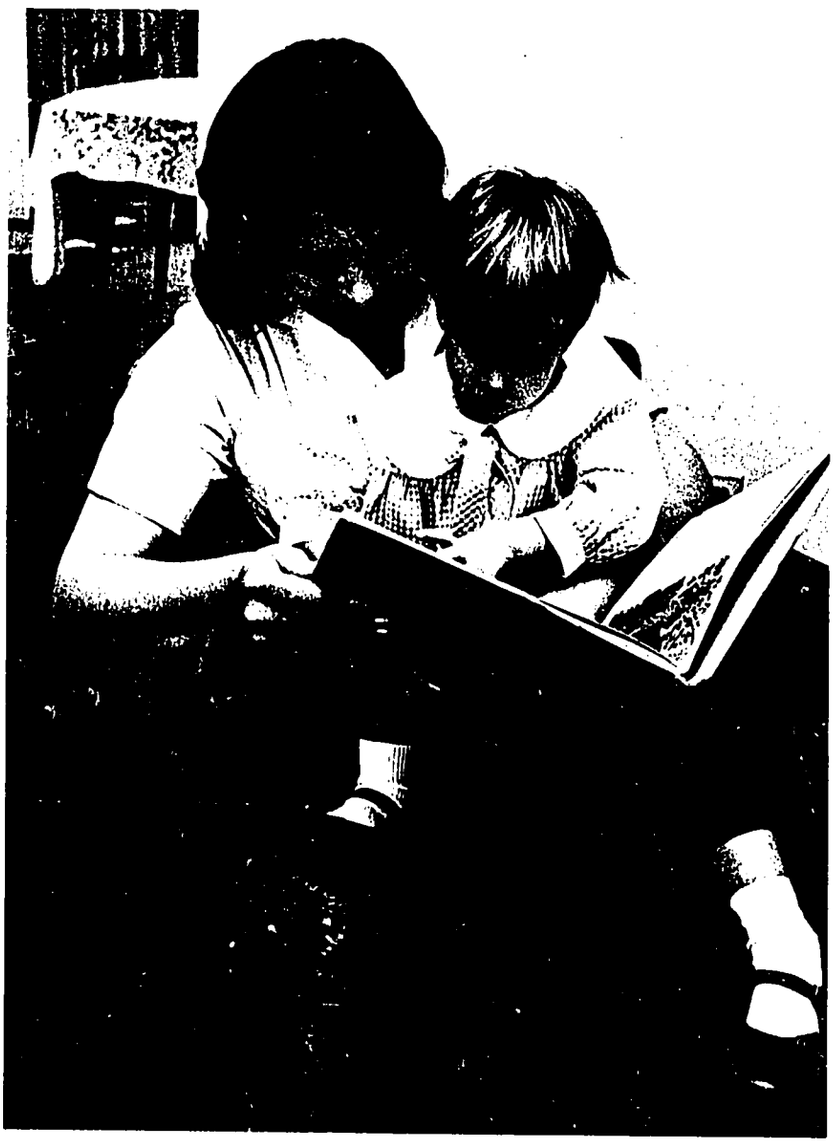
The slow learner urgently needs the patience of his family, because there will be many occasions when he will need more time to master a task than members of his family would like to give him. He will need much praise and approval for even minor accomplishments.

Many times there will be a temptation to do things for him, things that he really can do himself, just because it is easier and quicker. Resist the temptation.

When the slow learning child enters school, you will need to be especially reassuring. It may be very difficult for him to maintain his self-esteem at this time, because some of the school activities may be hard and frustrating. You must do everything you can to counteract his growing awareness that his classmates take in stride things which he finds only frustrating.

– Nine –

Special Help for the Fast Learner



Sometimes it is obvious to parents that they have a fast learner in the family, a child who learns to do things earlier than other children his age.

This is wonderful, yet it carries with it a special kind of responsibility. As parents of such a child, you will need to remind yourselves frequently that what you want your child to do is develop his full potential, *not* fulfill your ambitions for him.

Don't try to make your gifted child a reading, writing, musical or mathematical genius at the expense of his other interests.

There are a number of ways in which early learning manifests itself. Sometimes it is through the use of words unusual for the child's age, and an early and eager interest in books and reading. Sometimes it may be the ability to pick out tunes on the piano or carry a tune at an early age. Quite often the child will be unusually curious, asking endless questions and using materials in unusual ways.

Generally, all the things we have said about all preschool children in this series apply to the early learning child. However, there is a difference in pacing and degree.

Here, then, are some things you should do:

– Don't pressure the child. Encourage and help him, by all means, but make this stimulating and fun, never a chore. You may surround him with materials and experiences in which you think he might be interested, but there is a point at which you must let him decide how they are to be used. Sometimes they will not be used at all. Accept this.

– Enlarge his interests through new experiences. Seek experiences which you know he has not had before, particularly the kind which will support earlier learning. For instance, he knows something about milk. But does he know that both milk and butter come from a cow? Does he know how milk gets to be in cartons or bottles? Can he make a connection between the pineapple juice he drinks, the sliced pineapple in the can, and the fresh pineapple he sees in a store? Perhaps he has helped you with house plants, or in the garden. Does he know the conditions required to keep a plant alive and growing?

– Encourage his curiosity. One way is to keep new experiences coming so that the child has frequent opportunities to ask questions and gain new informa-

tion. Look for things that are new to him. Discuss what he observes, taking care to use words which he will need later to describe his experiences, and explain things as necessary. And once more for emphasis: this should be fun for both parent and child, not a lesson.

- Encourage his creativity. Some children have an unusually novel approach to materials such as clay and paint. Some are particularly responsive to music, and may even go so far as to make up their own songs. Some create all kinds of buildings out of blocks, or play for hours under a card table covered by a blanket, in make-believe houses and hideouts. These activities help a child become accustomed to expressing his ideas in ways appropriate to him. For your part, be prepared to supply the proper materials and show him how to use them. Some of these materials can be odds and ends that collect around the house – cardboard boxes, old clothes, transparent tape, and old magazines.

– Provide for social contact with other children. The years between age two and five are those in which children begin to be interested in playing with other children, and during which they begin to learn such essentials as sharing and taking leadership roles. Children who have had the other experiences which we have discussed, but who have had only limited contacts with other children of their own age, may be at a disadvantage when they enter school. This applies especially to early learners because, in view of their other interests, social contact may seem less important.

And now, the inevitable question: what about early reading?

By all means, encourage your child's interest in reading, but not to the exclusion of other things he should be interested in. You certainly want to establish the idea that reading is important, just as you would with any preschool child, but don't give him the idea that reading is the only thing that matters.

Prior to kindergarten, many bright children do not show the slightest interest in reading, although they do like being read to. Give them time. The important thing is that they learn to like books and understand the important role that books can play in life.

If he does show an interest in reading, help him. When he identifies a word, help him find that same word in another place in the story. Help him read the words under a picture. Be sure lots of beginner's books are available to him. Write down stories that he tells in a little scrapbook and read them back to him so he is certain to understand what writing and reading really are.

Always keep your teaching at an informal level. It is more important that a child start school with a good vocabulary and a wide range of experiences than that he have formal reading instruction beforehand.

Much the same thing can be said about writing.

The first thing a child will want to write is his name. You can show him how to do it, using the large capital letters which are the easiest for him to make. A child's muscular coordination may not be well-developed enough for him to write very much or very well. Do not be surprised, then, if his interest in writing is short lived, and if he is happy with the letters spread all over the page. Quantity and quality can wait, but help him feel satisfaction in however much he chooses to write.

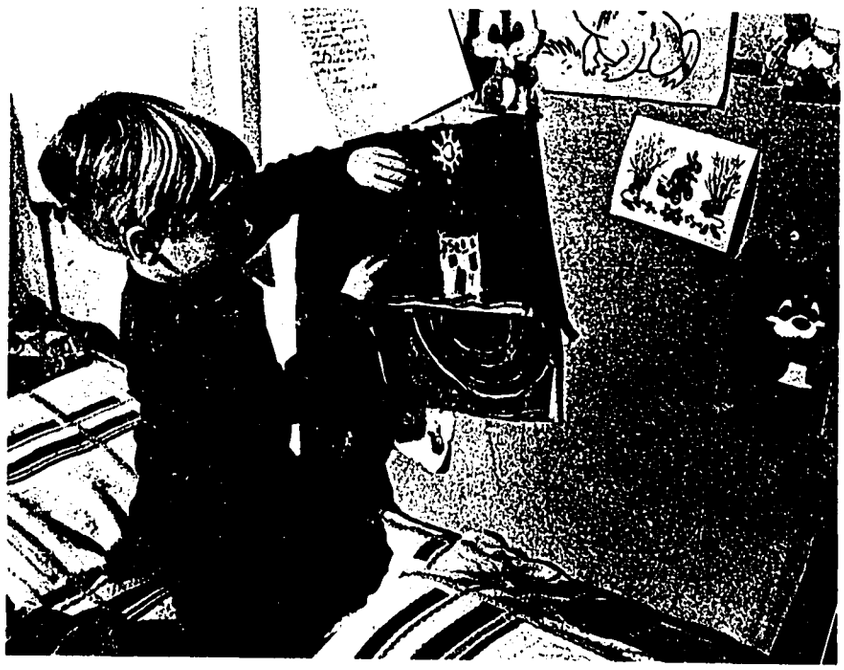
Early learning young children are a real delight because they can do so many unexpected things, and because they are able to experience so much joy from the things they know and can do.

Help them go to school as

enthusiastic learners, no matter what the area of learning, and help them be considerate of others who may not learn quite so rapidly as they.

These preschool years are very important in determining what kind of human being your child will become. This is a good time to discover his strengths, and build on them, but it also is a good time to discover his weak areas while there is ample time to strengthen them.

– Ten –
After Your Child Starts School



The first year of school is very significant in the life of a child. He begins to form his opinions and attitudes toward school, and begins the behavior patterns which will help him or hinder him as he progresses from year to year.

You as parents must be helpful and patient.

Some children take starting to school in stride, with little or no indication of the great difference it makes in their lives. Other children experience difficulties which are reflected in quite different ways, and for which the specific cause may never be identified.

How you treat the problem probably is more important than its cause, particularly if the child's new behavior is a direct result of his increased feeling of independence and growing up.

He may use language that he has never used at home and which you have no intention of permitting him to use. . . He may become quite bossy and independent, insisting on more freedom in some areas while at the same time needing more help with tasks he has long performed independently . . . He may decide the teacher is infallible, and relegate you to a second rate role.

Maintain your equilibrium. This should be a passing phase.

Your child will need you to maintain the limits to his behavior that you believe are essential. Part of his growing up is in knowing that you will protect him, and not let his behavior get out of hand. It may be wise to keep these limits to a minimum during this period, for it is important to the child to test his mental and physical muscles against the world.

Some children starting school revert temporarily to their earlier infantile habits such as thumbsucking, bed-wetting, or whining.

