

Stamping And Writing

Two-Sound Stamping Materials



Included in your reading kit are three complete sets of stamps for student use. Each set is composed of two separate stamp trays. Each tray is divided into three horizontal rows. Five of the rows contain spaces for eight stamps. The sixth row, that is the last row on the second tray, has slots for only five stamps (the final four sounds plus a silent letter stamp). The remaining space is set aside for the stamp pad.

The stamps in each tray are in the same order as the sound-pictures on both the Sound Review Charts and the Decoding Charts. This order is the same order in which the children are taught the sounds from *Dekodiphukan*. This means that the stamps along the top row of the first tray in each set represent the first eight sounds of the program. The stamps along the second row represent the second eight sounds. The stamps in the third row are the third eight sounds, and so on.



The Two-Sound Stamping Worksheets represent the students' first efforts to write words on their own. There are twenty-two different stamping worksheets at the two-sound level. The codings on the stamping worksheets are the same codings used on all the other kit components at the two-sound level. As is the case for all other two-sound activities, there are more triangle-level stamping sheets than any other individual coding.

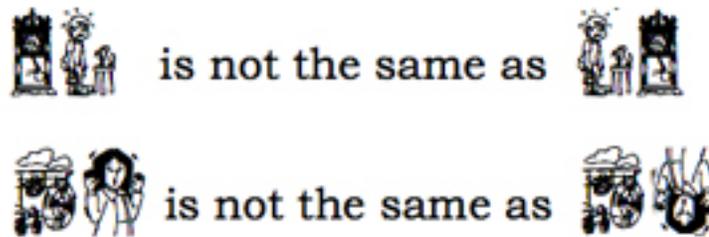
When all children in class are beginning the triangle level of activities, only the first eight stamps are placed in the trays. As children are first learning how to use the stamps, looking through only eight sounds for a desired stamp is

much more manageable a task than having to search through all forty-four.

As individual children become ready for the circle level of activities, the next row of stamps is added to the trays. This new row, and each new row after it, is added to the trays even though not all children are ready for the additional sounds. The children who still use only the first eight sounds can find them quite easily, despite the introduction of more and more rows of stamps. The first eight are still where they were. They still occupy the very first row of the very first tray in each set.

Each of the earlier two-sound activities encountered by the students asks them only to read words and then demonstrate comprehension by matching the words read to the appropriate illustrations. The Two-Sound Stamping Worksheets ask the student to write what has been read. In this case, writing doesn't mean handwriting. Writing here means to record in symbols something that others can read.

Learning to write means, among other things, learning that the order of the sounds is important.



Children do not learn these elements of writing as they match word cards to pictures, or underline choices on a worksheet, or thumb through the pages of a book. They only learn about writing by having the opportunity to write.

The Two-Sound Stamping Worksheets provide a structured approach to introducing students to writing. The child reads the word at the top of the worksheet and then sees how accurately he or she can stamp it next to the appropriate illustration. This lockstep approach to writing is meant to teach children specific fundamentals, like the importance of the order of sounds within a word and the need to reproduce the sound pictures right-side up.

Three-Sound Stamping Worksheets



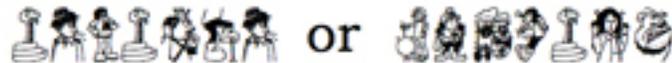
There are ten Three-Sound Stamping Worksheets. Although most students have already learned all forty-four sounds before they begin three-sound activities, the proper significance of the codings is maintained for those students who have not yet absorbed all of the sounds before they are introduced to the three-sound level of materials.

Since the coding levels maintain their significance, children who begin the triangle level of the Three-Sound Stamping Worksheets are once again using only the stamps in the first row of the first tray in each stamp set. Learning and then re-learning the order of the sounds in the trays makes the eventual learning of the Decoding Chart just that much easier.

Free Stamping of Words

If you search your kit for a component labeled Free Stamping of Words you will find it as elusive as were the Vowels-Only Books. Free Stamping of Words is to created entirely by the students themselves.

Students who are ready to begin free stamping usually know all forty-four sounds. They also usually know how to read and stamp out many two and three-sound words. Now they are asked to apply the knowledge they have, as they attempt to stamp out any word they wish, with the exception that obvious obscenities are to be quietly censored, of course, and then illustrate what they have stamped. This means, for example, a student may try to stamp out:



or any other word he or she wishes. Once the child has the word stamped out, he or she then draws an illustration for the word. The order of the activity can be reversed. The picture may be drawn first, and then the word stamped out once the drawing is completed.

The students may be very good at hearing all of the sounds in the words they are free stamping. They may also be terrible. Good or bad isn't important. What is important is that the students are free to stamp or write any words they want, how ever well or poorly they may perform stamping at the start.

Writing means recording in symbols something for others to read. Until now, the writing the students have done has consisted of copying what others have written. Free stamping of words allows students to begin writing what they want someone else to read. Writing what you want to write and not what someone else tells you to write is called "creative writing". The free stamping of words represents the students' first efforts at creative writing.

