Dedicated to the memory of Leslie Duffen. His inspiration and insight into how children with Down's syndrome learn, was and is the driving force behind this software and continues to inspire research and practice in reading for speech and language development.

Speaking for Myself PLUS Handbook for the ***Speaking for Myself PLUS*** **software pack.**

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Introduction

Speaking for Myself was originally designed by Bob Black, with the collaboration of the Down Syndrome Educational Trust and The Down's Syndrome Association. This new version has been improved and enlarged with new graphics, extra content and with the addition of Signalong video and Mayer-Johnson Picture Communication Symbols.

Speaking for Myself PLUS provides an extensive range of activities for those with speech and language difficulties in special and mainstream education (those working at or towards Key Stage 1 and those working from the 'P' scales) or at home. It aims to:

- Develop communication, cognitive and reading skills.
- Introduce signing and symbols as a bridge to the written and spoken word.
- Be an invaluable resource for teaching Reading to teach Talking.

To operate the software you can use the mouse, keyboard, switches, touch-screen or access the switch options via an overlay keyboard. Switch users will be limited to error free options within some activities. All activities, once loaded, can be operated by <spacebar> and <return> or attached switches to some degree. Consult the relevant section of this Handbook for details.

The CD contains four main sections, each of which can be easily accessed from any other – if children need a change from one activity, you can quickly divert them to another. The activities are:

Flash Cards (which talk and write)
Sixty on-screen flash cards are provided to help children to learn (or reinforce) a basic whole word sight vocabulary of everyday words, and to encourage productive speech by imitation. Those learning to sign or using signing as a conceptual bridge to the spoken word can view a video of the relevant sign by clicking on the Signalong button.

Games and Diversions
Speaking for Myself PLUS also offers several interactive multimedia exercises specially designed to reinforce listening, placement, shape, colour and number recognition, plus colouring in.

Talking Stories (about everyday things)
15 Talking Stories, each using only 2 or 3 words per page, have been specially created to encourage productive speech and/or the development of early reading skills. Those wanting to access signing for these stories can now view a video of the signed text as in the Flash Cards activity.

Talking Nursery Rhymes
Eight colourful animated nursery rhymes have been specially selected, which can be listened to, watched, sung along with or used as a missing word/line exercise to reinforce reading skills and further encourage productive speech.

Installing and Finding the Software

Installing

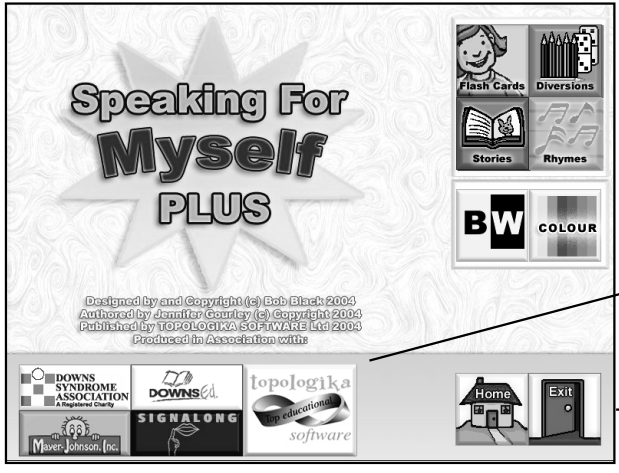
To install the software, put the CD in the drive and follow the on-screen instructions. These may include entering a **Registration Code**, which is on the CD sleeve and/or the Product Registration Card.

Once you have installed the software you will find the following items in a group under your *Start* menu:

Speaking for Myself PLUS — the program itself.
Handbook — an Acrobat version of this Handbook.
Story and Colouring Book – an Acrobat version of the Story and Colouring Book.
Print Flash Cards and Stories – a program for printing all the flash cards and stories. See page 27.
Install Acrobat Reader and Install QuickTime — run the former if you cannot read the Acrobat versions of the documentation, and the latter if the videos don't appear or if the software asks you to.
Upgrade — *Speaking for Myself PLUS* can be supplied with various licence types, from a Single User to an unlimited Site Licence. To change your licence type, simply contact us for a new Registration Code, start this program, and follow the instructions on the screen.