Be patient. Pay as little attention to these specific habits as possible, but do find extra time to spend with your child, and give him much reassurance that you love him. Do all you can to provide a home situation with a minimum of frustration for the child, particularly until going to school becomes an accepted part of his routine.

Most children are eager to share school experiences with their parents. Your response to the paintings he brings home is very important. It is better to say something like, "Tell me about it," than to shrug it off with, "Isn't that nice," or to criticize with, "Surely, you can do better than that."

You want to keep your child enthusiastic about bringing home his work, and to feel that it is appreciated. You may be able to fix a place in his room where he can display examples of his efforts, changing the display from time to time.

If your child is one of those who doesn't want to talk much about school, don't press him. Of course, you are interested, but frequently the best way to find out is not to ask directly. Show interest when he volunteers information, supply any materials he needs for a school project, and take an interest in the samples of art and other work he brings home. Eventually he probably will open up with you.

Sometimes you can bridge the gap between home and school by letting him share some of his things with the other children.

He can take to school a favorite record, for instance, or an

especially interesting book with good illustrations, or a tadpole found on an outing into the country. It is unwise, however, to send such things as toy guns, books that belong to an older brother or sister, games that have many pieces or toys that will break.

It is better for you to deal with the problem of his wanting to take something inappropriate than for him to be disappointed because the teacher did not want to use it.

Dress your child in clothing appropriate for school – clothing that can be subjected to the dirt of the playground and the paints and clays of the classroom. Clothing which is too tight is hard to manage. Missing buttons or broken zippers cause problems for both the teacher and the child. To help guard against loss, label all his clothing with his name or a mark he can identify or show the teacher.

Your child will continue to need a stimulating environment at home, but an added dimension must be considered: His time is not as free as it was, and he is having experiences at school which may lead to new interests.

After the child begins school, education is a shared experience between the home and the school, and one does not get along very well without the help of the other. What your child is interested in at home often depends directly on what he has been doing at school.

He may be interested in reading at home, while father is reading his newspaper and sister is doing her homework. But he may reveal none of this interest at school, where he would rather paint or work with clay. Both kinds of experiences are needed.

Continue to play games with your child, because the teacher seldom can give the attention needed to make games satisfying to children.

Also continue to read stories, because the closeness a child feels to his parents when being read to is not easily found in other ways. During this period he may become really interested in learning to read. Adjust your teaching to what he wants to know, and don't try to push him farther or faster than he wants to go.

The main thing is that you continue to spend time with him in activities that are intellectually stimulating and fun.

Finally, become as involved as possible in the activities of the school which are open to parents. This is the best way to become familiar with the school's program. It is also difficult for parents to help their children be successful in school if they have no knowledge of the program and the way teachers would like parents to help.

You can help your child tremendously by assuming your share of this joint responsibility.

Early Childhood Authority Helps Parents

Dr. Annie L. Butler, author of "Headstart for Every Child," has been deeply involved in the education of young children for more than a quarter of a century.

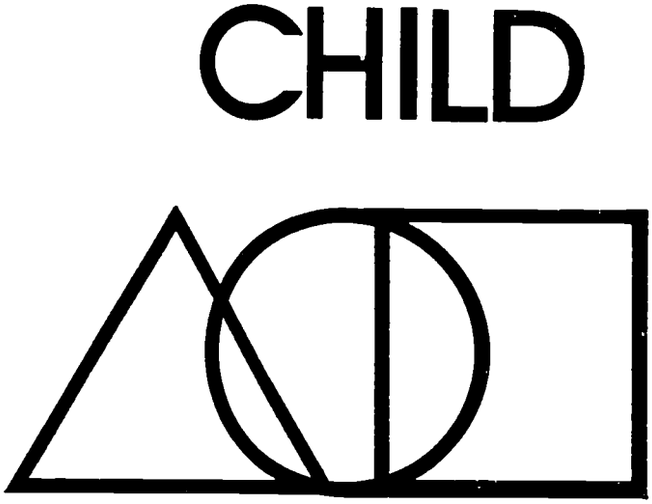
Dr. Butler has a Bachelor's Degree in home economics from Alabama College, a Master's Degree in child psychology from the University of Iowa, and a Doctorate in teaching young children from Teachers College, Columbia University.

She has been a classroom teacher of three, four, and five-year-old children, and a nursery school supervisor. While on the faculty of Teachers College, Columbia University, and Newark State College, she was supervisor of prospective teachers of young children. Dr. Butler has also served in a number of capacities as a consultant to Project Headstart and at the present time is an Associate Professor of early childhood education at Indiana University and is secretary of the U.S. National Committee on Early Childhood Education.

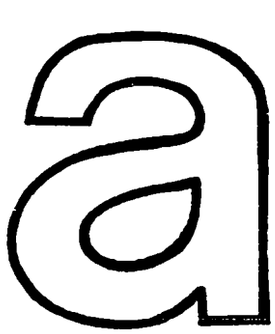
Dr. Annie L. Butler
Indiana University

Dr. Butler has written numerous articles for educational journals and is the author of "Current Research in Early Childhood Education" and co-author of "All Children want to Learn."

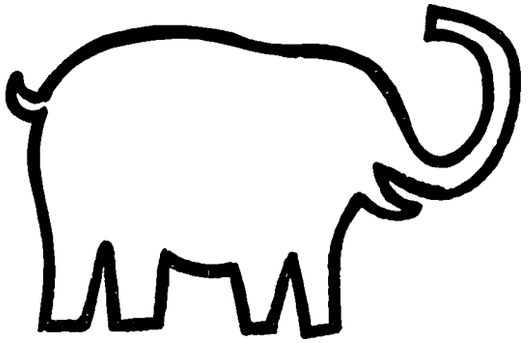
HEADSTART FOR EVERY CHILD



SHAPES AND COLOR PUZZLE



ALPHABET-OBJECT LOTTO



TRIP TO THE ZOO

AND LOTS OF OTHER GAMES

Alphabet-Object Lotto

Learning the individual letters is the very first step on the long and happy road to reading. In today's world, children see letters and words almost everywhere they look — in magazines, on billboards, on cereal boxes, in television advertising, on street signs, etc.

Parents should never try to force their children to learn to read before the children themselves are able and willing. However, all children should be encouraged to learn the alphabet, and see how individual letters are put together to form words.

There are numerous ways you can use Alphabet-Object Lotto to play simple but instructive games with your child: by memorizing "A is for apron," "B is for balloon," "C is for cat," etc., your child learns, for the first time, that those funny little lines that we call letters also represent sounds he knows. It is best for preschoolers to learn only one sound for a letter; there is plenty of time for him to learn there are different sounds for the same letter (as the "a" in apron and apple, the "c" in cat and nice, etc.). Ask your child to give you the letter blocks that say "T for tree," "K for kite," "I for ice cream," etc.

Use the master card to help your child learn his a-b-c's. Spread out a few of the letter blocks, and have your child hand them to you as you call them out. Start with only a few, and be patient until he learns all the letter names. You may have to repeat the name of the letter several times while he is looking for it.

Give your child one or more of the block capital punch-out cards and ask him to place them on the matching space of the master card. Later he can learn to match the lower case letters on the punch-out cards with the appropriate letters on the master card. The master card, with its block capital letters, provides a good model for children who want to start simple writing. Older children can also learn to make lower case letters from the punch-out blocks.

IMPORTANT: See the instructions elsewhere in this booklet for teaching your child to make letters.

Use the block capital letters to show your child how his name is spelled. Perhaps later you can do this with a capital for the first letter, with the other letters in lower case, but don't try to do this so early that the child is confused.

With older preschool children, use the capital letters to make simple words that he has seen and heard in the stories you have read to him. Also, with older children, you can say: "B is for balloon, isn't it? But B is for boy, too, and B is for ball. Can you tell me any other words that B is for" (butter, bed, bicycle, etc.)

Always encourage your child to ask questions about letters and words, but don't, repeat don't, make it a chore instead of a game.

The Manuscript Alphabet

Soon after a child becomes aware of the wonderful world of letters and words he probably will want to start writing simple words himself — especially his own name. Let him start with the block capital letters. (Joined cursive writing requires much more muscular coordination.) If your child is really interested in writing, or very adept at it, he can later use the small, lower case letters as well. Don't be surprised, or disappointed, if his first words ramble all over the page. And, don't expect the child to form the letters perfectly, but do encourage him to make them legible.

You will note on the letter cards that all except two of the lower case letters are formed as they are in books and magazines. In print they are "a" and "g", but for children's use they are the more simple "ɑ" and "ɡ".

Right from the very beginning of writing, the child should learn to write from left to right. The lefthand stroke of the letter should be made first, and it should always begin at the

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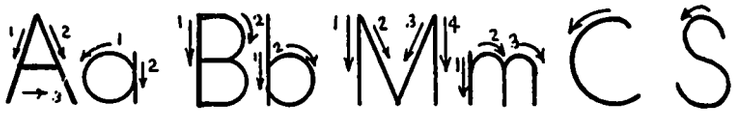
top. (or as near as possible, as in C and S.) Then the right hand stroke can be made, as in these illustrations:



All his life your child will be reading the English language from left to right, so be sure he learns to form his words that way, always beginning at the left and moving to the right.

A Trip to the Zoo

This game is played with the spinner, and with markers (checkers, different colored buttons, etc.) for each player. This is a game that requires parent participation, especially in the earlier years.

There are two variations for younger children, one with the colors and one with the numbers. The youngest children will recognize colors before numbers, so use this version first. When the spinner is flicked, the player moves to the "next red," the "next blue," etc. When the marker is placed on one of the animals of the zoo, the player gets an extra turn, with one exception: when the marker stops on the bear, the player has to move back two spaces. The first player to reach the "Finish" box is the winner. The game is played the same way when the numbers are used: the children move to "the next two," "the next four," etc.

As the children become used to the concept of numbers, they can move on to an advanced version. Instead of moving to "the next four," for instance, they move forward four spaces. This is the beginning of learning of what numbers really represent. This is a major step in learning, so don't expect your child to grasp the idea immediately. Encourage him, but <u>don't</u> try to push him beyond his interests or abilities.

You can add many other variations, depending on your child's interests and abilities. You can say, for instance, "the first one to land on the giraffe gets a cookie," or "the first one to land on the zebra has to stand on his head." If your child is particularly adept at numbers, you may want to introduce the idea of subtraction, by saying, "When the spinner stops on a red number you have to move back spaces." However, a word of caution: the game is intended to be fun, and all children love success, so be very careful about introducing penalties. Losing spaces isn't fun, and it represents a form of failure.

Encourage your child to think of new ways of playing this game. You will probably be surprised at some of the ideas he will have.

The Number Games

You will note there are two sets of number boxes, one showing only the number, the other with the little circles to show what those numbers mean. The goal, of course, is to have the child learn to count, and learn what the numbers 1 to 10 represent.

