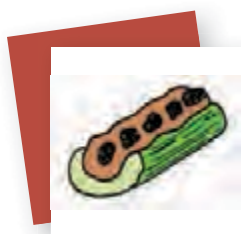


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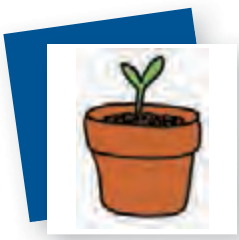
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# How to Use Picture Directions

The tasks presented in this book were carefully selected by a veteran teacher to avoid any safety issues (no sharp knives, no stoves or microwaves, no hot glue guns). While some of the tasks might get a little messy, none should be a complete disaster. These are tasks that most young children can do independently, with the use of picture directions and a little initial instruction. The picture directions pages are all reproducible so they can be photocopied and cut apart, or used on communication boards again and again.

The first tasks presented in the book are ones that can be done repeatedly, even on a daily basis: making juice, making a sandwich, folding laundry. These are introduced first because in the beginning the child will learn how to use picture directions as well as how to perform the given tasks. Once the child is able to follow the sequence of picture directions, then other tasks can be introduced.

While all of the activities provided in this book are selected for the young or developmentally delayed student with beginning level skills and concepts, there exists a range of skill levels within the different activities. Two tables (one for fine motor skills and one for cognitive skills) rank the activities according to level of difficulty (see **Appendix**, p. 163). They provide a quick reference to aid in selecting appropriate activities for the child, depending on the current level of functioning.

It's important to remember that the number one objective of using picture directions

is to teach the child how to follow written directions independently. The second, and lesser, objective is to perform the actual tasks. Therefore, the child should never be rushed through to completion, but should be encouraged to try to figure out what to do.

The cleaning-up process has not been included in the directions for a couple of reasons. One is to keep the directions short and easy to follow. The other is that cleaning up is not highly motivating for most kids. To become independent in using directions, the child needs to be motivated to complete the task. Cleaning up is probably going to take more adult supervision.

Providing prompts or picture cues for cleanup is recommended, because this is an important life skill. With many of the activities, providing a plastic tub where everything can be put afterward is all that is needed. Having a visual checklist for putting the cap back on the glue stick and putting lids on containers, and so forth, may be helpful.

## Getting Ready

Each section of the book begins with **Teaching Tips** to help the adult prepare to introduce the activities to the child. In many cases there are references to easy-to-open or easy-to-use containers. Plastic zipper bags with slides, containers with lightweight plastic covers that have elastic to hold them in place, and plastic yogurt containers are good choices. If the child has difficulty

opening containers, try leaving zipper bags partially unzipped or prying up one corner of the container's lid in advance of the activity.

When you begin teaching the child to use picture directions, start by having all the materials together and ready to use, so the focus will be on how to use a list, not how to hunt down materials. Putting exactly what the student is going to need (individual portions) in a small plastic basket or on a tray or table will help.

After the child understands how to use a list, gradually make gathering materials a little more challenging. Throw in some materials that are not needed and not on the list. Materials can be stored in easy-to-open see-through containers at first, then in opaque containers that have a picture and word label taped onto the top or side.

Once the child is able to retrieve items from containers that are within easy reach, have the child start retrieving labeled containers off nearby shelves. You can also start by having one large container from which the student counts out how many items are needed (e.g., each student counts out two pieces from one loaf of bread). This teaches sharing and taking turns as well. Gradually progress to having students get items from where they are normally kept.

Once things are set up, direct the child to use the **You Will Need** checklist. Direct the child's attention to each picture. If the child is verbal, ask questions such as these:

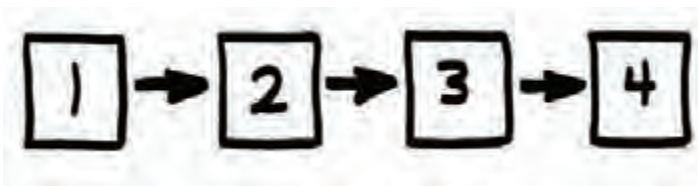
- What is that?
- Do we have that? Where?
- Should we check it off?
- Do we have everything on the list?  
Is everything checked off?
- What do we do now?

