

Combining Categories, Inferences and Context Clues

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Illustrations by Kevin M. Newman

People think in categories throughout each day.

For instance:

- "What shall I have for breakfast?" results in choosing from a category of breakfast foods.
- If a person thinks, "It is going to be a cold day," the category of warm clothes comes to mind.
- A student says, "I must pack my backpack for school," and immediately the category of things for school pops into mind.
- When students come home from school and say, "I am hungry," all foods in the snack category come to mind.

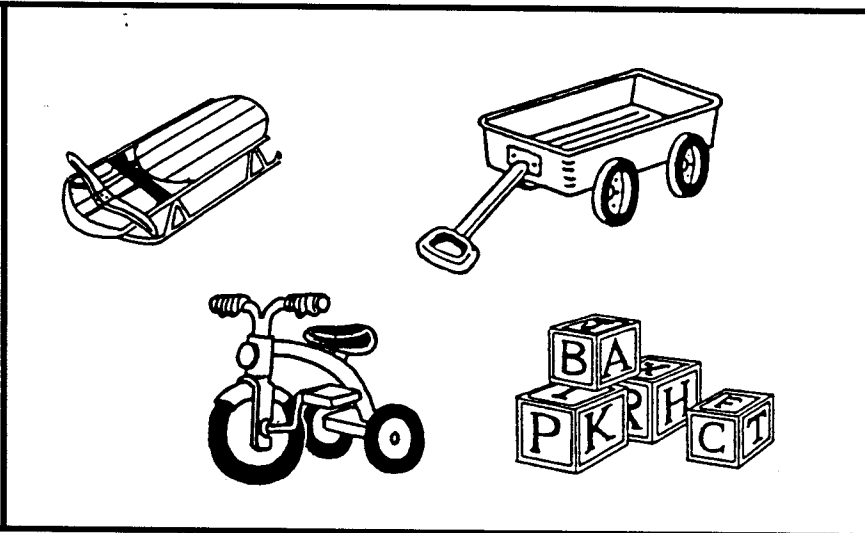
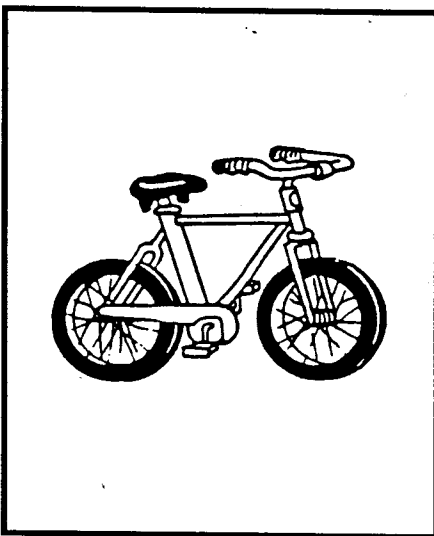
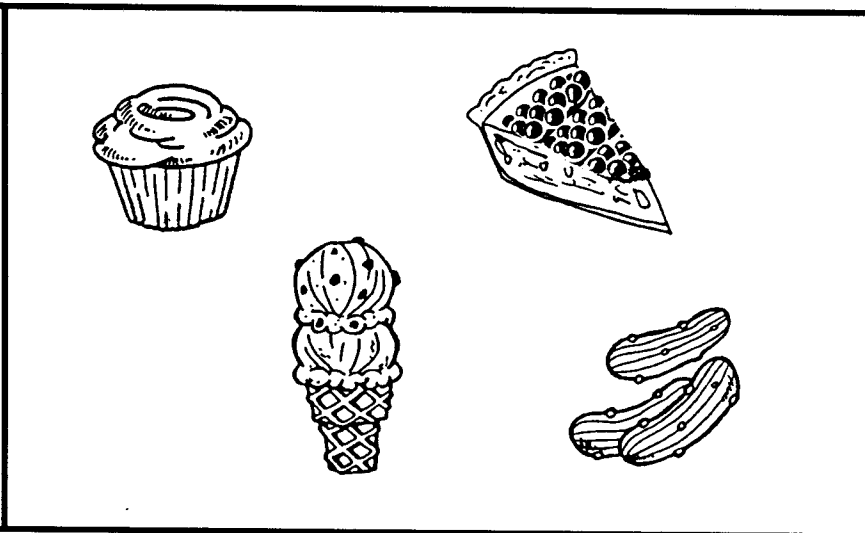
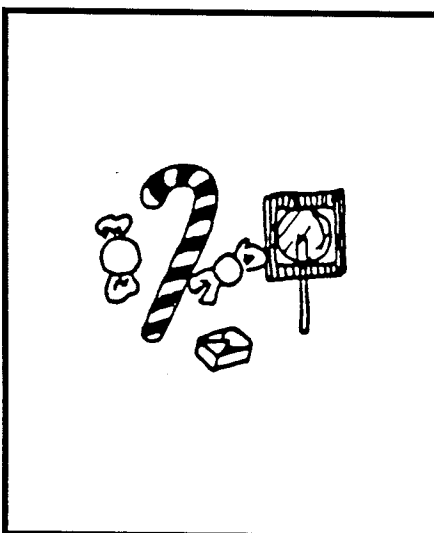
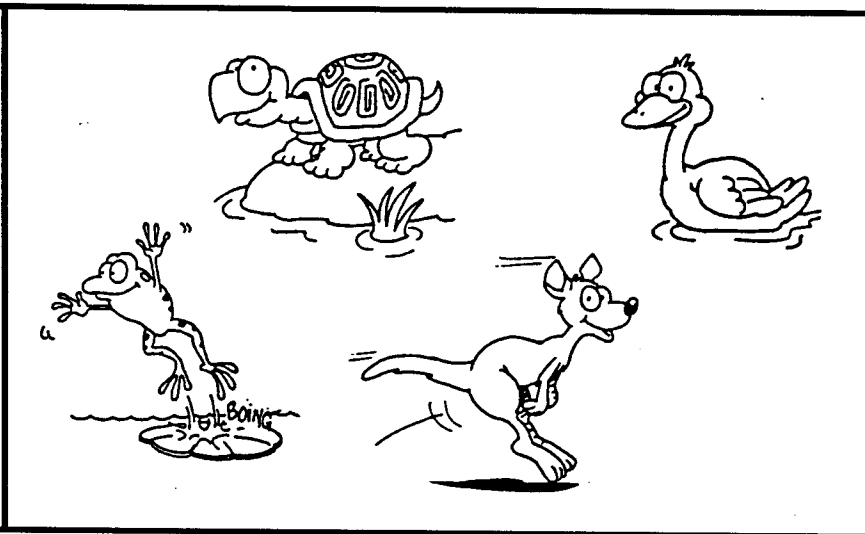
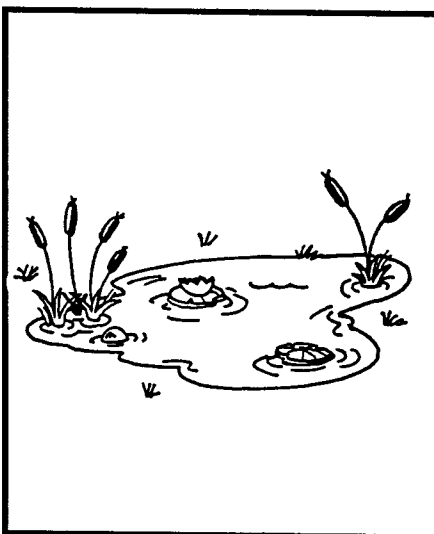
Thinking in categories is spontaneous. Almost all learned information is remembered in categories and retrieved from memory in categories. This is the reason it is such an important language skill. While most children learn it through language interaction, others need practice in grasping the skill.