There are several simple but interesting games which can be played with the spinner. As with "Trip to the Zoo," start with the color version first. When the spinner stops on a color, the player places a marker – checker, small coin or button – in the appropriate box. If the player already has a marker in that box, he in effect loses that turn. Depending upon the age of the child, the winner can be the first one to have marker on 3, 5 or even all 10 boxes. The game is played the same way using numbers instead of colors.

There are many other simple little numbers games you can play with your child. For instance, place a pile of buttons on the floor or table, and have the child put one in the "1" square, two in the "2" square, etc. Or, have him flick the spinner. If the arrow stops on the number "3" have him put three markers in one or both of the appropriate boxes.

Again, let your child think up different ways to play this game. And, this is VERY IMPORTANT: whatever game you are playing with your child, do not keep him at it beyond his interest span; the game should be ended while it is still fun and while the child is still interested.

Shapes and C

There are four ways this
progressing from the easiest to
1. Group the pieces by colo
2. Group the pieces by shap
3. Group the pieces by size.
4. Learn to place the squ
proper holes.

Show your child that some
or saucer) are in the form of a
the form of a square. Use the
"triangle," so that he adds the
ready to try it, ask him to pl
largest circle, etc.

Listenin

We hear – and ignore – so m
sometimes forget that children
If you have a musical instru
child the great difference betw
There are many ways to do thi
many children have; by filling
levels with water, and striking
pointing out the difference betw
the growl of a dog.

When you are talking with
different sounds he can hear –
singing or children yelling. En
music on the radio or record pla

And ALWAYS REMEMBER
listen unless he is listened to;
you, and listen carefully when h

variations, depending on your
You can say, for instance, "the
gets a cookie," or "the first one
nd on his head." If your child is
you may want to introduce the
'When the spinner stops on a red
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to be fun, and all children love
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ber Games

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Shapes and Colors Puzzle

There are four ways this game can be used, gradually progressing from the easiest to the most difficult:

1. Group the pieces by colors.
2. Group the pieces by shapes.
3. Group the pieces by size.
4. Learn to place the squares, circles and triangles in the proper holes.

Show your child that some things around the home (a plate or saucer) are in the form of a circle, and some (a box) are in the form of a square. Use the words "circle," "square," and "triangle," so that he adds them to his vocabulary. When he is ready to try it, ask him to place the smallest triangle on the largest circle, etc.

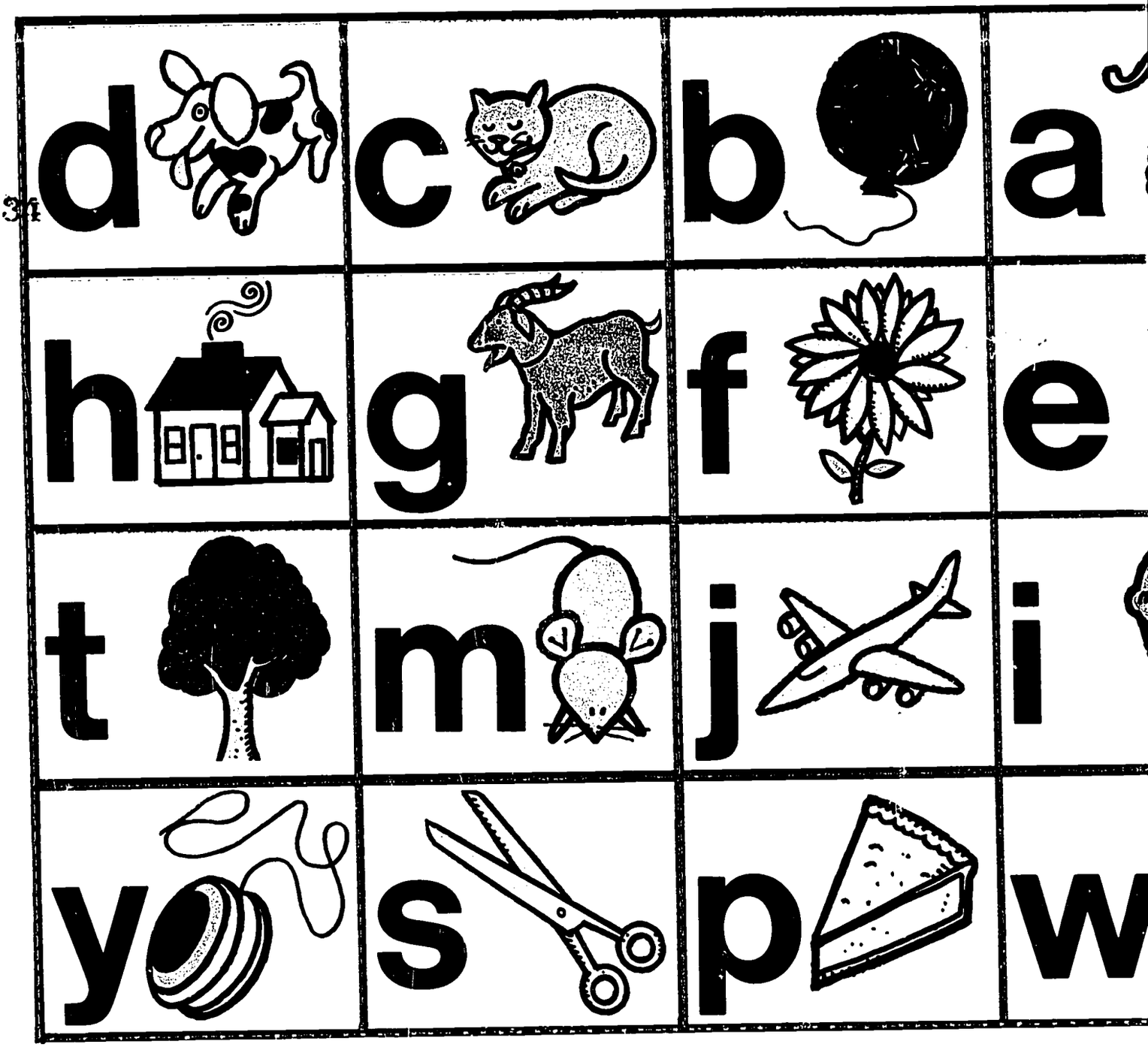
Listening Games

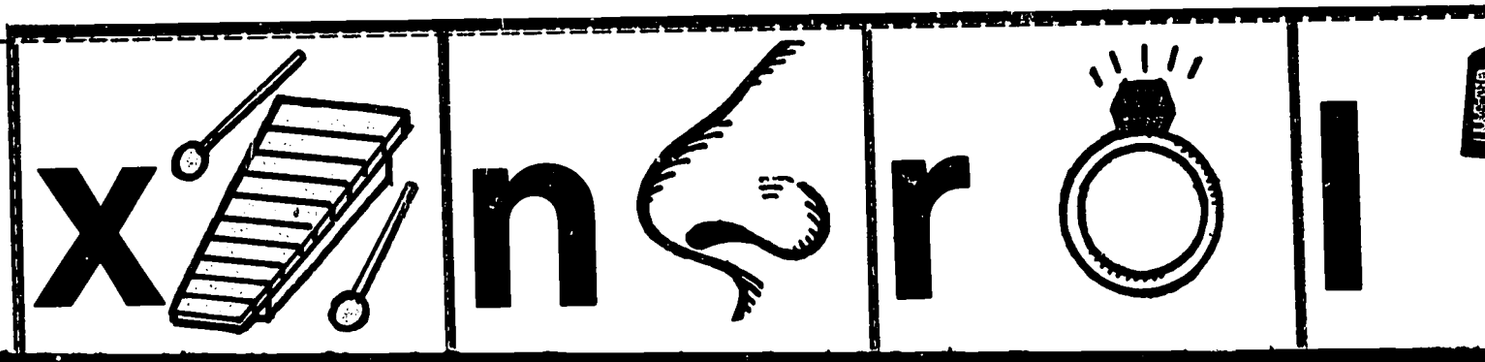
We hear – and ignore – so many sounds in life today that we sometimes forget that children must be taught to listen.

If you have a musical instrument in your home, show your child the great difference between a high note and a low note. There are many ways to do this: with a toy xylophone, which many children have; by filling glasses or tin cans to different levels with water, and striking them with a knife or spoon; by pointing out the difference between the yap-yap of a puppy and the growl of a dog.

When you are talking with your child, point out all the different sounds he can hear – a truck, a car, an airplane, a bird singing or children yelling. Encourage your child to listen to music on the radio or record player.

And ALWAYS REMEMBER: Your child can not learn to listen unless he is listened to; so encourage him to talk with you, and listen carefully when he does.





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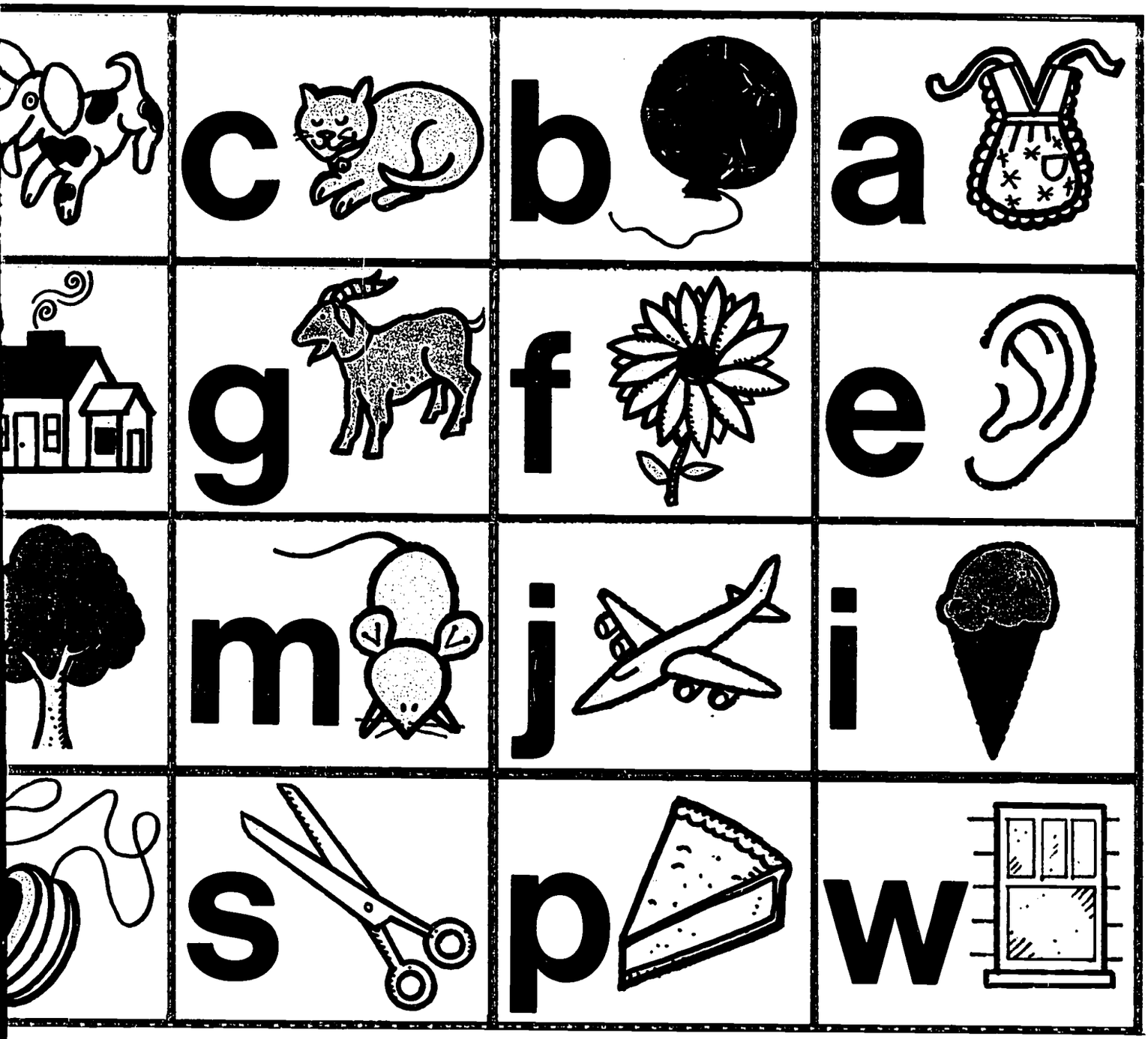