The Home Page

Load the program by clicking on its icon on your *Start* menu in the usual way. Once loaded, you will see the Home Page and hear the intro tune.



These 4 buttons let you access the main activity areas within the program. Flash Cards, Stories, Rhymes, and Diversions (see next page).

These buttons let you choose whether to display colour or black and white symbols throughout the session.

Double-clicking these 5 buttons gives information about the organisations that collaborated in the production of *Speaking for Myself PLUS*.

This button lets you exit the program (see next page).

The activity toolbar is available on most pages and it does the same job each time. It makes it easy to move from one activity to another.

Activity toolbar

This button takes you to the Flash Cards Choice Page.

This button takes you to the Diversions Choice Page.

This button takes you to the Story Activities Choice Page.

This button takes you to the Rhyming Activities Choice Page.

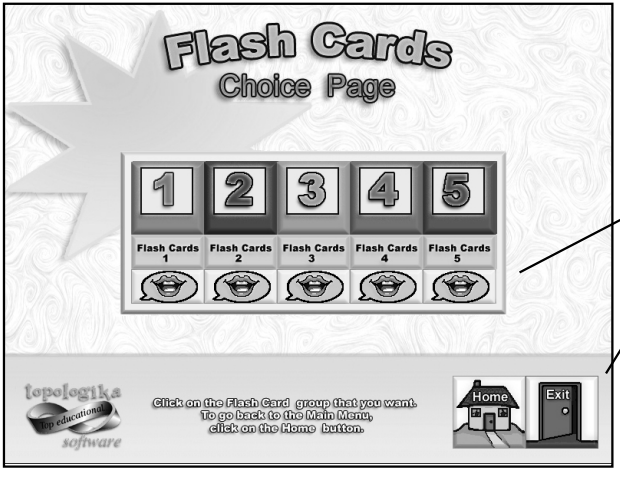
The Home and Exit buttons appear on most pages and do the same job each time. It makes it easy to go back to the Home Page or to exit the program at any time.

Click here to go to the Home Page.

Double-click here to exit the program.

The Flash Cards

From the activity toolbar, clicking the Flash Cards button brings you to the Flash Cards Choice Page. Choose the flash card set you want by clicking on the number 1-5 (you will first be shown a list of words in that set).



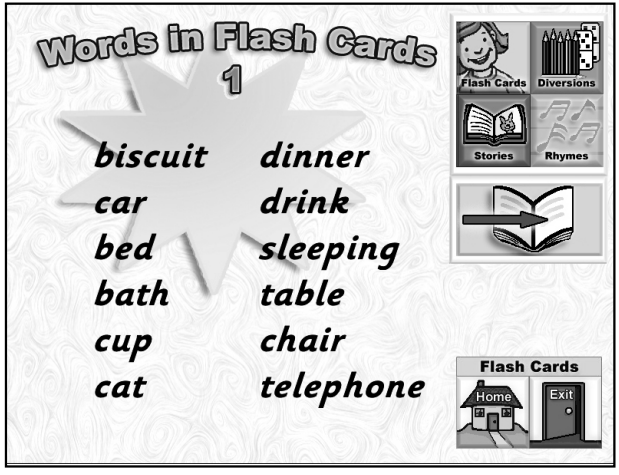
Clicking the mouth picture speaks the name of the activity.

Clicking the Home button takes you back to the Home Page. Double-clicking the Exit button exits the program.

You can also move through the selections using <spacebar> (selection has a black line around) then <enter> to select.

Using the Flash Cards

Here is one of the flash card word lists. The following pages explain how to get the most out of them.



The activity toolbar is explained on page 8.

The red arrow takes you to the first flash card in the set you have chosen.

