

Using Matching Cards

1. Naturally Expose the Children to the New Vocabulary

Before using the cards themselves, naturally expose the children to the new vocabulary by regularly using it in conversations, by observing the objects in their natural environments, by reading aloud books that feature the objects, and by using one-set of these cards in vocabulary building 3-period lessons. This is your opportunity to thoroughly internalize the terminology so that you can bring it to life for the child.

2. Practice the Vocabulary with the 3-Period Lesson

Use either the red-backed or blue-backed set of cards in a 3-period lesson.

Period 1: Place 3 or 4 photo cards on a clean workspace that is free from distractions. Touch and name the first card. Say, "This is an ambulance." Repeat for all. **Period 2:** Move your hands away and say, "Show me the ambulance." If she cannot or points to the wrong card, simply move back to period 1. **Period 3:** Point to a card and say, "What is this?" If the child does not say the name, simply move back to period 2. Depending on the child, you may get through all 3 periods in one lesson or you may need to repeat the first two periods over the course of several days before the child is ready to demonstrate mastery in period three. Keep in mind that it is during the second period that most learning takes place. Place your emphasis there.



3. Matching the Cards

Depending on the abilities of the child(ren), you can begin with a subset of 6 pairs of cards or use the full set of 12 pairs. Also, you can keep the red- and blue-backed sets of cards in separate containers or mix them together in one container. If they are mixed, begin the exercise with the cards face down and sort by color into two piles.



- Lay out the red set face-up in a column on the left side of your work area (make a second column for the rest of the red cards in the middle-right of your work area if you are using all 12 pairs).
- Take the first blue-backed card and say, "Let's see if these cards look the same as any of the ones here. Let's see if they match." Beginning at the top of the column, look for the match and place it just to the right of the matching card.
- Free the child to continue (do more examples if you need to) and inspire him to repeat the work. You or another child can mix up the cards for him so he can start over. When you clean up, repeat the name of each object as you return it to the container.

4. Sorting the Cards

Create a sorting game by using the red-backed cards from one topic (e.g., Transportation) and the blue-backed cards from a different topic (e.g., Pets). Mix the cards together and place them in a pile face up on the workspace. NOTE: While you will demonstrate how to sort the cards into traditional categories (e.g., transportation vs. pets), the children may find unique ways to sort the cards (e.g., by color or dimension). These alternative categories can be quite interesting and help show the child's creativity. It is the sorting, the act of organizing items into groups, that is valuable to the child. Which groups those are is open to a world of possibilities!

- Place a card in a column on the left side of the workspace.
- Take the next card out and ask, "What is this?" Then place it on the left side if it is part of the first category or start a new column to the right side if it is part of the next category. Continue until you have at least two cards for each category laid out.
- Ask the child to take the next card out, name it, and place it in the proper column. Free them to sort everything.

Lesson 2: Place the Red-backed cards in one column



Lesson 3: Match them to the Blue-backed cards



Lesson 4: Mix the Red-backed cards from one packet with the Blue-backed cards from another packet and Sort into columns