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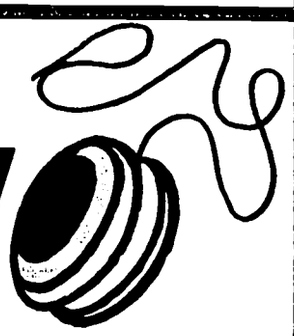
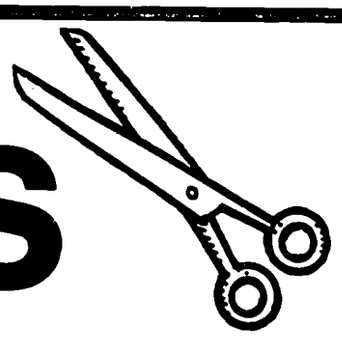
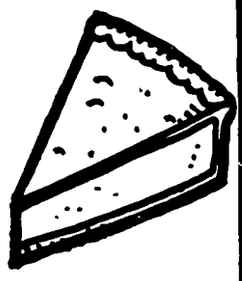
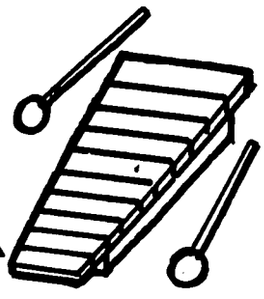
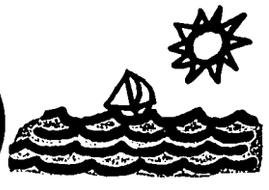
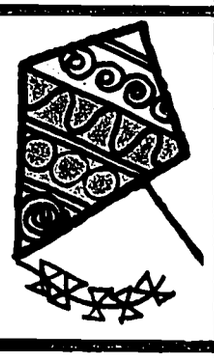
y 	s 	p 

x 	n 	r 
o 	u 	q 
v 	k 	1
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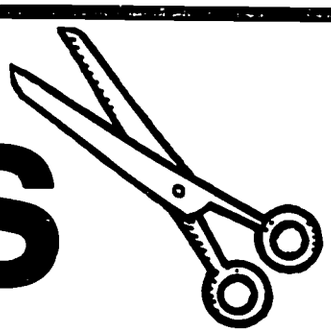
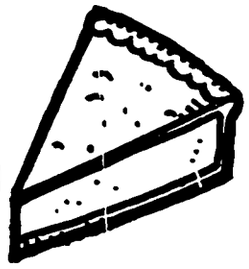
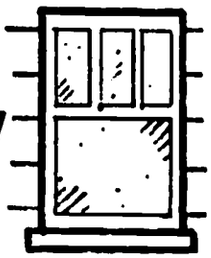
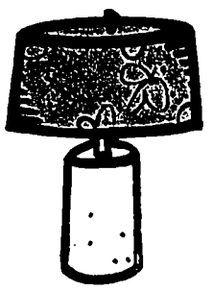
	s 	p 	w 
	n 	r 	l 
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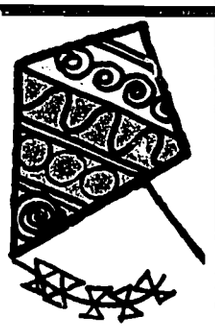
	k 	1	2
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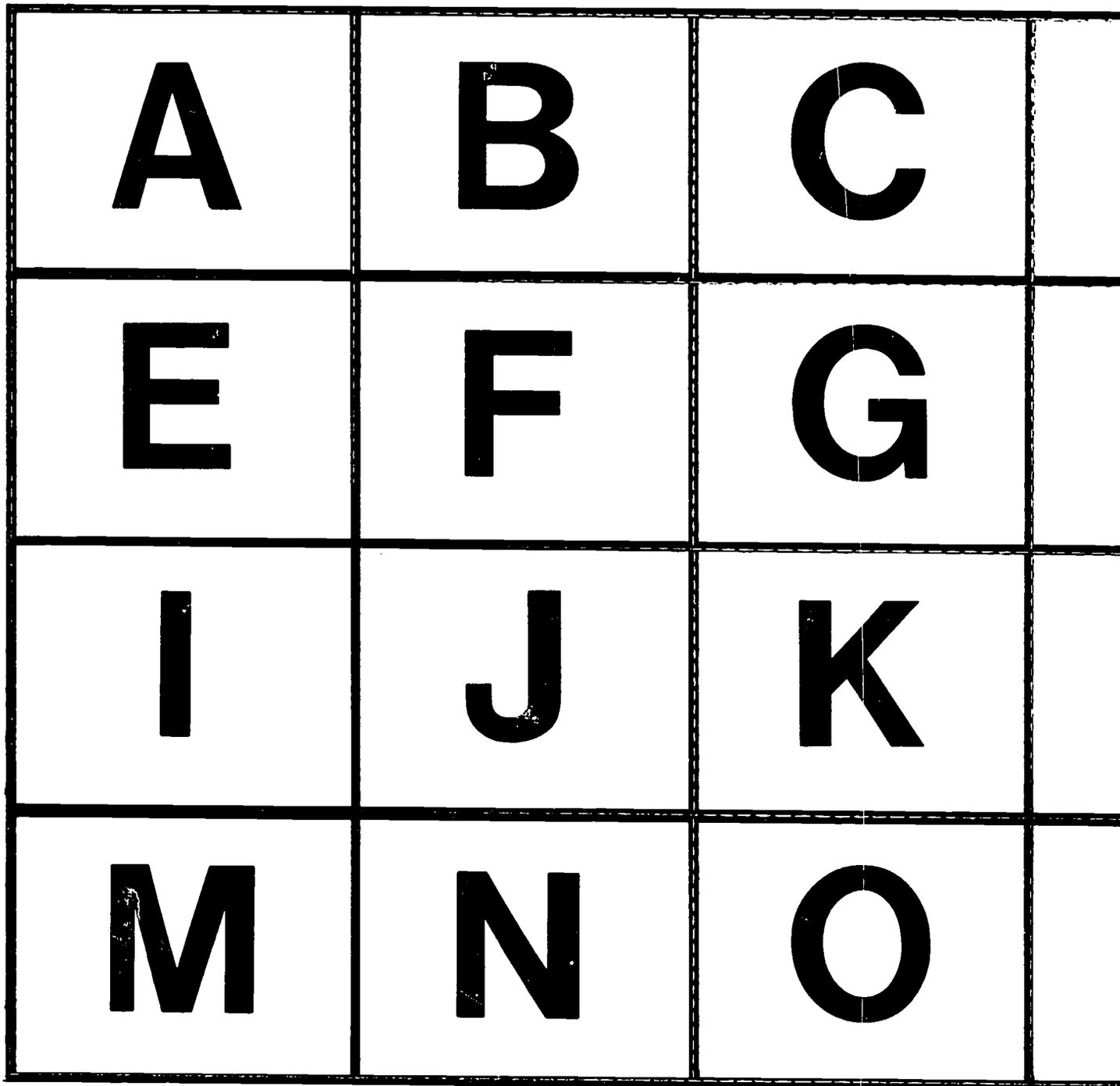
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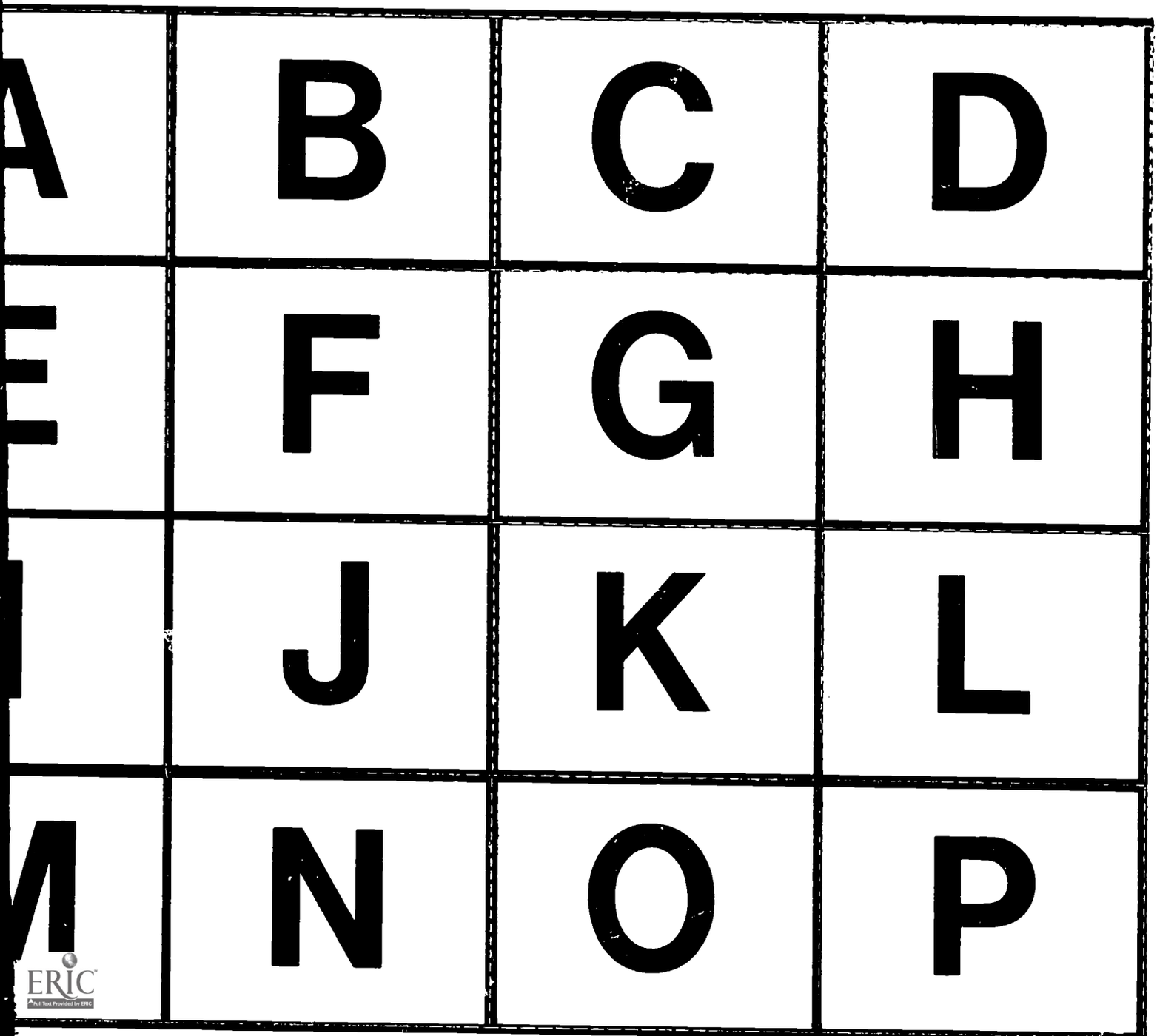
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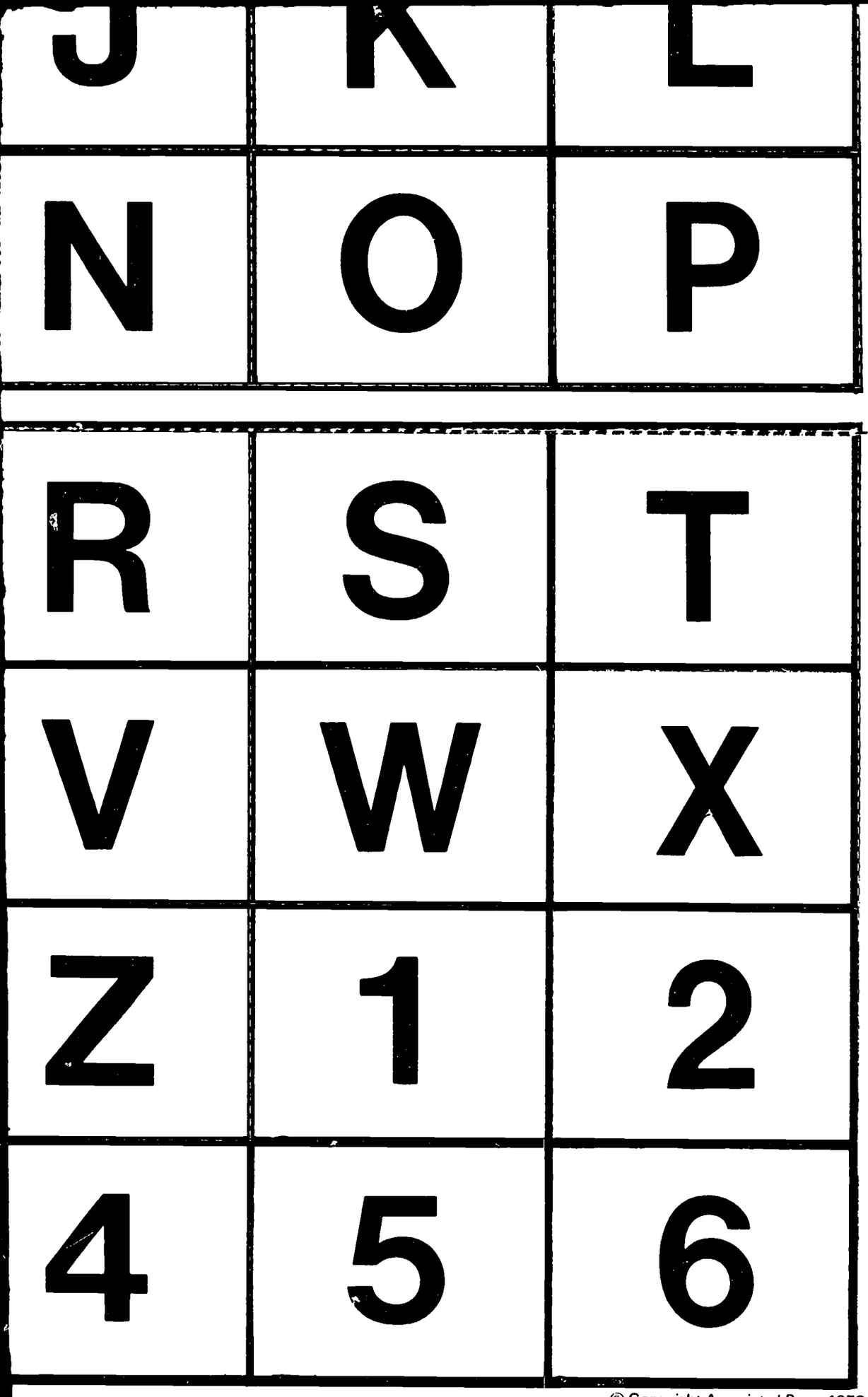

