

Colour Coding Pack

What is it?

Colour coding is an approach that helps children with language problems. It helps:

- children who need help building their language
- children with language disorder or communication problems
- children who need help to say words in a sentence in the right order
- children who are helped by a structured approach to teaching early literacy skills

How Colour Coding Works

Colour coding works by helping children learn the roles different words have in a sentence. For example:

- 'who' words (**subject**) – this can be a person or animal
- 'what doing' words or action words (**verb**)
- 'what' words (**object**) – this could be an object or 'thing'

Colour coding helps show children where each word goes in the sentence. The colours help children to learn what each word means and how they fit together in the sentence. Colour coding helps children to learn new words and build vocabulary.

Using colour coding helps your child to understand 'wh' questions like who, what and what doing. It can help children who miss out words like 'is' and 'the' in a sentence.

How To Do It

We teach colour coding in this order:

- **The Verb** is taught first. Actions words are important words in a sentence. They do not start the sentence but we practise these first. Verbs are words like reading, writing or jumping. We ask a 'what doing' question for red words
- **The Subject (who)** is practised next. Subject words can be people or animals e.g. man, lady, baby or dog. We ask a 'who' question when teach blue words
- **The Object (what)** is practised when children can put who and what doing words in a sentence. They are what the sentence is about. We ask a 'what' question when practising yellow words.

We practise colour coding by using simple pictures, symbols and sentence strips.

Here are some examples of sentences using a picture from the book 'Spot the dog – Happy birthday'



verb



subject + verb



verb + object



subject + verb + object



You can find advice for each stage on the Barnsley speech and language therapy toolkit. Your speech and language therapist will let you know which stage your child needs to work at.

They should be introduced in the following order:

1. [Colour coding 1: verbs](#)
2. [Colour coding 2: subject + verb](#)
3. [Colour coding 3: verb + object](#)
4. [Colour coding 4: subject + verb + object](#)
5. [Colour coding 5: longer sentences](#)

Ways to Practise Colour Coding

The different stages on our toolkit will show you how to practise colour coding with your child. Your speech and language therapist may have given you some pictures to use with the pack.

It is important your child learns the colours and the questions that go with them.

You can also practise colour coding:

- With books – choose pictures from books your child enjoys and use colour coding to talk about what's happening
- Photos – take photos of your child through the day as they play. Use colour coding to talk about what is happening in the photo
- In written work – for older children who are starting to write, use colour coding to help them. Use the sentence strips as writing frames. You can also ask your child to underline the different types of words in a sentence using their colour coding to help them learn the different word types.

You can find the resources for colour coding below including symbols, prompt cards and our sentence strip.

If you are a professional who supports multiple young people within your role we recommend printing, laminating and keeping this pack as a master copy so that you can use this with multiple children.

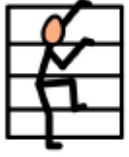
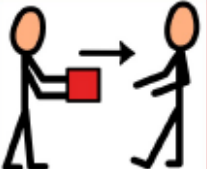
The sentence strip on page 17 can be used as a 'step on' for schools to use as a way to do colour coding in the classroom, to support literacy or for well-practised young people who no longer require the symbols.

