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Card Stock Word Cards

Articles and Pronouns (green border)

Nouns (purple border)

Action Words (red border)

Words for the Beginning of Sentences
(pink border)

Words for the Beginning of Questions
(lavender border)

Card Stock Sentence-Building Mats

Build a Three-Word Sentence (blue mat)

Build a Three-Word Question (yellow mat)

Build a Four-Word Sentence (green mat)

Build a Four-Word Question (orange mat)

Card Stock Sentence-Building Word Lists

Card Stock Center Directions Cards

Introduction

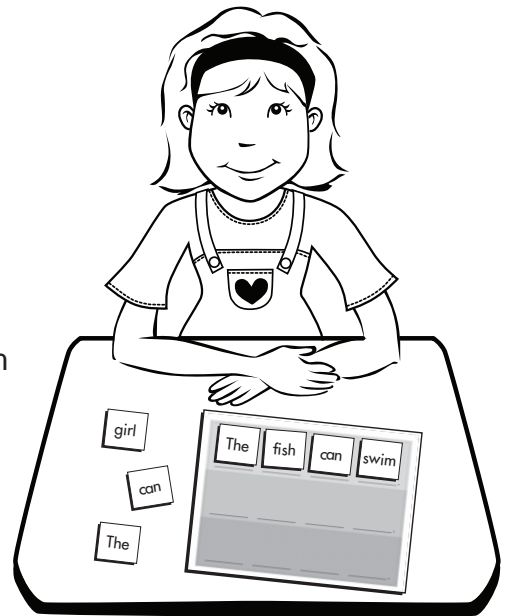
BUILD-A-SENTENCE introduces students to the fundamental concept that words go together to make sentences. The activities included in this resource are geared toward kindergarten and first-grade standards, interests, and abilities. The provided word lists will help students get started in building three- and four-word sentences. Additional word cards are included to allow for longer and more creative, child-authored sentence construction.

The interactive, hands-on activities are designed to move students from the ability to read sight words and decodable words to the ability to manipulate words into concrete, meaningful, and readable sentences. Students will practice the following skills:

- * reading and manipulating sight words and decodable words into simple sentences
- * building sentences from left to right
- * reading sentences from left to right and from top to bottom
- * understanding that a sentence must express a complete thought
- * understanding how to construct a question
- * capitalizing the first word in a sentence
- * using ending punctuation marks
- * recognizing and using action words in a complete sentence
- * constructing longer and more complex sentences independently

Word cards, sentence-building mats, center activity directions, and a variety of reproducible activity pages are provided to give students practice in constructing and writing sentences. Use the materials to help students make the connection between reading and writing, reinforce or extend their abilities to create sentences they can decode and comprehend, and support independent practice.

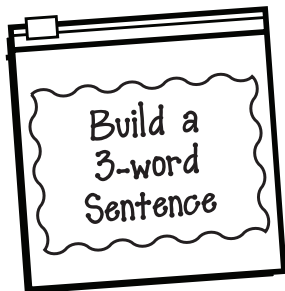
Begin using *Build-a-Sentence* today. The ready-to-use card stock word cards, sentence-building mats, and center activity directions cards require minimal preparation and are easy for teachers, parents, and volunteers to use. Once introduced, the materials store easily and travel anywhere young readers and writers need them. Get children excited about reading and writing sentences with the ideas and activities in *Build-a-Sentence*.



Getting Started

Preparing Center Materials

Pull out the colored card stock word cards, sentence-building mats, word lists, and directions cards. Make overhead transparencies of these pages if you choose to introduce the activities to the whole class before independent or small group instruction. Laminate these pages for durability. Cut all cards on the perforated lines. Once separated and organized the materials are appropriate for small group instruction or for individual students to use independently at their seats, in a center, or at home. Decide on a storage system that works best for your classroom arrangement and your students' needs. You may wish to choose from the following options.

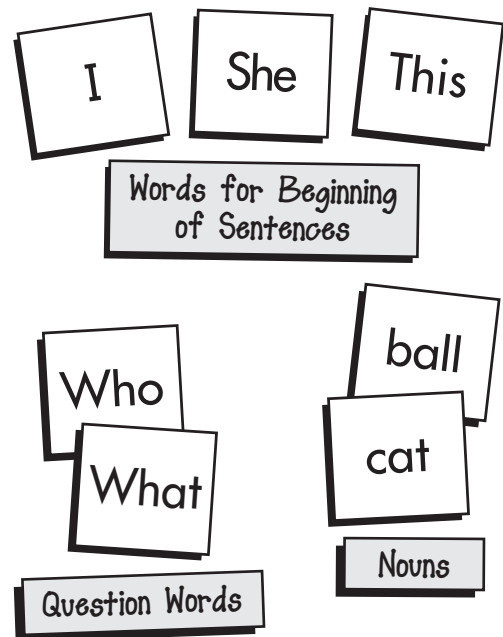


1. Place the sentence-building mats and corresponding directions cards in gallon-size resealable plastic bags or laminated manila clasp envelopes. Label each set with the title of the activity. Store the center materials flat or upright in a plastic shoe-box-size bin.