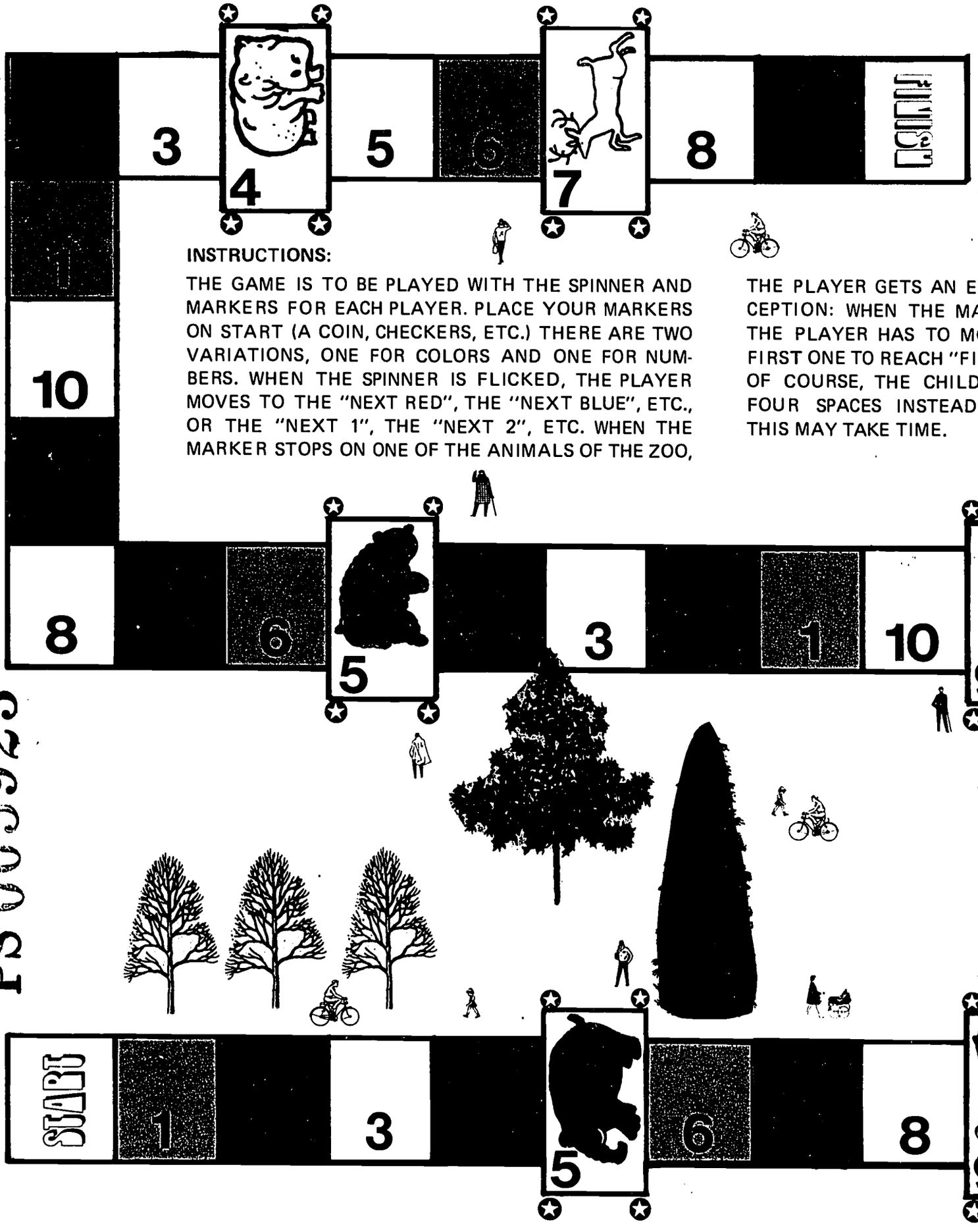

INSTRUCTIONS:

THE GAME IS TO BE PLAYED WITH THE SPINNER AND MARKERS FOR EACH PLAYER. PLACE YOUR MARKERS ON START (A COIN, CHECKERS, ETC.) THERE ARE TWO VARIATIONS, ONE FOR COLORS AND ONE FOR NUMBERS. WHEN THE SPINNER IS FLICKED, THE PLAYER MOVES TO THE "NEXT RED", THE "NEXT BLUE", ETC., OR THE "NEXT 1", THE "NEXT 2", ETC. WHEN THE MARKER STOPS ON ONE OF THE ANIMALS OF THE ZOO, THE PLAYER GETS AN EXT CEPTION: WHEN THE MARK THE PLAYER HAS TO MOVE FIRST ONE TO REACH "FINIS OF COURSE, THE CHILDRE FOUR SPACES INSTEAD O THIS MAY TAKE TIME.