Watch our video of [how to make a colour coding book](#) on our YouTube channel

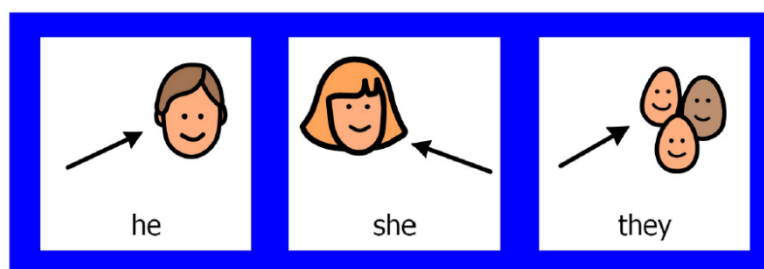
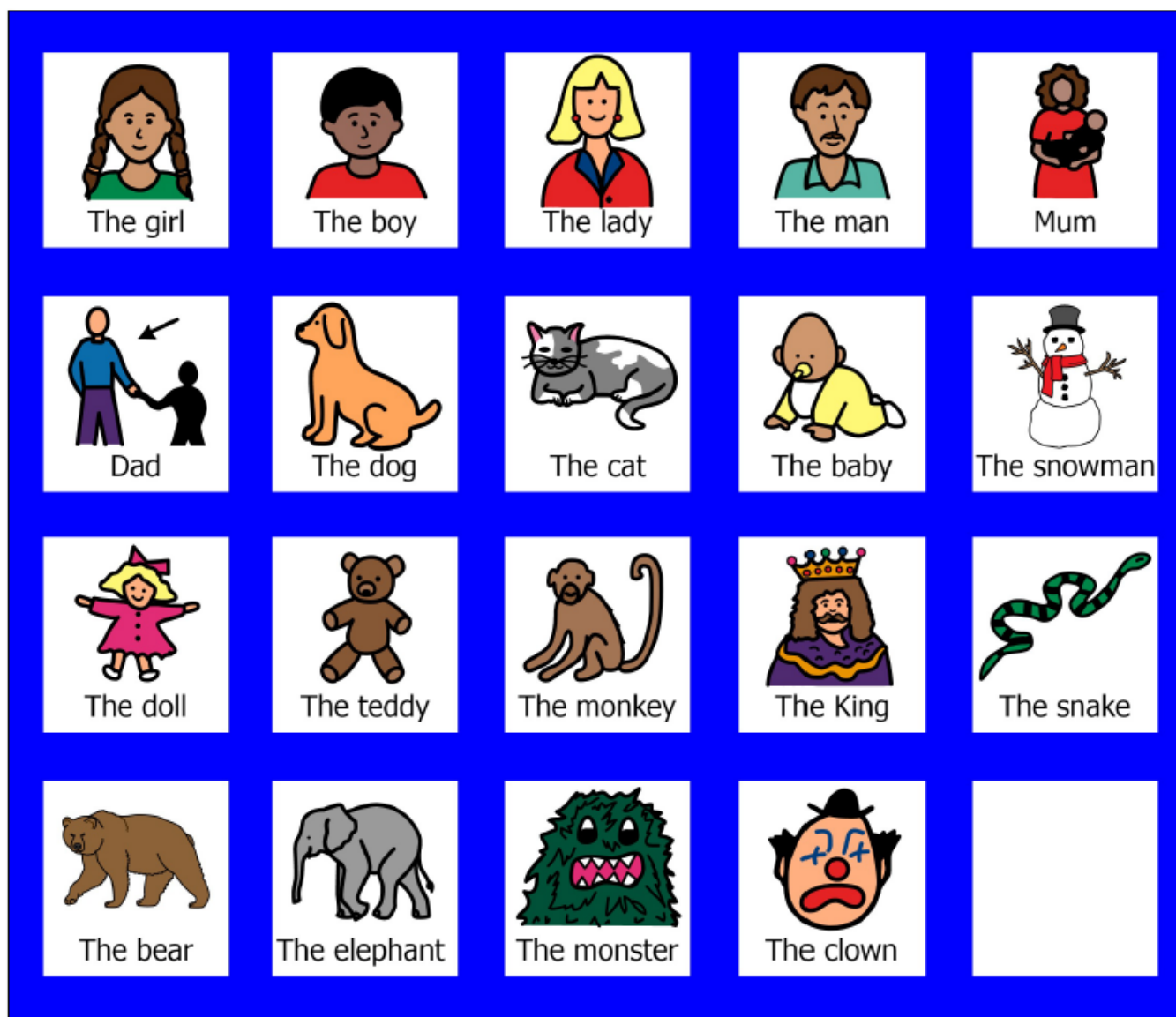
Colour Coding is based on the 'Colourful Semantics' work of A Bryan and has been developed in Barnsley by Fiona Hay of the Barnsley Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service.

If you have any questions please contact speech and language therapy

Verbs - What doing?

 is standing	 is kicking	 is laughing	 is painting	 is reading
 is washing	 is jumping	 is sleeping	 is drinking	 is running
 is eating	 is brushing	 is sitting	 is falling	 is pushing
 is climbing	 is cutting	 is giving	 is carrying	 is crying
 is hiding	 is throwing	 is swinging	 is fishing	 is drying
is				

Subject - Who?



