



How to Use Black Line Drawings, Or Cue Cards to Facilitate Student's Pre-Reading, Writing, Language and Social Skills

Laminated, Colored Cue Cards

Included in the Incredible Years curriculum are a series of laminated, colored cue cards (or black line drawings) that show pictures of the major social and emotional concepts of the program (for example, pictures of Wally's 7 problem-solving steps, Molly sharing and helping, Tiny's 5 anger-management steps, Dina Dinosaur's rules for the classroom, and a variety of solutions to problems). The cue card that represents the new skill being taught in a particular lesson is shown by the teacher during circle time to provide a visual reminder of the skill. These cards may also be posted on the board or classroom walls in strategic areas so children can see them and teachers can refer to them during the day. For example, the sharing cue card may be put in the house area or the trading cue card in the block area and so forth.

Purpose of Black and White Line Drawings or Cue Cards

In addition to the laminated colored cue cards, there are also black line drawings of the same social skills pictures that may be Xeroxed for use with the children. The purpose of these black line drawings is as follows:

- to provide children with a visual cue, symbol, or picture that represents the social skill being taught. This visual cue will help remind the children to use this skill in the classroom (e.g., trading, helping, sharing, calming down, problem solving).
- to provide pre-reading children with a visual cue or picture that, when associated with the written or spoken words for the concept, will facilitate pre-reading skills. Using the pictures in this way will help children see the connection between spoken language and print. The children will learn to read the picture and then the words.
- to provide children with a visual cue or picture that reminds them of a concept or social skill they have been learning. As children are coloring or decorating the pictures, the teacher asks them to talk about the concept and transcribes their answers on the line drawing. This association between the children's verbal language and the teacher's transcription is a beginning pre-writing skill to help children see the connection between their verbal description and the teacher's written language. This transcription also enhances language development.
- to provide ESL children or children with limited or delayed language with a visual cue, symbol, or picture that represents the social skill being taught. As the children are coloring or decorating the pictures, the teacher "describes" and labels the concept as well as the children's drawing. For example, the teacher might say, "*Wally is thinking of the first step to solving his problem. He is thinking of a solution or choice he can make. Now you are coloring his solution a bright red color. Now you are putting yellow color on top of the red solution light bulb.*" This "descriptive commenting" has been shown in research to be an effective way to increase children's language development.
- to provide children with a picture to show their parents so that parents know what their child has been learning in school and can reinforce that behavior using similar language when they see the behavior occurring at home.

The Do's and Don'ts of Using Black and White Line Drawings To Teach Pre-Reading Skills, To Foster Language Skills and to Promote Social Competence

Do's

- Teacher looks at pictures with students and labels or describes the concept on the picture with words (promotes pre-reading skills).
- Teacher asks the student to “act out” or demonstrate the concept represented on the picture (promotes practice of prosocial behavior).
- Teacher asks the student to repeat or “talk about” the concept on the picture (promotes language skills).
- Teacher writes down the student's ideas about the picture (promotes pre-writing skills), or helps the student to write about the concept represented on the picture with an example (promotes writing skills and concept integration).
- Teacher praises the student's efforts in talking about the concept or drawing (patience, persistence, understanding of concept).
- Teacher provides opportunities for student to combine this learning with additional art projects. For example, line drawings are provided with a variety of materials to decorate such as big crayons, sequins, glitter, glue, etc.). Colorful and innovative posters may be made from these drawings for the classroom walls or pictures put on popsicle sticks to make puppets.
- Teacher encourages the child to draw his/her own pictures of the concept after the idea or concept has been taught and understood.
- Teacher encourages older children to write and act out problem-solving stories or plays using the concepts, social skills, or problem-solving skills they have learned.

Don'ts

- Ask student to color in lines.
- Leave student on his/her own to color or complete activity without adult coaching.
- Give commands about the “right” way to color picture.
- Ask too many questions so that child is reluctant to talk.
- Be critical of the child's scribbles or colors used.
Remember, the purpose of this activity is not an art project but rather a learning task designed to help students learn the specific social, emotional skill as well as to enhance pre-reading, reading, pre-writing or writing skills. Creative art supplies can be added to enhance the fun with this activity.