2. The card stock word cards are color-coded by category to help identify the type of word. Categories include articles and pronouns, nouns, action words, question words, and words for the beginning of sentences. Group the word cards by color and store them in compartmentalized plastic craft boxes typically used for small hardware or beads or store word cards by category in resealable plastic bags or envelopes. Color-code all labels to match the cards inside.

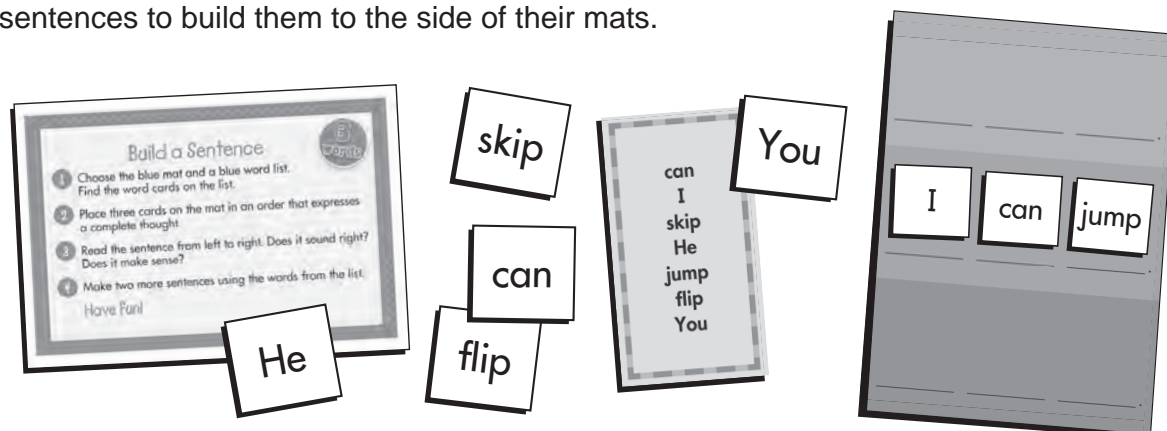
Using the Word Cards

Before having students use these materials independently, introduce all cards and mats to the whole class. Have students read the sight words and decodable words as you place them in a pocket chart. Tell students that the cards are color-coded by part of speech, or by their use in the sentence. For additional practice with reading the words, have students sort them. Students may initially sort by recognizing the color. When students are ready, encourage them to verbalize their sorts by saying the part of speech, or how the word is used in the sentence.



Using the Sentence-Building Mats, Word Lists, and Directions Cards

After identifying the words, introduce the color-coded sentence-building mats, word lists, and corresponding directions cards in small groups or to the whole class on the overhead. Demonstrate how to match the word cards with the words on the word list and how to use those words to construct sentences. Point out the particular ending punctuation on each mat and remind students about the importance of spaces between words, pointing out the space between each line on the mat. Note that some word lists may produce sentences with more words than allotted spaces on the mats. Encourage children who discover these sentences to build them to the side of their mats.



As you model using the center materials, talk through your thinking as if you were a student completing the activity. Read and point to the provided directions on the card as you practice each step. Emphasize the importance of reading the sentences created and self-checking for meaning. Model how you listen carefully as you read back your work, asking yourself if it sounds right and makes sense.

Some students will need repeated practice with the same mats. Others will catch on quickly and be ready to record their sentences and try new mats. Later, when students are ready, they will be able to use the word cards without the word lists to create their own sentences and questions on the mats. As an option, have students build their own sentences on laminated sheets of construction paper or in a pocket chart. Provide students with ending punctuation marks written on index cards and tongue depressors to remind them to leave spaces between words.

