
Compound Words

Understanding compound words is an important part of the current language arts standards. With guidance and support from adults, children should explore word relationships and nuances in word meanings. According to the standards, Kindergarten students should be able to:

“Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on kindergarten reading and content.”

Teachers use many strategies to teach reading, but there are particular benefits to using hands-on materials such as these puzzles:

1. **Hands-on learning is *real* learning.** Acquiring knowledge through experience rather than abstraction yields a greater range of intelligence to solve problems.
2. **Hands-on learning keeps kids focused.** Reading a book or listening to a lecture can be a challenge even for the most focused student.
3. **Hands-on learning encourages failure with a purpose.** Recent research suggests that we are raising a “generation of children who don’t know what it’s like to fail”, and in doing so we rob students of an essential learning experience. Failure teaches the importance of perseverance and hard work, but it is also a part of any career trajectory that students might choose. They learn to ask questions like “What went wrong?” “What can I do differently next time?” and “How can I make it better?”
4. **Hands-on learning lets students become the teachers.**

Introduce the Puzzles

The words and art have been carefully chosen to provide children with appropriate clues for matching them up, but before you provide direction, let children play with the pieces while you observe their actions.

1. Do they try and match them up right away?
2. Do they sort them based on any specific characteristic?
3. What is the nature of their verbalization?
4. Do they ask you for guidance?

Observation can provide you with some clues as to which activity to suggest.

Puzzle Activities

Simple Matching

Select the puzzles that you feel will best challenge the student and ask him or her to match them up correctly. It can be fun to put the puzzle pieces in a bag and shake them up, dumping them on the table. For extended use, ask a student or team of students to match the entire set.

Mix and Match

Briefly place three or more completed puzzles in front of the student and then quickly mix them up. Ask the student to put them back together correctly. You can do these in a team format, keeping score to see which team is quickest.

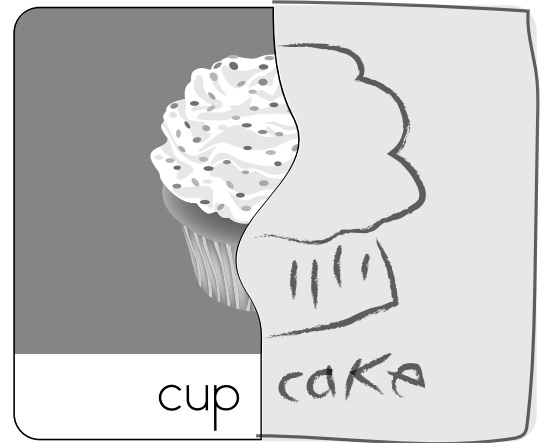
Concentration

Place the puzzle pieces facedown in neat rows and columns but in random order. Each player in turn then flips over two pieces and if they match, the player keeps the completed set and goes again. If not, the pieces are put back in exactly the same spot, facedown. Play continues until all pieces have been matched. The player with the most completed puzzles wins the game.

Draw and Write

This can be challenging, but fun.

Pick out some puzzles that you think would be appropriate for a specific student or team. Now give them only one half of each puzzle. Ask them to trace the puzzle piece and then to draw the rest of the picture and write the rest of the word. Correct answers may not be the same as the other half of the card.



Extensions:

1. Create puzzles with additional words/drawings.
2. Create a bulletin board. Put the topic "Compound Words" on the board and collect examples of pictures and words that illustrate the concept.
3. Read stories to students and point out opposites.
4. Ask students to make up sentences or stories about compound words. For example: "To see at night I use a flashlight."

Extend student learning with all four Reading Skills Puzzle sets from didax.com!

- 211295** Reading Skills Puzzles: Rhyming Words
- 211296** Reading Skills Puzzles: Compound Words
- 211297** Reading Skills Puzzles: Consonant Blends and Digraph
- 211298** Reading Skills Puzzles: Opposites