A TRIP TO THE ZOO

TS AN EXTRA TURN – WITH ONE EX-
THE MARKER STOPS ON THE BEAR,
S TO MOVE BACK TWO SPACES. THE
ACH "FINISH" IS THE WINNER. LATER,
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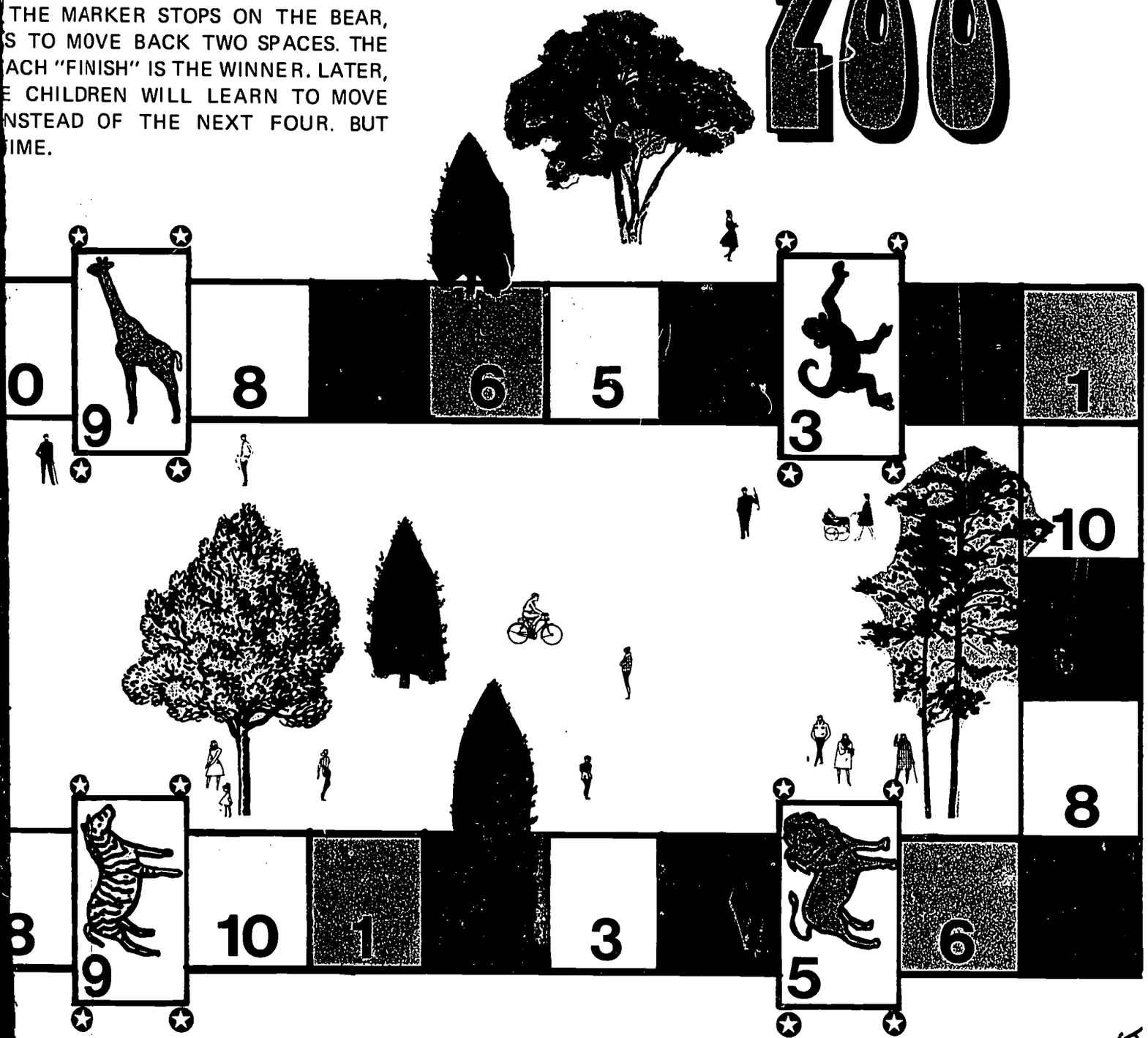

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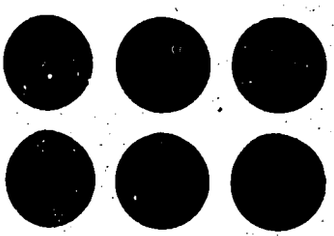
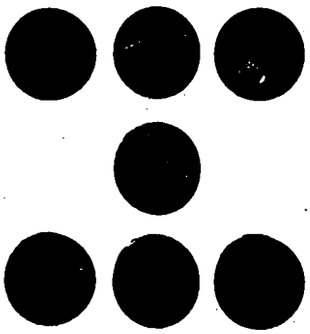
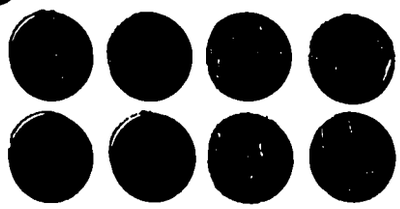
6 	7 	8 
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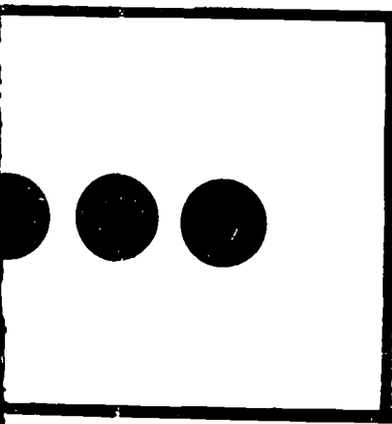

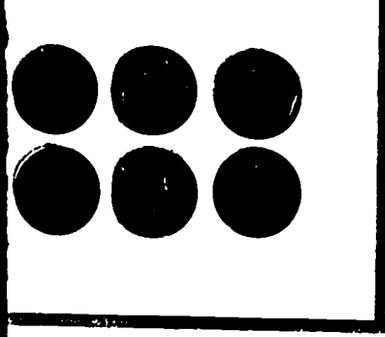

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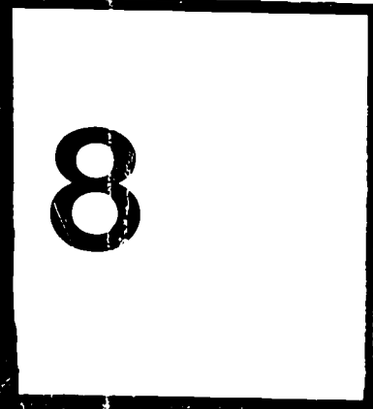

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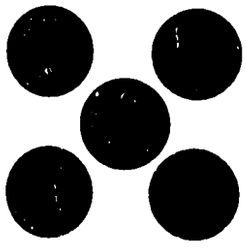

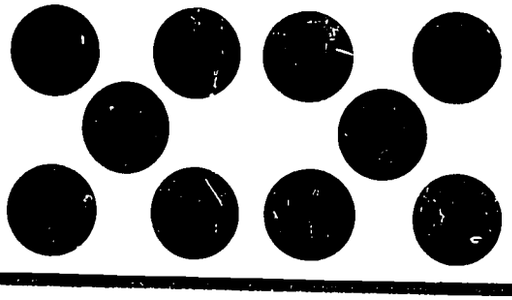

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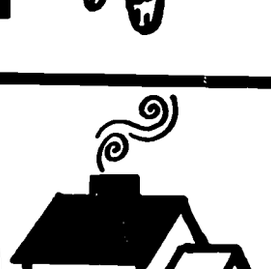
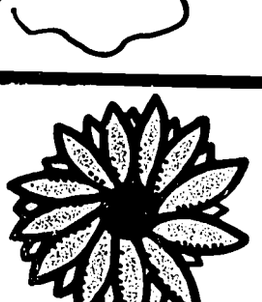
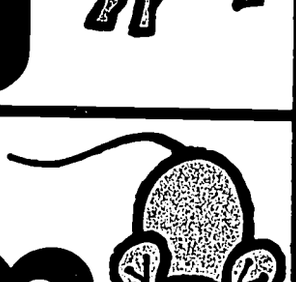
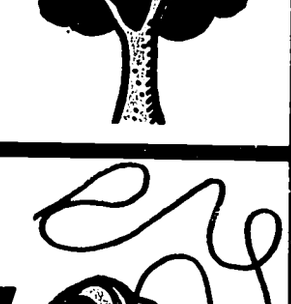
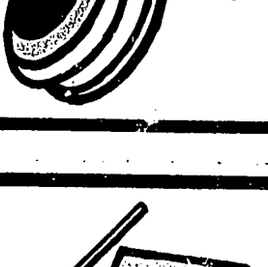
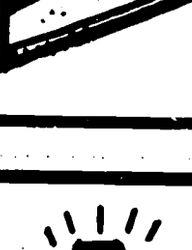
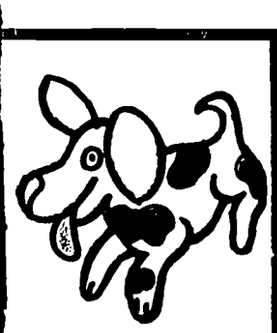
h 	g 	f 	e
t 	m 	j 	i
y 	s 	p 	w

x 	n 	r 	l



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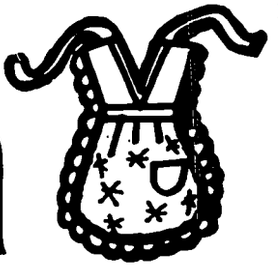
a 

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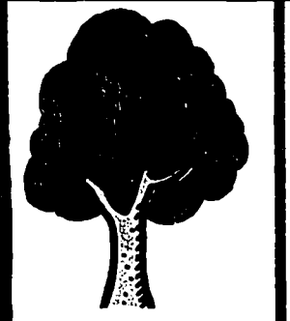

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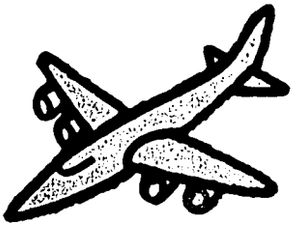
j 

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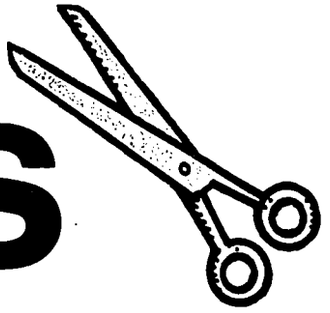
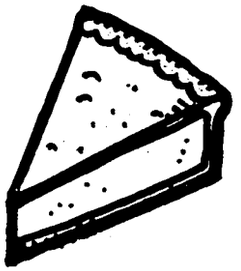
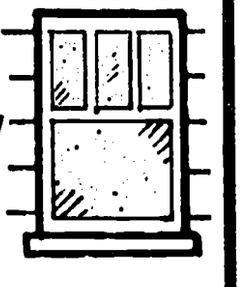
s 

p 

w 

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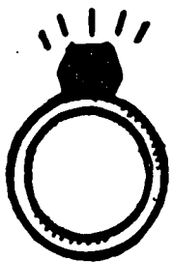
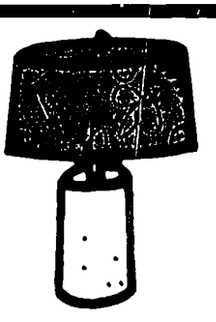
r 