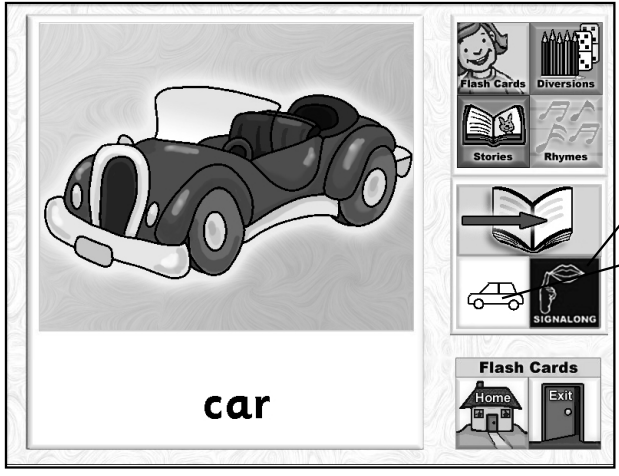
Clicking this box takes you back to the Flash Cards Choice Page.

Clicking the Home button takes you back to the Home Page. Double-clicking the Exit button exits the program.

<Enter> moves onto the first card in the set.

A Flash Card screen

Clicking on the picture speaks the word, clicking on the text box speaks the word and writes it letter by letter.



The activity toolbar is explained on page 8.

The red arrow takes you to the next flash card in the set you have chosen.

Clicking the Signalong button plays the video demonstrating the sign for this word.

Clicking on the symbol speaks the word.

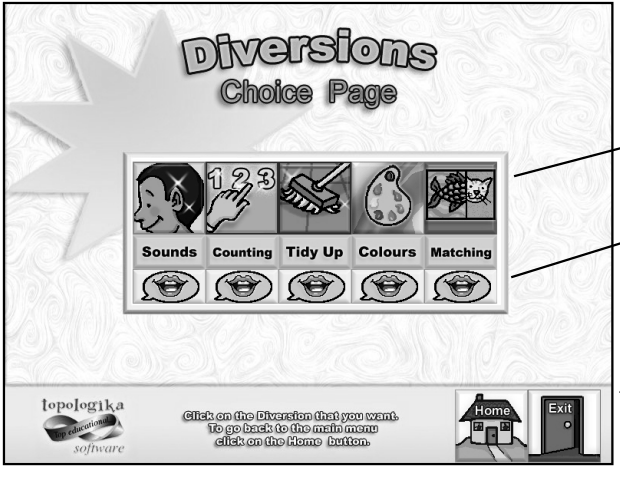
Clicking this box takes you back to the previous page.

Clicking the Home button takes you back to the Home Page. Double-clicking the Exit button exits the program.

<Spacebar> speaks and writes the word, <enter> moves onto the next card in the set.

The Diversions

From the activity toolbar, clicking this Diversions button brings up the Diversions Choice Page. Diversions enable children to practise specific skills or simply play games away from the main activities.



Select the activity that you want by clicking on the picture.

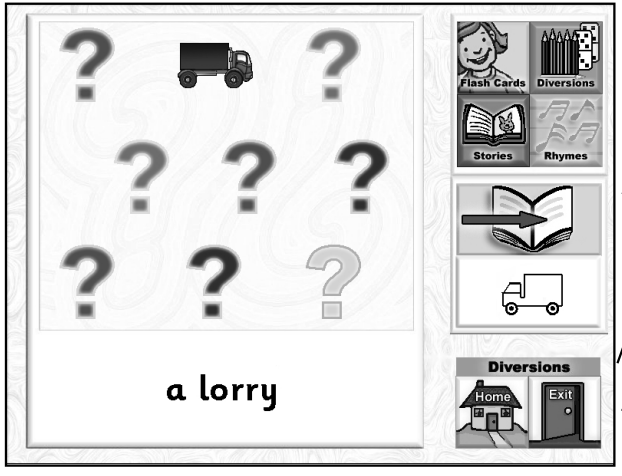
Clicking on the mouth button speaks the activity name.

Clicking the Home button takes you back to the Home Page. Double-clicking the Exit button exits the program.

<Spacebar> highlights each activity in turn
<enter> selects the highlighted one.

Diversions – Sounds Game 1

The first listening game has nine hidden objects. Click on a ? to find out which picture is hiding behind it and what sound it makes.