Using the Reproducible Pages

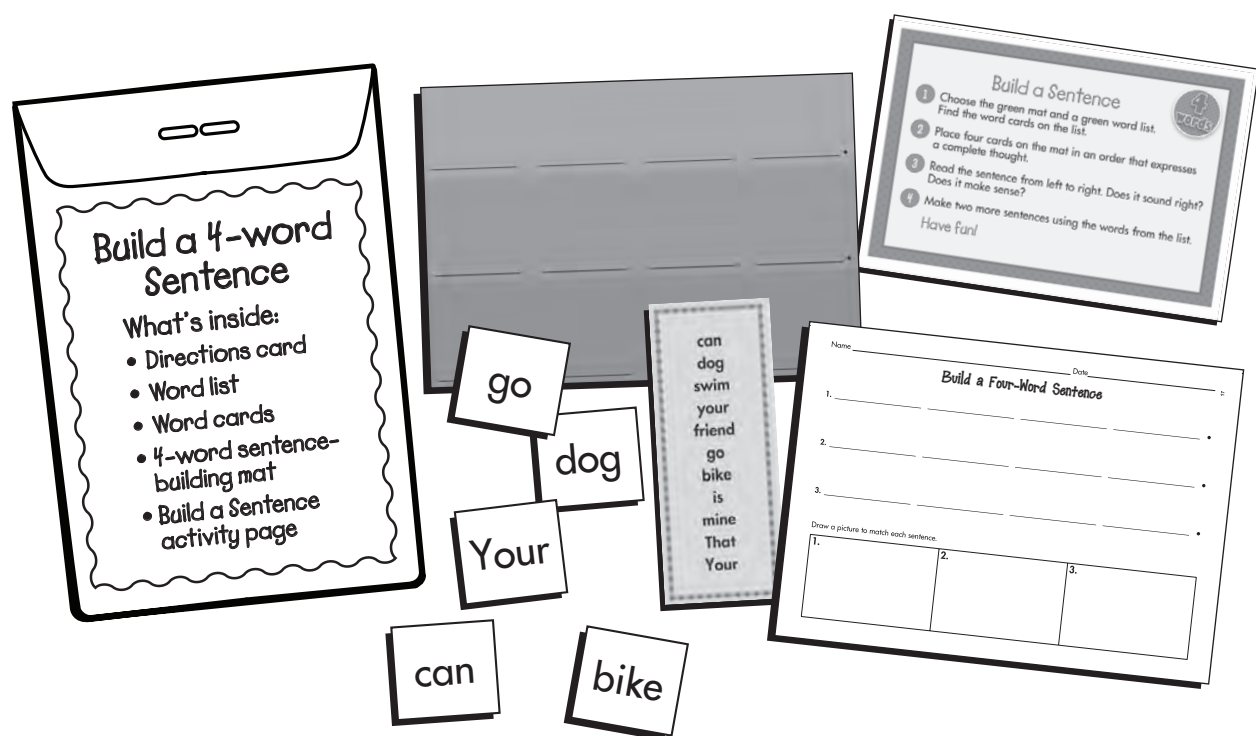
A variety of reproducible pages have been provided for children who are ready to apply and extend what they are learning beyond the introductory sentence-building centers. After students have created sentences on their mats, invite them to copy their sentences on the corresponding Build-a-Sentence reproducibles (pages 15–18). Keep copies of these reproducible pages in the center or have students record their original sentences on your choice of writing paper. Encourage students to demonstrate their comprehension of the sentences by drawing matching pictures.

A reproducible page titled 'Build a Three-Word Sentence'. At the top, there are lines for 'Name' and 'Date'. Below the title, there are three numbered lines for writing sentences: 1. _____, 2. _____, and 3. _____. At the bottom, there is a section titled 'Draw a picture to match each sentence.' with three numbered boxes: 1., 2., and 3.

Also included are reproducibles that can be used for independent seatwork or homework (pages 19–24). These activity sheets combine words featured on the word cards at the center and additional decodable words. When children are ready for building their own sentences from a large pool of words, provide them with a set of the reproducible word cards (pages 7–14). Ask each child to cut out the words and place them in a resealable plastic bag or envelope. Invite children to use the cards to build sentences. Once a sentence is created, have children glue the words in place on a sentence strip. Have children illustrate their sentences and assemble their strips into personalized books titled *My Sentences Book*.

Making Travel-Friendly Centers

Use these center materials for take-home review, for work with a classroom volunteer, or for after-school tutoring. Place the directions card, sentence-building mat, word list, word cards, and corresponding reproducible inside a resealable plastic bag or laminated manila clasp envelope. Label the bag or envelope with an inventory checklist of the contents so the person receiving the bag knows what should be returned.



Assessment

Assessment depends on the level of each student and the time of year in which you introduce the centers. Informally assess children by direct observation as they use the materials, noting their successes and areas of need. Once children are ready to record their findings, use the reproducible pages as documentation of their progress. Show children's work to parents during conferences or send their work home for parents to use in supporting their children's learning.

my

a

you

you

my

the

the

that

mine

he

your

that

mine

he

it

it

her

she

me

me

Name _____ Date _____

Build a Three-Word Sentence

1. _____ •

2. _____ •

3. _____ •

Draw a picture to match each sentence.

1.

2.

3.

?

?

?

can
I
skip
He
jump
flip
You

is
mine
that
can
She
swim
it
made
I
That

can
fish
I
like
me
You
play
She

bike
her
I
see
can
dog
swim
the
game
like
The

can
dog
swim
your
friend
go
bike
is
mine
That
Your

can
He
tell
you
bike
I
my
ride
ball
play
She



Build a Sentence

- 1 Choose the blue mat and a blue word list.
Find the word cards on the list.
- 2 Place three cards on the mat in an order that expresses a complete thought.
- 3 Read the sentence from left to right. Does it sound right?
Does it make sense?
- 4 Make two more sentences using the words from the list.

Have fun!

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Build a Question

- 1 Choose the yellow mat and a yellow word list.
Find the word cards on the list.
- 2 Place three cards on the mat in an order that asks a question.
- 3 Read the question from left to right. Does it sound right?
Does it make sense?
- 4 Make two more questions using the words from the list.

Have fun!

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