l 

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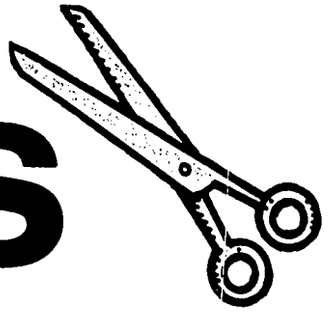
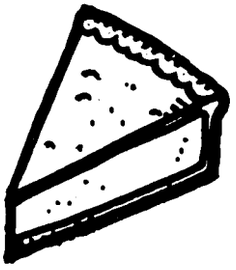
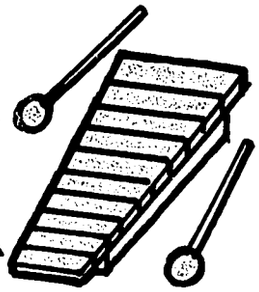
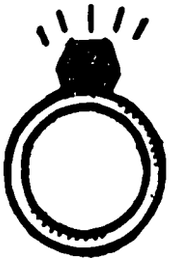
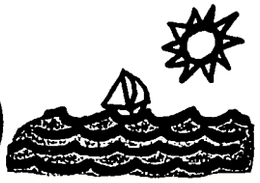
y 	s 	p 	v
x 	n 	r 	l
o 	u 	q 	z
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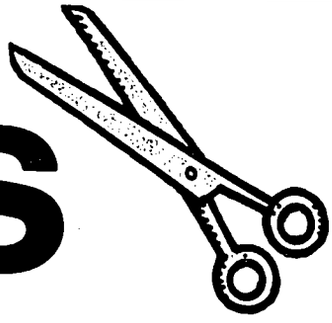
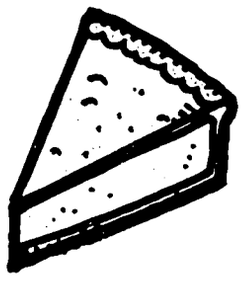
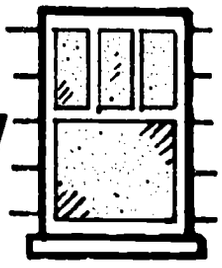
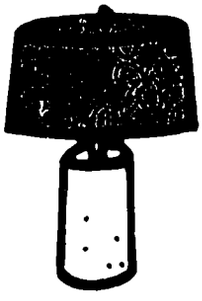
s 	p 	w 
n 	r 	l 
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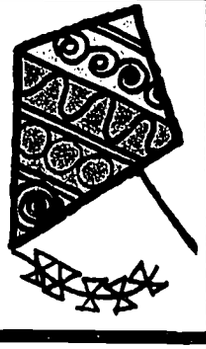
k 	1	2
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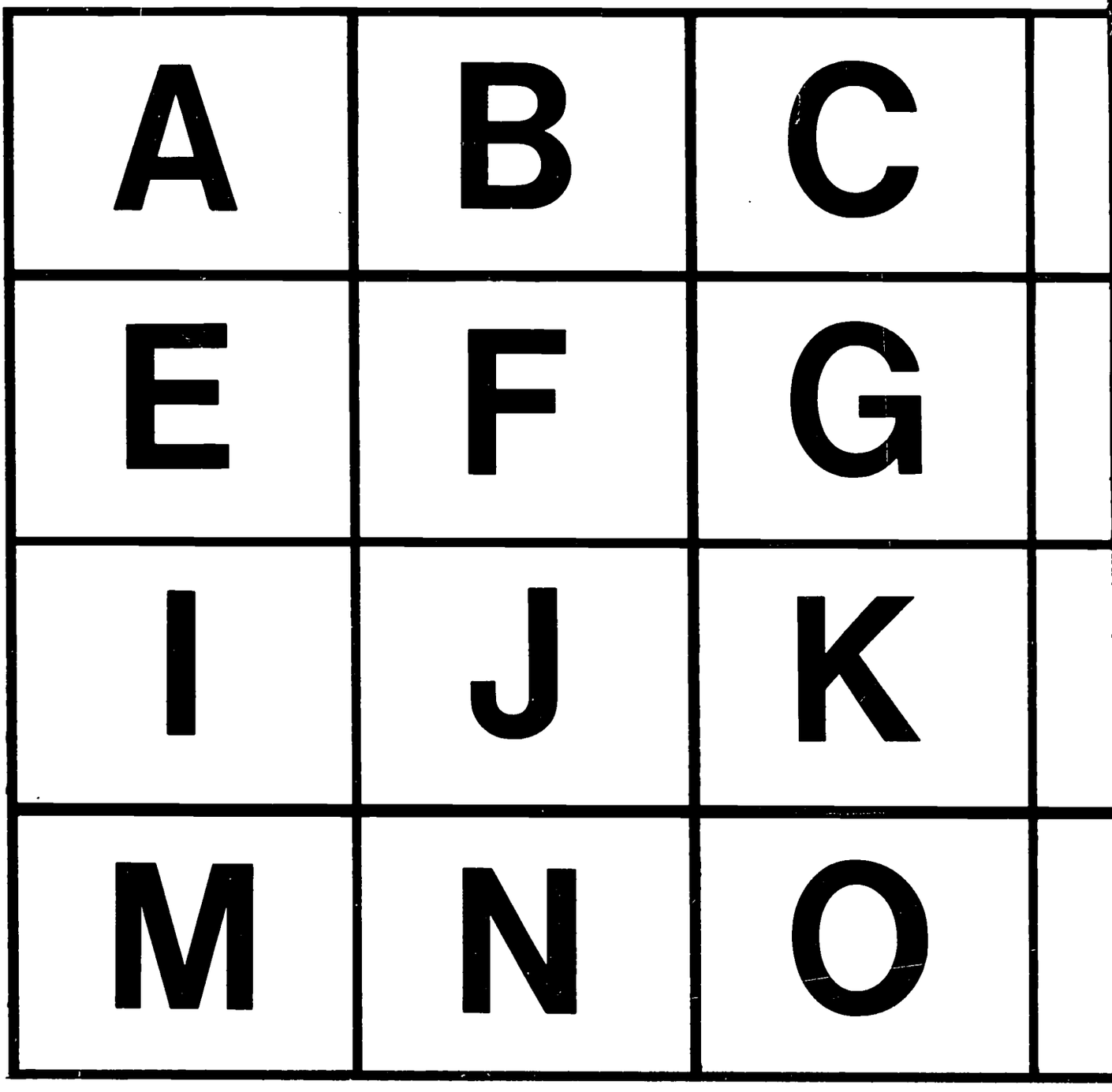