These first efforts may not be readable by anybody but the student who actually does the writing. The words stamped out may be too long for others to read because the words may go substantially beyond the three-sound words the students are learning to read. The words may also be missing sounds, or have included extra sounds, or have sounds in the wrong order. None of this is important.

The logical progression of learning, represented by the two-sound, three-

sound, phrases, transition sentences, and vowels-only sequence of activities, still occupies the majority of each student's reading time. However, the logical progression cannot capture for the child the excitement that comes from being able to put his or her own words on paper, or the feeling of power that writing affords when what one has written can actually be read by someone else. Even if that someone else may initially only be the teacher, and even if that someone can only read with a few subtle hints drawn from the illustration that accompanies the stamped-out word.

The carefully structured, logical sequence of the activities of the program goes on. The free stamping of words has a purpose all its own. Free stamping is the children's first taste of why we read and why we write.

The logical progression of activities ensures that each child will have the technical ability to read. But what fun is learning to read or learning to write if all you ever get to read is what someone else tells you to read, and all you ever get to write is what someone else tells you to write? Reading and writing are not ends in themselves. They are tools that enable us to reach our own ends. Reading allows us to discover things others have written to share with us. Writing allows us to share our own discoveries, or adventures, or fantasies, or feelings with others.

White and Blue Tiny Writing Cards – Phrases



There are sixty-four White Tiny Writing Cards and sixty-four Blue Tiny Writing Cards. The white cards are easier. They contain one, two or three-sound words in one or two word phrases. The blue cards are more difficult. They contain either words that may be four sounds long or phrases that may have three words.

The Tiny Writing Cards are introduced when students begin working with the phrase cards and the phrase worksheets. The white cards are introduced first. The blue cards are introduced whenever the teacher considers the students are ready for them.

The Tiny Writing Cards are a stamping activity. A student selects a card and stamps the words on the card onto a piece of drawing paper. The student

then demonstrates that he or she can read the stamped phrase by drawing an illustration for it.

The purpose of the Tiny Writing Cards is to expand the range of what the students can stamp and illustrate. The Two and Three-Sound Stamping Worksheets teach students to stamp out single words. The free stamping activities that follow encourage students to stamp out and illustrate single words of their own choosing. The phrase activities involving picture packets, worksheets, and books introduce students to reading multiple-word phrases. The Tiny Writing Cards present students with their first official opportunity to write something longer than a single word. Some students may already have attempted to write multiple-word phrases to accompany their earlier free stamping illustrations. Children who choose to go beyond the one-word assignment during their earlier free stamping activities are not discouraged from doing so. The purpose of the Tiny Writing Cards is to encourage all the children who are at this level of activity to stamp out more than one word on a page.

Free Stamping of Phrases

The Components Chart indicates that the reading kit component identified as Free Stamping of Phrases is introduced once the students have finished working with their white and blue Tiny Writing Cards. It is sometimes difficult to accurately depict an evolving and interwoven progression of activities in the rows and columns of a chart that is meant to relay a sequence of activities, one following another. In many cases, the free stamping of phrases actually begins before the children have completed the Tiny Writing Cards. Free stamping of phrases may already have started spontaneously as the children were supposed to be confining themselves to single words. If it hasn't started spontaneously, children are encouraged to stamp out their own phrases and illustrate them as soon as they've been introduced to the Tiny Writing Cards at the white level.

Free stamping and controlled stamping belong side by side. Free stamping allows children to capture their own ideas in writing. Controlled stamping allows children to develop the skills necessary to make their writing readable by others, so that what is written to be shared can be shared.

Reading means looking and saying. Writing traditionally means using a pencil, drawing the letters, and knowing the spellings. But writing with the stamps means knowing what you want to say, listening for the sounds in each word, and then stamping it out. The range of what may be written by the students using stamps is not limited by penmanship or the words a child may have learned to spell. What may be written is limited only by what the child wants to write. With the stamps, writing and reading can develop together.

White and Blue Tiny Writing Cards - Transition Level

At about the same time students begin activities with the transition sentence cards and books, and are using their Decoding Charts to write words on the phrase worksheets, they begin making use of the transition codings on the Tiny Writing Cards. The Tiny Writing Cards offer about the same level of difficulty as the phrase worksheets.

At the transition level, the Tiny Writing Cards are used in essentially the same way as they were at the stamping level. The one main difference is that, instead of stamping the phrase onto drawing paper and then illustrating it, the students write the phrase on their drawing paper using traditional letters before illustrating it. Writing traditional letters on the drawing paper does not make the activity any more difficult, because even if a student cannot always read the traditional form of the words now written, he or she can still read the sounds on the Tiny Writing Card from which the words came.