Objects - What?



hair



teeth



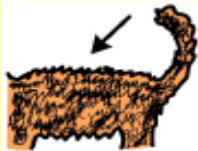
the dog



the teddy



the coat



fur



a bone



an apple



a banana



dinner



a sandwich



the
newspaper



a book



a comic



a letter



the menu



water



juice



tea



television



a present



a ladder



a pig



a ball



a balloon



the leaves



a can



some bubbles



the bed



the slide



her face



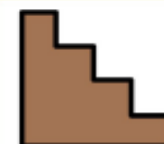
the pots



the window



the tree



the stairs



a car



a doll's
house



some clothes



a picture



a doll



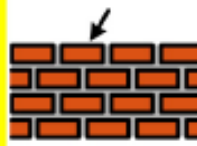
a rope



the floor



a rock



a wall



a chair



some bread



a magazine



the paper



a door



a mountain



the pet food



some pop



some milk



a coffee



the cake



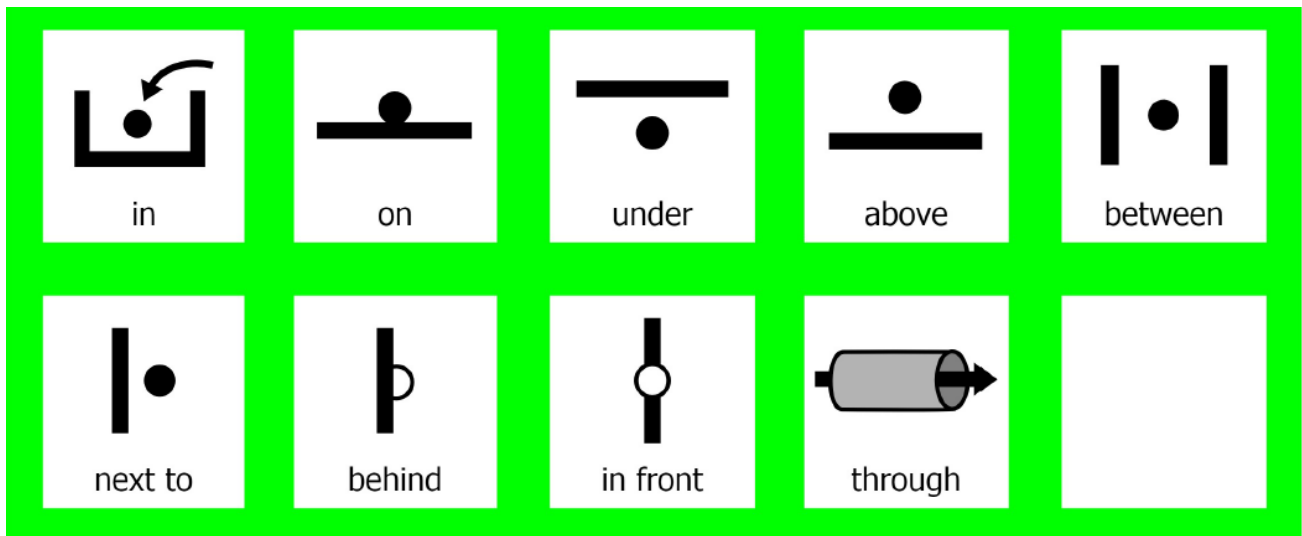
the table



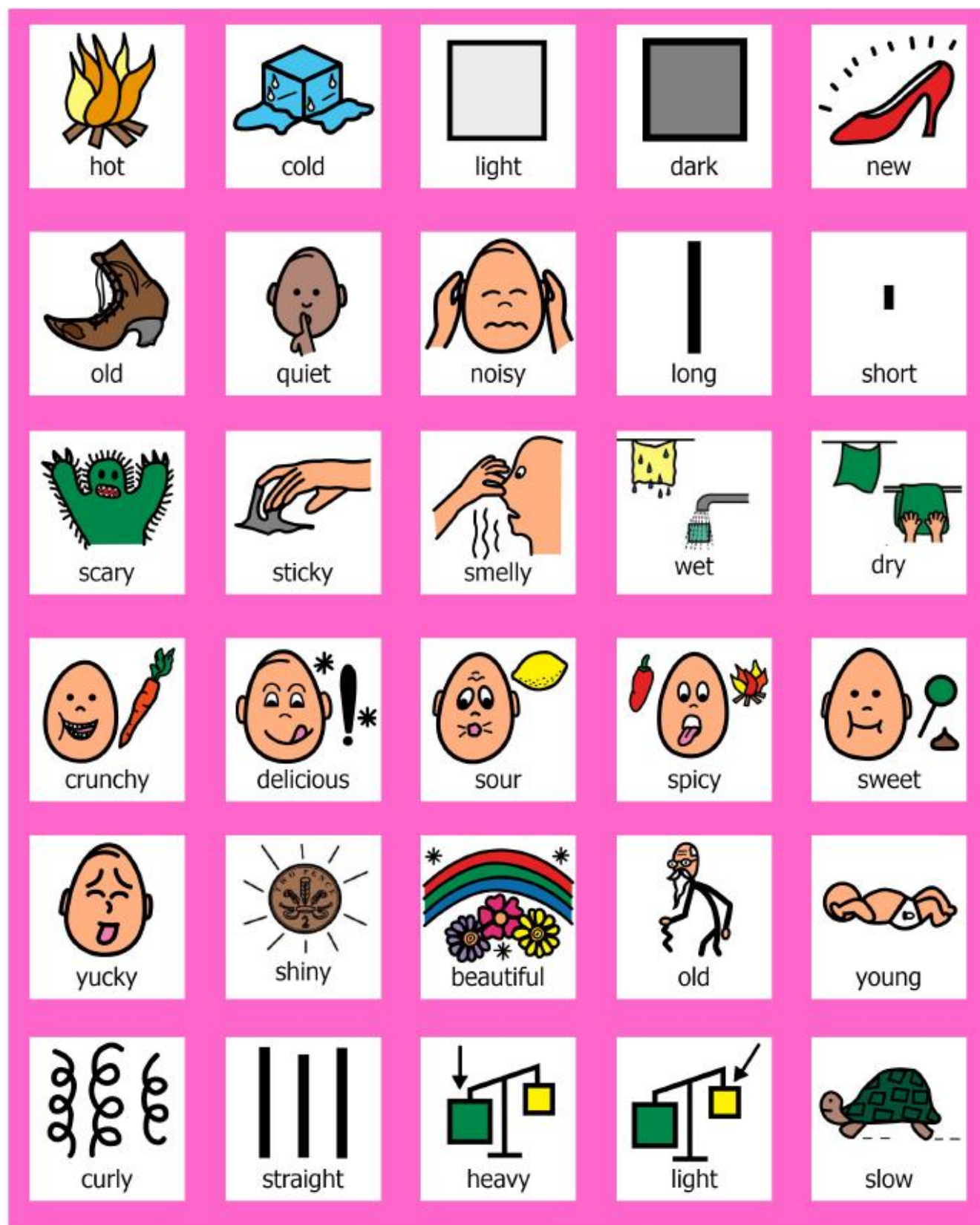
the sand
castle

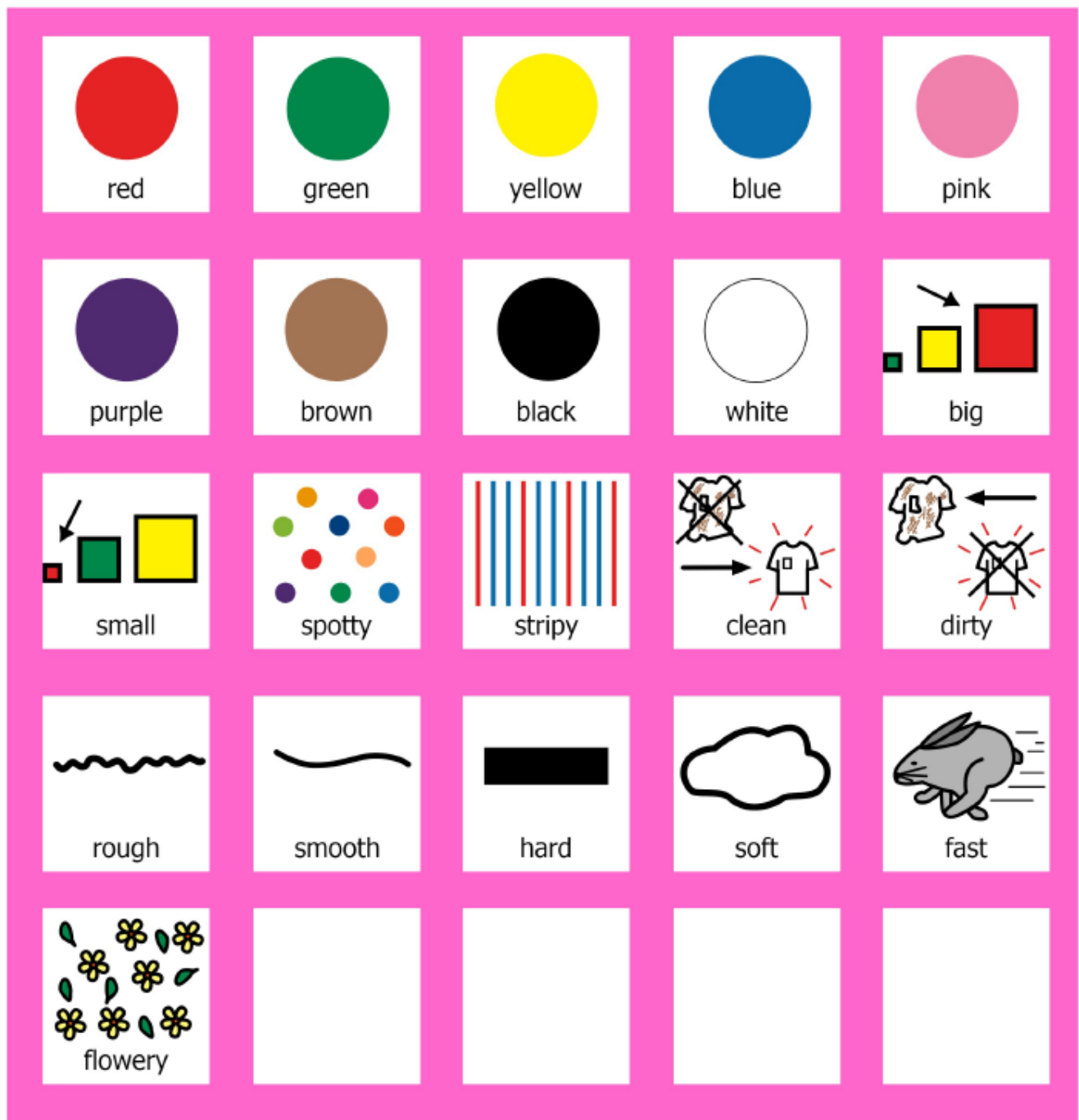


Prepositions – Where?

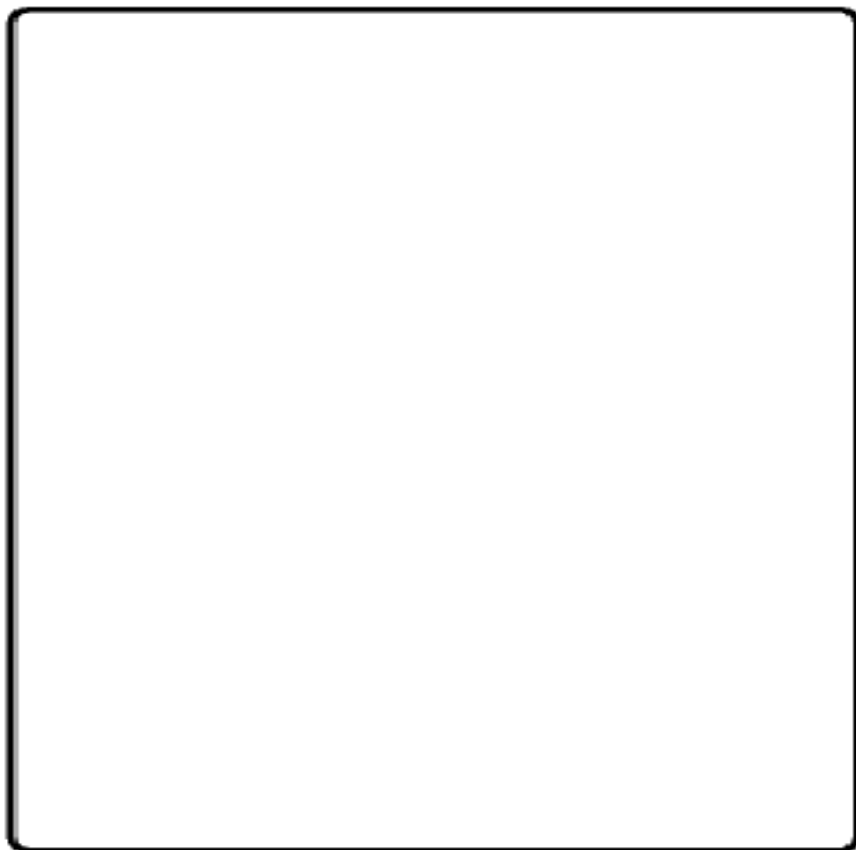


Adjectives – What is it Like?