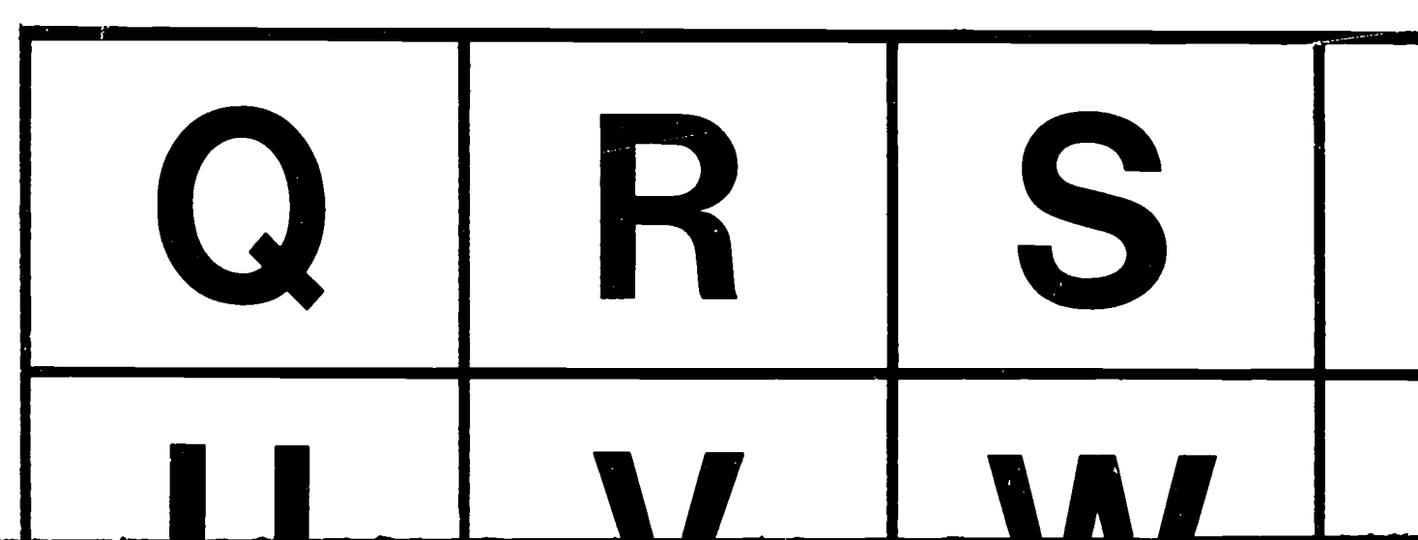

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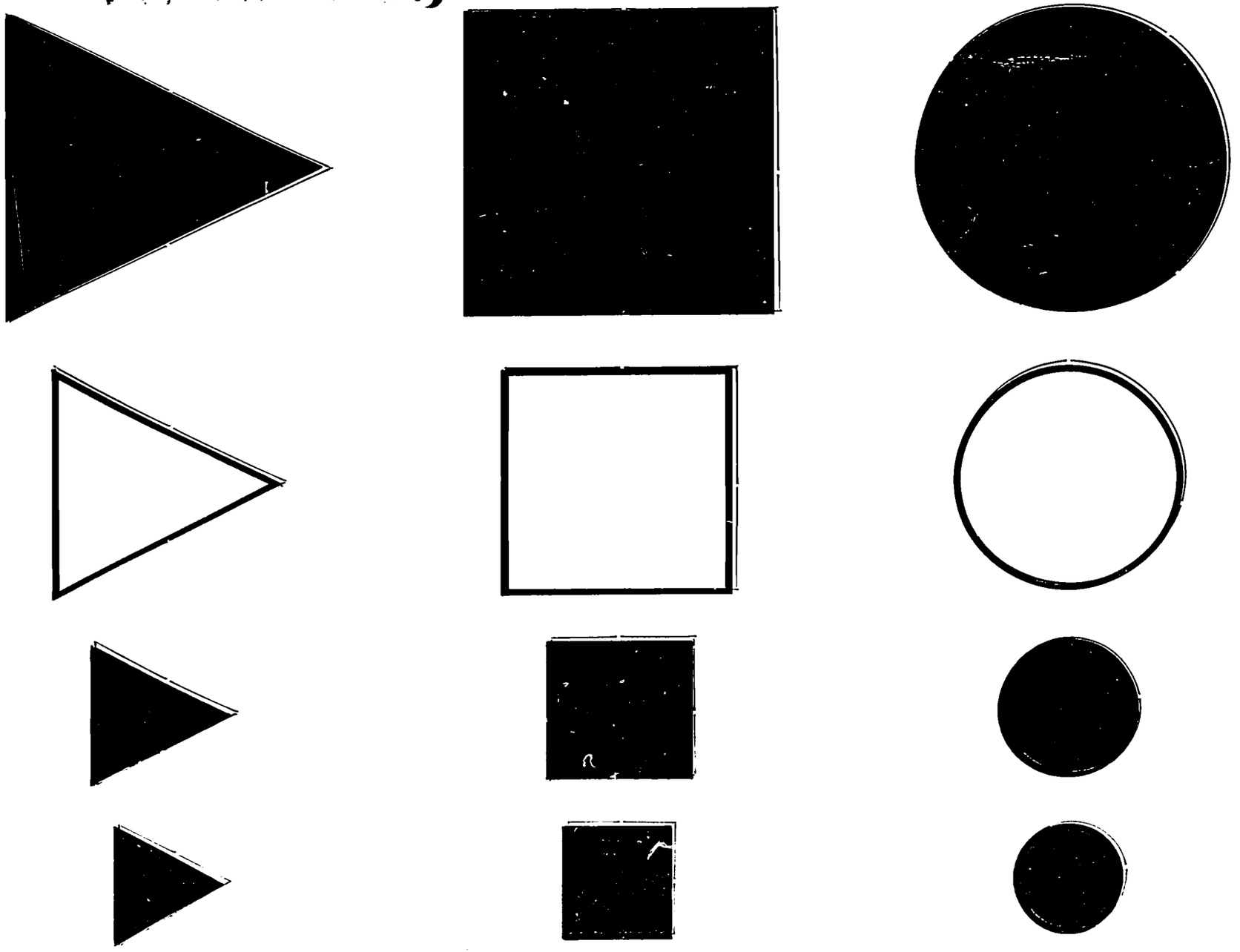
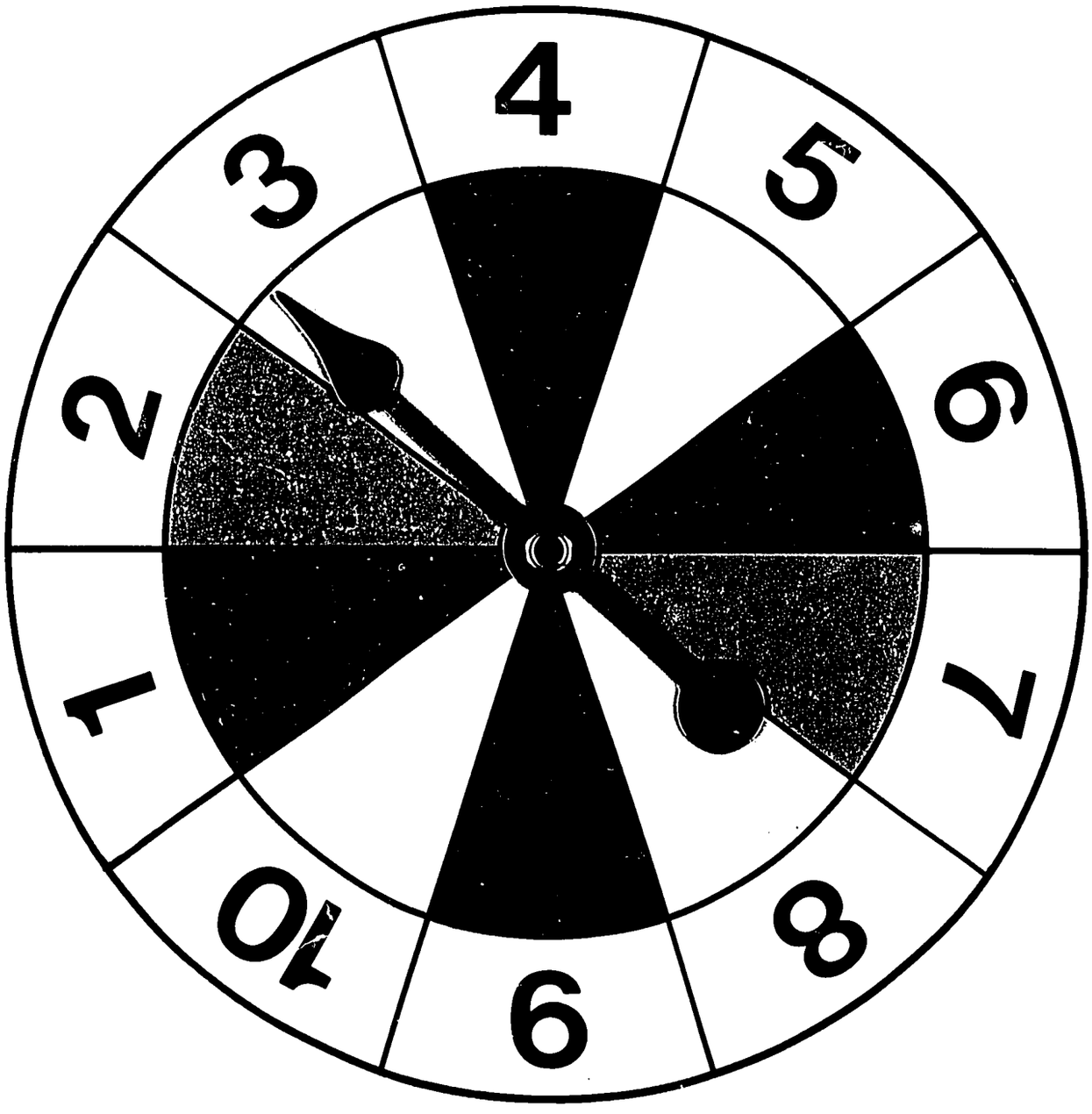


GADGET PRINTING

Various gadgets when brushed with tempera and used to print on paper make a pleasing design on booklets, invitations to visit, etc. (Sponges, bottle tops, milk tops.) A stamp pad may be made by placing a piece of felt in an aluminum pan and then saturating it with tempera.

SOAP PAINTING

Ivory Snow (or any detergent) can be mixed with water and whipped to a heavy cream consistency and used as finger paint. Tempera or food coloring may be added. To achieve different and unusual effects, combs, toothbrushes, sticks, etc. can be used instead of fingers.



PAPER BAG PUPPETS

Stuff small bag with newspaper. Tie string around the neck opening leaving enough room to hold on to. Sack may be painted and decorated with yarn, buttons, seeds, etc.

WATER PAINTING

On warm days, children enjoy painting with water using buckets and large paint brushes — 4" wide. Painting the sidewalks or sides of the building is great fun.

PEANUT BUTTER BALLS

3 tablespoons honey
4 tablespoons peanut butter
½ cup non fat dry milk
¼ cup dry cereal flakes,

Mix honey and peanut butter. Gradually add non fat dry milk, mixing well. Form into balls with greased hands. Roll in dry cereal flakes. Chill until firm. Makes 18 balls.

CEREAL CANDY

2¼ cups chopped milk chocolate or semi-sweet bits
4 cups Wheaties or other cereal

Melt chocolate over hot but not boiling water. Add Wheaties mixing until well coated with chocolate. Drop by teaspoonsfuls onto waxed paper and allow to harden or spread in greased shallow pan to one-fourth inch thickness, and when cool cut into squares. Makes 34 small pieces.

VEGETABLE PRINTING

Cut up pieces of vegetables or fruit (slices of lemon make interesting prints). Let children make marks with scissors or some other blunt instrument on the cut vegetable (potatoes or carrots are good to use). Press the piece of vegetable onto a piece of felt that has been saturated with tempera paint. Stamp the vegetable onto paper and make prints.

UNCOOKED PLAY DOUGH

1 cup salt
3 cups flour
½ cup water (add gradually) – more may be added if necessary
Powdered paint or food coloring
May be kept in plastic bags in refrigerator.

Children will enjoy preparing the mixture and squeezing it through their fingers to mix it thoroughly. Rolling pins should be available as well as cookie cutters for making different shapes and forms. They should be encouraged to use the dough creatively in any manner they wish – patting and pressing or modeling it into dishes, animals, bird nests, snakes, etc. are lots of fun.

COOKED FINGER PAINT

1 cup Linit Starch
2-2/3 cups boiling water
1 cup soap flakes (not powder)
2 T. Glycerine
Vegetable coloring or powder paint
Spice extract

Dissolve starch in a little cold water. Add *boiling water* and stir until thick. Cool slightly and add soap flakes and glycerine. Add few drops of spice extract (oil of cloves) for pleasing odor. Paint should be kept in covered jars, and will keep longer if kept in refrigerator. Can be kept out of refrigerator for a couple of weeks if spice extract is added.

Paint may be divided in small amounts and coloring added, stirring well to avoid lumps. Or child can be given uncolored paint, with powdered paint sprinkled on as child uses it.

If finger painting can be done on oilcloth or formica covered tables, children can make their designs directly on these. Pieces of paper can be laid on the designs and lifted off. This process gives a different and unusual effect from painting directly on paper.

BOOK MAKERS PASTE

1 tsp. flour
2 tsps. cornstarch
¼ tsp. powdered alum
3 oz. water

Mix dry ingredients, add water slowly, stirring out all lumps. Cook in double boiler, stirring constantly. Remove when paste begins to thicken. It will thicken more when it cools. Keep in a covered jar. Thin with water if necessary.

COOKED PLAY DOUGH

¼ cup cornstarch – blend with cold water
5 cups flour
2 cups boiling water, add ½ cup salt

Pour mixture (hot) into cold. Cook in double boiler until clear. Cool. Knead flour in until right consistency, adding color with flour. Keep in air-tight jar or damp cloth and aluminum foil. Products will dry and harden. (If dough becomes hard, add more water.)

LIQUID STARCH

Buy prepared liquid starch, pour a small amount on fingerpaint paper or directly on a formica table. Add tempera color and use as fingerpaint.

COLLAGES

A box of "nothings" or "beautiful junk" forms the basis of collages. Any and all kinds of materials may be used singly or in combination in creating works of art. It is recommended that Elmer's Glue or a similar product be used on construction paper or cardboard. Listed below are materials which may be used in the making of collages.

Bottle caps
Straws
Paper rolls
Cotton
Feathers
Ribbons
Buttons
String
Yarn
Sequins
Bangles
Thread
Rick-Rack
Braid
Macaroni (all sizes shapes)
Dried peas
Beans
Rice
Cereal
Popcorn

FRUIT-NUT ROLL

1½ cups raisins ½ cup peanuts few grains salt

Wash raisins, dry, put through food chopper with nuts. Mix well, salt to taste and shape firmly into small roll. Chill and slice.

COOKIES

½ cup (¼ lb.) margarine
1½ cups sifted flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
2/3 cup sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Soften margarine at room temperature. Place all ingredients except egg in bowl. Mix thoroughly, add egg and mix again. Shape crumbly dough into 4 balls with hands. Roll on floured board or waxed paper to 1/8 inch thickness. Cut cookies. Bake on greased cookie sheet in moderate oven (350°F), 8-10 minutes. Decorate. Makes 48 cookies.

CRAYON AND PAINT PICTURES

After children have drawn pictures, it is interesting to let them cover over the entire picture with a thin wash of Tempera paint using a wide brush.