The activity toolbar is described on page 8.

The red arrow takes you to the next listening activity.

Clicking text speaks it.

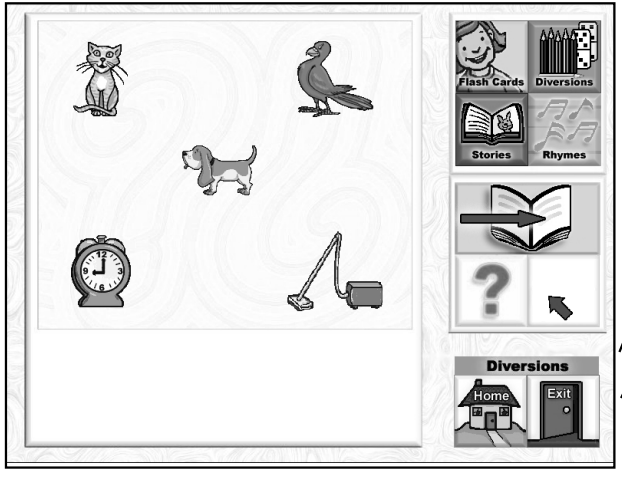
This button takes you back to the previous screen.

Clicking the Home button takes you back to the Home Page. Double-clicking the Exit button exits the program.

<Spacebar> selects a picture, plays its sound and speaks and writes its name. <Enter> takes you to the next screen of listening activities.

Diversions – Sound Games 2 and 3

This shows the second listening game. The idea here is to click on the ? to hear the sound, then click on the corresponding object. The name of the object appears in the text box and is spoken. The third listening activity works in the same way, (but has four objects instead of five).



The activity toolbar is described on page 8.

The red arrow takes you to the next listening activity.

Clicking text speaks it.

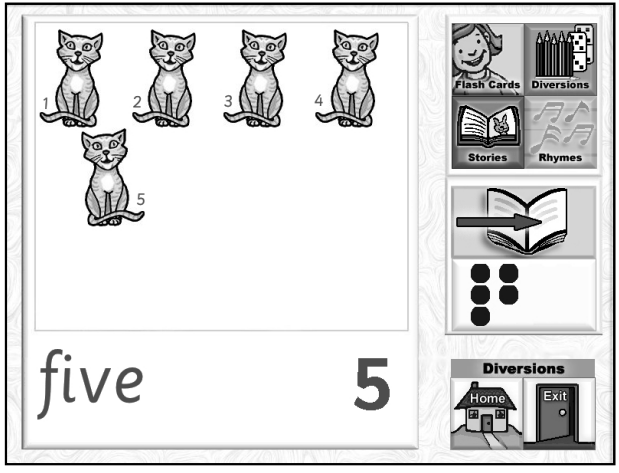
This button takes you back to the previous screen.

Clicking the Home button takes you back to the Home Page. Double-clicking the Exit button exits the program.

<Spacebar> selects a sound, speaks its name and selects its picture. <Enter> takes you to the next screen of listening activities.

Diversions – The Counting Game

Here you can name and count the objects, and read the name for the number.



The activity toolbar is described on page 8.

The red arrow takes you to the next number 1-12 then straight back to 1.

Clicking this button displays the number of cats, writes the word and speaks the number. Clicking on the cats or the written number will speak it again.

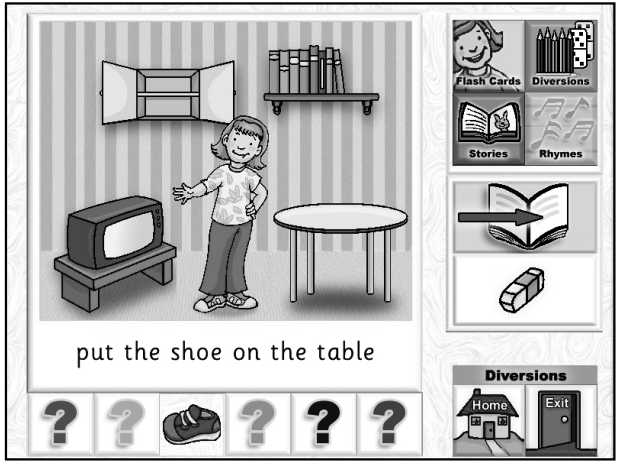
This button takes you back to the previous screen.