It is important to understand how context clues (exact information) and inferences (hints) help students form categories in more subtle instances than simply saying, "Find all the animals." The unit has a wide variety of lessons that combine understanding context clues and inferences in forming categories.

Before beginning each lesson, each student should be given the student picture page that corresponds to the instructor's page.

Each statement should be read aloud to the students who will then circle all the pictures that belong to a certain category referred to in the statement. The picture in the box on the left will give a visual hint about each inference. The instructor can point out and comment on this picture to the student. In some instances, it is part of the hint. In others, it is part of the category. When homework is sent home, it would be helpful to include this manual page.


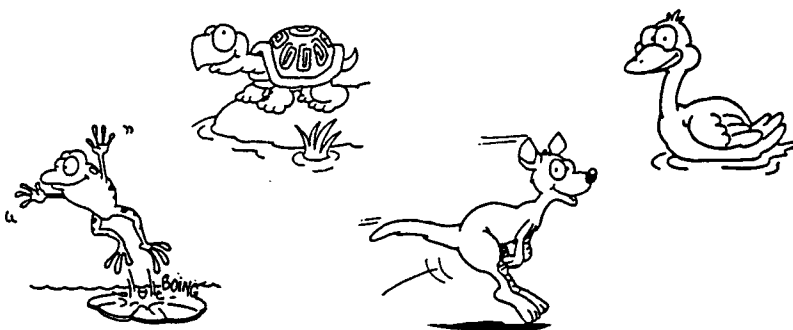
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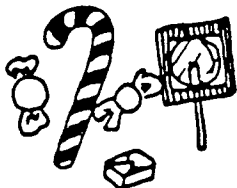
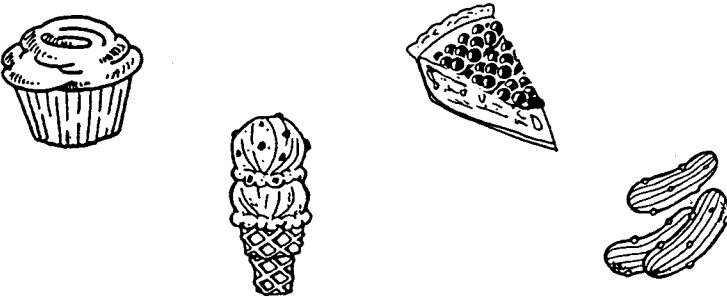