If the child is able to give an answer, then repeat and expand on what is said. For example, if the child says, "bread," you might say, "Yes, two pieces of bread; one, two." If the child cannot state the answer, then you say it.

The picture directions are designed so the written instructions, numbers, and pictures can be cut apart and each element used separately. You can also leave them intact and cover the text or numbers when photocopying, or cover the pictures and copy only the text.

The picture directions can be presented to the child in a number of ways.

- The simplest and easiest method for the child to follow is to present one direction at a time (each direction cut out and mounted or glued onto a separate card). It's not always necessary to start here, and obviously you would want to move away from this approach as soon as possible. However, presenting directions this way will allow the child to focus solely on following one direction at a time, without dealing with the idea of sequencing.
- The next step in complexity is to take the set of cards with directions on them and put them on a ring or make them into a little book. Here the child can be in control of turning to the next direction when a step is completed, but still sees only one direction at a time.
- When you feel the child is ready, present the cards in sequential order. This can be done with two cards to start, then with more cards. Use either a left-to-right or top-to-bottom presentation. Arrows can be added between pictures to help give the idea of moving from one picture to another.



- Finally, present the directions as they appear in the book, left to right and then down to the next row.

## Demonstrating the Tasks

When demonstrating the tasks, use clear, simple language to tell what you are doing. Since independence is the goal, let the student lead as much as possible. First see if the child can figure out what needs to be done by asking open-ended questions, such as, “What do we do with the peanut butter?” or “Where do the batteries go?” If the student is able, have the student tell you what is happening.

## Moving Toward Independence

The student is likely to need assistance performing the tasks, but “backward chaining” can be used to gradually build independence. Work with the child until the child can independently complete the last step of the task. Once this is mastered, work on independence in the next-to-last step. Keep on moving backward until the child can complete the entire task independently. Some tasks may be more suitable for “forward chaining,” which is just the reverse. In forward chaining, start with step one, then move to step two, and so forth.

Since students tend to become dependent on verbal prompts, fade these out as quickly as possible. Instead of telling the child what to do, try using different strategies, such as simply waiting expectantly and giving the child plenty of time to carry out the

tasks. Keep in mind how much processing time you need when you are thinking in a different language or figuring out something that is totally new or different to you. Wait and then wait a little longer.

If the child is still unable to complete the task, give as subtle a cue as you can—a look, a nod, or pointing to or tapping an object or picture. If more assistance is needed, use as subtle a physical prompt as you can; touch the child’s elbow to move the hand in the right direction, move the necessary object closer to the child, move the child’s hand onto the item to be picked up. Only go to hand-over-hand assistance if your more subtle prompts are getting you nowhere. While they may seem more intrusive, physical prompts are actually much easier to fade than verbal reminders.

No matter what type of prompt you’re giving, you’ll want to start using more subtle prompts as soon as possible. Keep reminding yourself to be more and more subtle until no prompting is needed. It’s easy to get into a routine of providing certain cues or reminders, even when they aren’t needed.

## Building Skills— Related Activities

Once the student can follow a picture direction independently, a number of activities can help reinforce acquired skills and build new ones. Here are a few ideas to try.

- **Student teaches student.** Have a student who has mastered a task teach or demonstrate it to another student.
- **Sequence the steps of a task.** Photocopy and cut apart the different steps of the directions and have the

student put them in the right order. The picture directions can be glued on poster board and then laminated as cards to be placed in the right order on a table or attached to a board with Velcro®. You can also have the student glue the cut-out pictures onto a strip of paper in the correct order.

You may want to first introduce the task with the numbers written on the picture directions. These pictures can then be matched and placed next to numbers written on the strip. This introduces the idea of matching a number to an identical number. Once the student can do this, cover up the numbers on the pictures when photocopying them and have the child sequence the unnumbered pictures. This will require the child to look at what's happening in the picture and to figure out which action needs to come first. If the child is working on writing, have the child write the correct number on each picture.

- **Matching text to pictures.** The text from all the directions can be cut out to provide separate text and pictures, which can then be matched.

The pictures without text can also be used in having the child tell you what is happening in the picture. This is a good strategy for working on oral language and helps the child focus on “reading” the picture.