Creative Writing Activities

Not all of the spaces on the Components Chart represent materials that are to be found in the Reading Kit. Neither of the two different kinds of vowels-only books are in the kit. Free stamping activities exist only as students create them with the stamps. Creative writing, too, is an activity for which no specific kit materials will be found.

Before students begin creative writing using traditional letters and not stamps, they will have learned to write the individual letters through the handwriting activities that parallel the two and three-sound and phrase activities. At the transition level, this letter-writing ability is blended with the use of the Decoding Charts so that students may begin writing words using the traditional letter spellings we all recognize. At the same time they are learning to write letters for words beneath the appropriately coded sound pictures on their worksheets and Tiny Writing Cards, they are also acquiring a writing vocabulary of one hundred fifty-six different sight words that comprise approximately seventy-five to eighty percent of all the words in the reading vocabulary of early elementary textbooks.

Thus, by the time what is called "creative writing" on the Components Chart begins, the children can write letters, use the Decoding Chart, and know how to write correctly over one hundred words in their traditional form.

The materials a child needs to begin creative writing are:

- Individual chalkboard and chalk (see Appendix)
- Spelling Notebook (to be described shortly)
- Writing paper
- Drawing paper and crayons

A student who is engaged in creative writing proceeds in one of two ways. The first way is for the child to draw a picture and then write about it. The second way is for the child to write about something and then draw a picture to accompany the words. I will describe the first way and you may then deduce how the second way might be accomplished.

The student is given drawing paper and crayons, or whatever other drawing medium is in common use in the classroom, and asked to draw a picture. Once the picture is drawn, the student writes a story, or at least words, on his or her chalkboard to accompany the picture. The chalkboard is used because any mistakes that may occur in the writing process or that are noticed

by the teacher in the proofreading process are quite easily corrected. Chalk, once erased, leaves no messy record of mistakes.

It is only after the teacher (or later, another child) has reviewed and approved the chalkboard writing that the child copies what has been written to lined writing paper. Since the child has already created what is to be written on the chalkboard, what goes on the paper is only an exercise in copying. The child no longer has to worry about what to say or how to spell it. Instead, the child can concentrate his or her attention entirely on the process of copying each letter in each word as legibly as possible. This means that what is actually written on the paper is an exercise in penmanship and is much more apt to appear in a readable form when it is placed in a vowels-only book to be read by the other children in class.

There are two different forms of vowels-only books that are made from the creative writing assignments. The first is made from the writings of all the children working at the creative writing level who have completed a particular assignment. For example, all of the children's writings and illustrations for the week can be stapled together and called a book, or all the writing and illustrating done by the children in conjunction with a trip to the park, or a trip to the zoo, can be placed in one book.

The second form is when the work of an individual student is collected and made into a book that has only one author. This might be done because a student wants to write about a series of drawings that relate to one another, as when the student is writing a story that extends beyond an illustration or two. It might also be done to provide an extra boost to the ego of students who would like to see all of the writing they've completed for a week or so in one volume with their name on the cover.

Whichever style of book is formed from the creative writing, the procedure is the same. The teacher collects the writings and the illustrations that are to go in the book. The teacher uses the small stamps to indicate the pronunciations above the vowels in each word. Any other codings deemed appropriate are added, as well. Even though each child can read what he or she has written without the need for vowels stamped above the words, the books are to be read by many other students as well. Stamping the vowels makes the books a source of reading practice for all students at the vowels-only level.

Once the vowels above each word have been stamped, the books are ready to assemble. The familiar format of the writing on one page and the illustration on the next can be continued in the creative writing books. If the writing is placed beneath the illustration that it describes, children become too interested in the picture to pay much attention to the words. When the writing is on the previous page, children's attention is focused on the words and the words provide a clue as to what may be expected when the page is turned.

Creative writing and the resulting vowels-only books represent the culmination of all that students have learned about reading and writing as they advance through the program. Reading what one's classmates have written, while they read what you have written, makes the whole process of reading and writing a meaningful activity. Learning to read and learning to write are

important. If the skills of reading and writing are to be used with joy and enthusiasm once learned, then it is equally important to learn that reading is fun and writing is fun. The creative writing activities and the student-authored books that flow from them have as their purpose ensuring that the learning and the fun are inseparable.

Spelling Notebooks

The Spelling Notebook (see Blackline Masters) is each child's last resort in calculating how to spell words for creative writing assignments. If a child cannot spell a word and all other possibilities for figuring out its spelling have been exhausted, the child opens his or her Spelling Notebook to the page for words that begin with that sound and brings the Notebook to the teacher. The teacher makes the appropriate entry in the Notebook. The Blackline Masters contain the masters for creating the individual Spelling Notebooks.

The description of the levels of activities associated with stamping and writing is now complete. The next set of descriptions is an overview of the handwriting activities that lead eventually to the use of Decoding Charts. Although the handwriting activities do not make use of sounds until the Decoding Charts are introduced, you will learn which handwriting activities are meant to parallel what you have already learned about picture packets, worksheets, books, and writing activities.