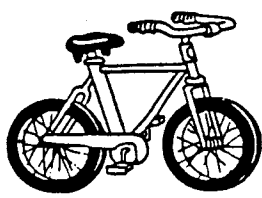
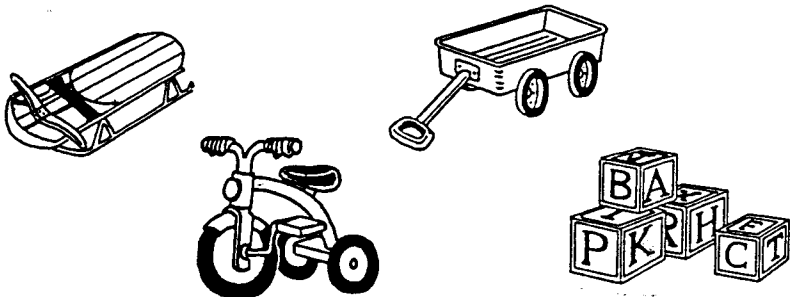
Instructor's Worksheet

The purpose of the activities is to learn to form categories based on understanding the hints (inferences) and specific facts (context clues) given in each statement.

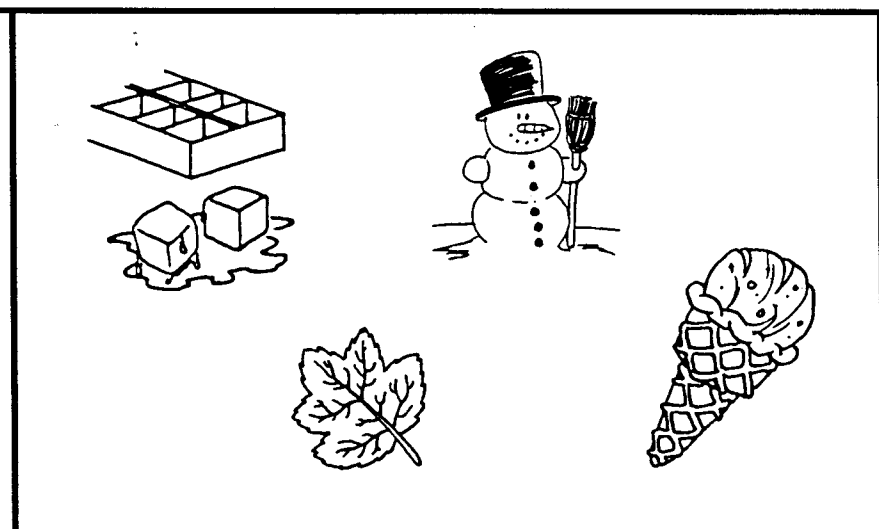
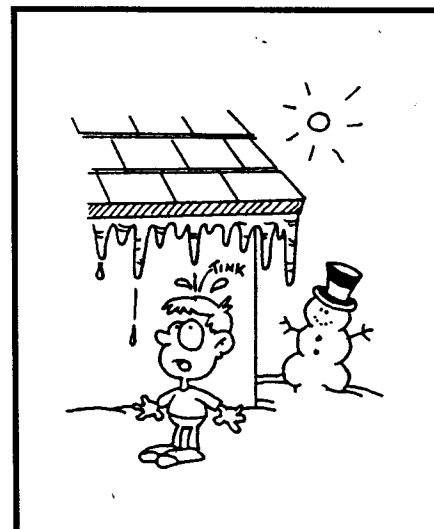
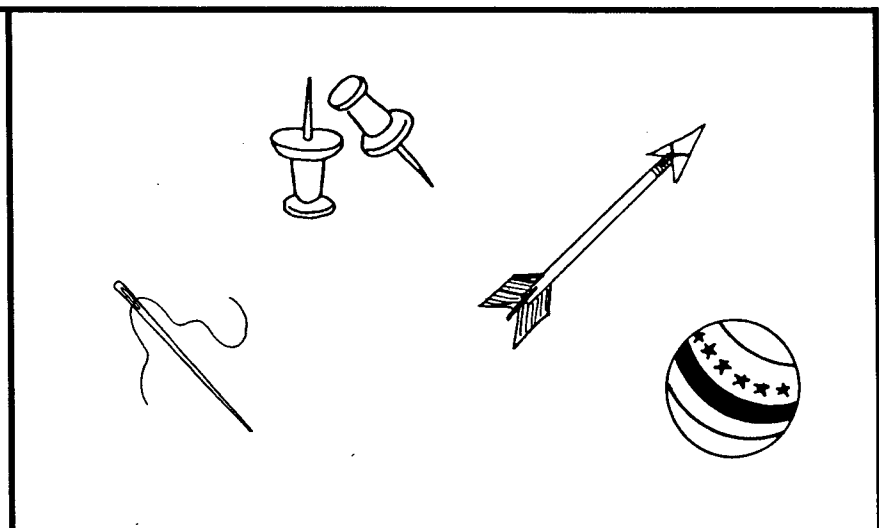
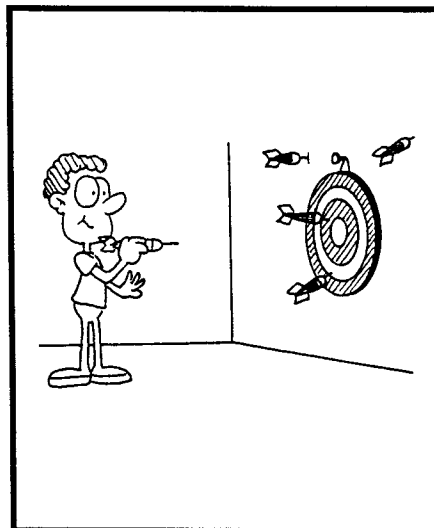
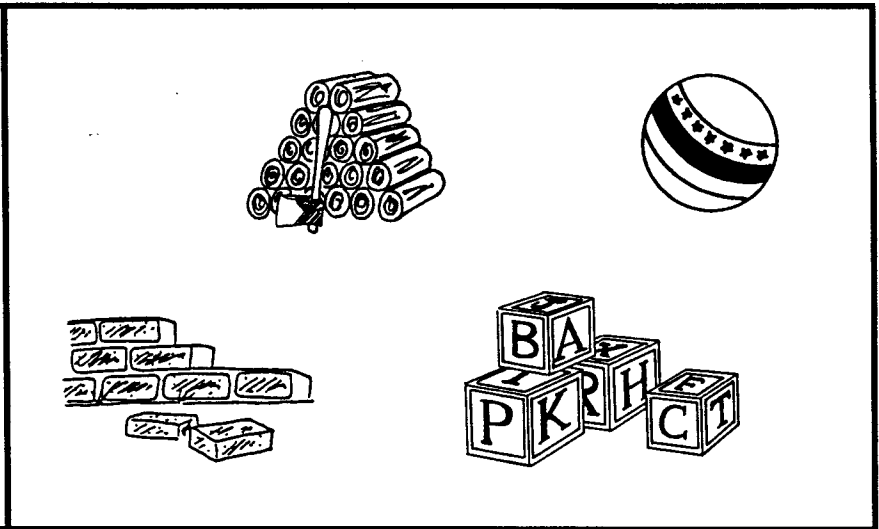
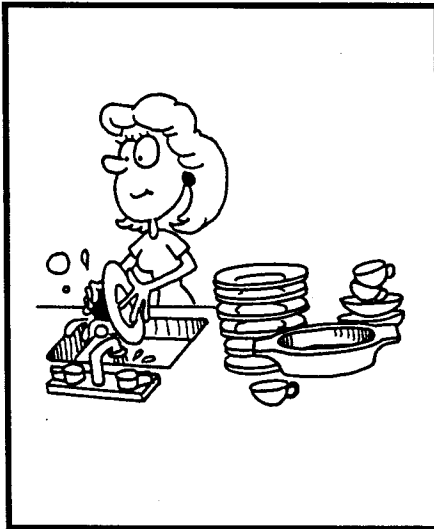
Directions: Before beginning, each student should be given a copy of the worksheet that corresponds to the instructor's worksheet. Each statement should be read aloud to the students who will then circle the three pictures that belong to the category being described or inferred.

	 <p>Many animals drink from ponds but only a few actually swim in the ponds. Find the ones you think might swim in the pond.</p>
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	 <p>Sweet things usually have sugar in them. People eat sweet things for dessert or for snacks. What probably has sugar in it?</p>
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	 <p>Some toys and equipment should not be used indoors because there is not enough room to ride them safely. Which ones do you think should not be used indoors?</p>
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Name: _____



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