- **Using the cloze technique.** With the cloze technique, text is presented on sentence strips or on a worksheet with select words missing. The child can either write in the missing word or place a card with the correct word in the blank space.
- **Matching concept and concept phrases.** Key concept phrases like “put in” or “put on” can be written on cards and matched with pictures showing that particular action. The child can then be asked to separate pictures that represent the different concepts.



**IMPORTANT!  
TEACHERS  
READ THIS**

## Why Use Picture Directions?

Using picture directions builds independence, which is the ultimate goal for any child. By learning to follow step-by-step picture directions, the child gains the lifelong skill of following written directions without assistance. Even with picture directions, most children will need to have the tasks in this book demonstrated. But with picture directions, the child will be able to independently perform tasks more quickly than otherwise possible. For the child who has auditory processing difficulties or who needs tasks to be more concrete or visual, this is even more true. Learning to complete given tasks without adult assistance builds a “can do” attitude, which encourages the child to progress in learning without always waiting for adult direction.

By beginning each activity with a checklist of needed items, the child learns the skill of using a list. The child needs to be able to match the actual object with the picture, to determine when all needed items are present, and to understand that it’s time to begin the activity.

Picture directions also help teach the idea of sequencing—recognizing numbers and following them in order, in a left-to-right and top-to-bottom progression—and the importance of performing directions in a sequential order.

Using picture directions builds reading skills as well. Because picture directions are always paired with simple, repetitive text, the child can start building associations between the written word, the pictures, and the actions performed. Additional follow-up activities (presented in **How to Use Picture Directions**, on the preceding pages) can be used to build greater language and reading skills.

# Orange Drink



You will need:

Orange drink



Water



Cup



Spoon



1



Open orange drink mix.

2



Put 3 spoons of mix in cup.

3



Pour water in cup.

4



Stir.

# Chocolate Milk



You will need:

Cup



Chocolate mix



Milk



Spoon



1



Open  
chocolate mix.

2



Put 2 spoons  
of chocolate mix  
in cup.

3



Pour milk in cup.

4



Stir.



# Peanut Butter Face



You will need:

Rice cake



Peanut butter



Apple slice



2 raisins



Knife



1



Put peanut butter  
on rice cake.

2



Put apple slice  
on rice cake.

3



Put 1 raisin  
on rice cake.

4



Put 1 more raisin  
on rice cake.

# Tortilla Roll-Up



You will need:

Tortilla



Spread



Meat

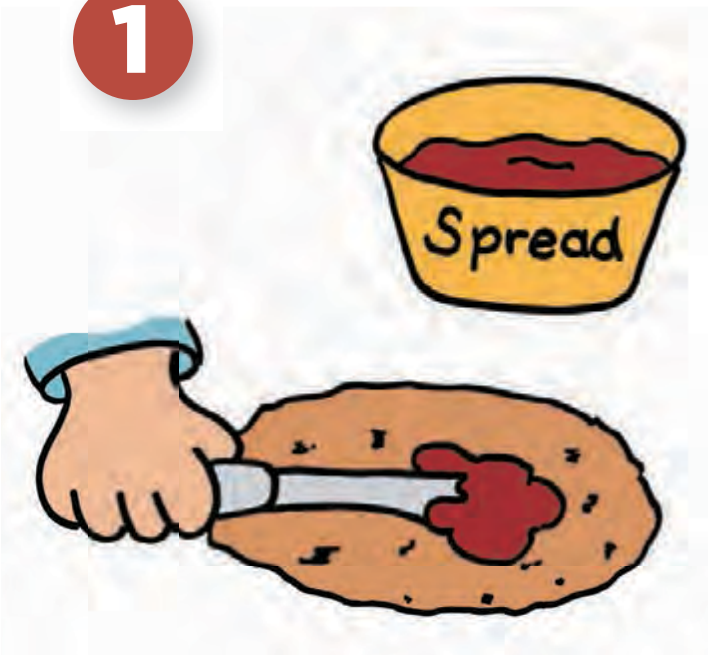


Knife





1



Put spread  
on tortilla.

2



Put meat  
on tortilla.

3



Fold tortilla.

4



Roll up tortilla.