Prompt cards

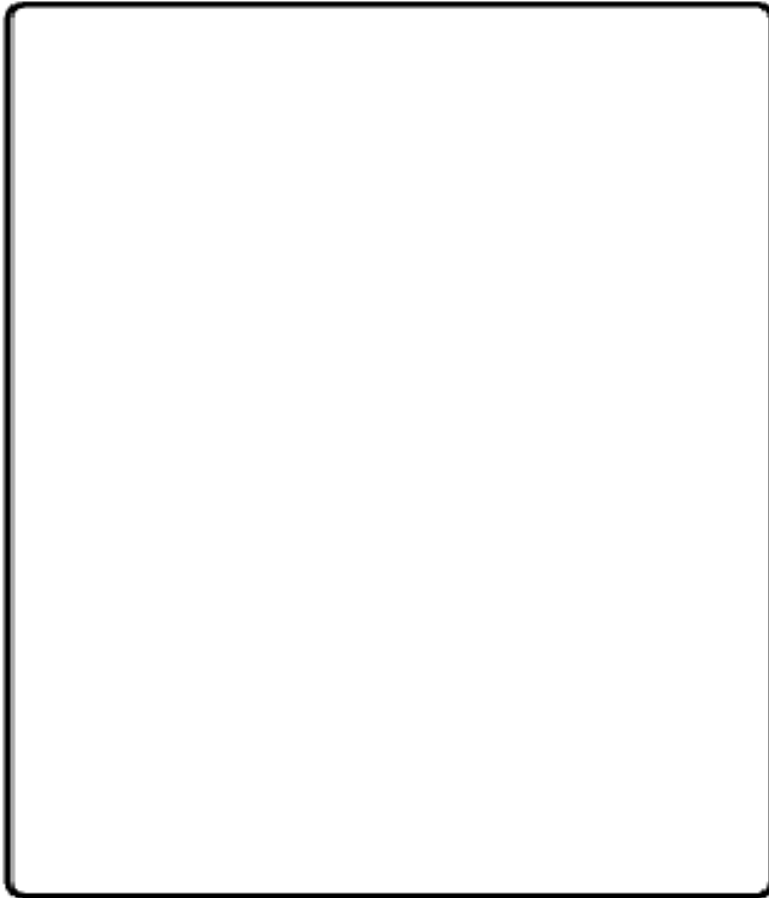


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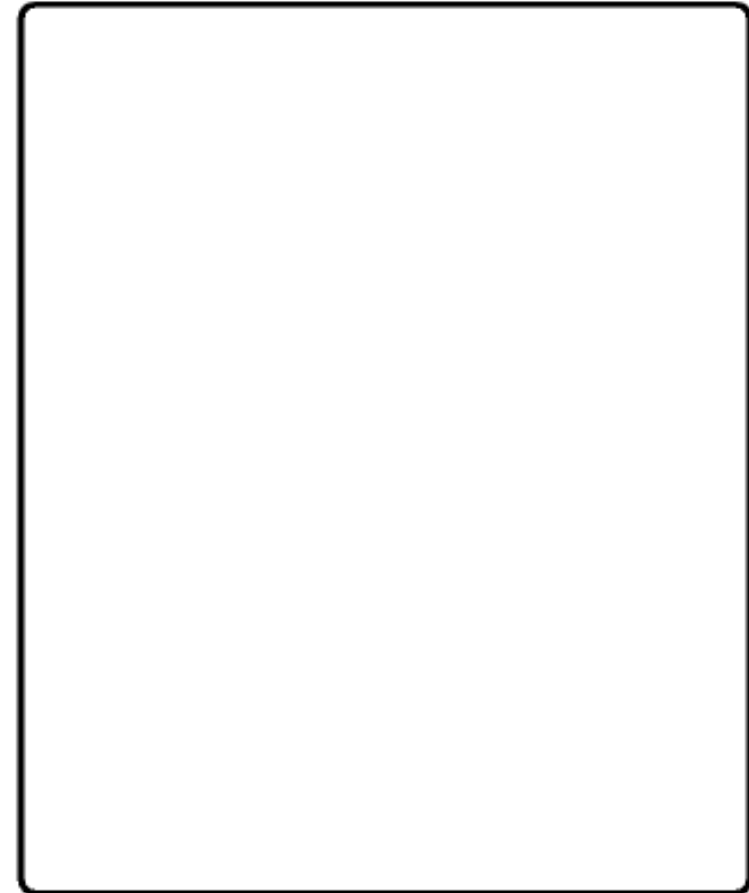


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© F. Hay 2001

What/who?

Where?

What doing?

Who?

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Who?

What doing?

What's it like?

What/Who?

Sentence strip