Clicking the Home button takes you back to the Home Page. Double-clicking the Exit button exits the program.

<Spacebar> speaks the number. <Enter> takes you to the next number in sequence (1-12) and then back to 1.

Diversions – The Tidy-up Game

In the tidy up game, objects have to be put back where they belong. Click on a ? to see an object and to see and hear the accompanying instruction. Click on the text to hear it again. Click on the object once to 'pick it up' and click again to drop it into the required location.



The activity toolbar is described on page 8.

The red arrow takes you to the next set of pictures under question marks.

Clicking on the rubber removes all the objects that have been placed so far.

Clicking text speaks it.

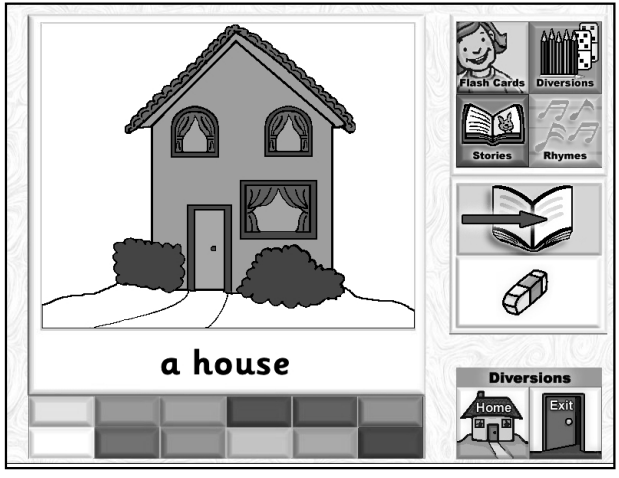
This button takes you back to the previous screen.

Clicking the Home button takes you back to the Home Page. Double-clicking the Exit button exits the program.

<Spacebar> selects an object and reads the instruction. <Enter> places the object in the required location.

Diversions – The Colouring Game

Clicking on a colour in the colour palette selects it, clicking inside any shape in the picture colours it in.



The activity toolbar is described on page 8.

The red arrow takes you to the next picture to colour in.

Clicking on the rubber removes all colouring in so far.

Clicking text speaks it.

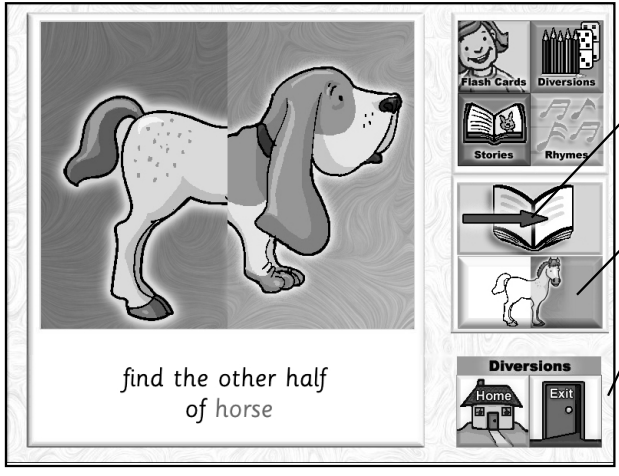
This button takes you back to the previous screen.

Clicking the Home button takes you back to the Home Page. Double-clicking the Exit button exits the program.

<Spacebar> selects a colour and fills in a shape with it, <enter> chooses a new picture to colour in.

Diversions – The matching game

Here you have to find the other half of the object on the left. Clicking on the text speaks it. Clicking on the right side of the picture scrolls through the picture halves. Clicking the left side of the picture speaks the text again if the halves don't match, or shows a reward if they do.



The activity toolbar is described on page 8.

The red arrow takes you to the next picture.

Clicking text speaks it.

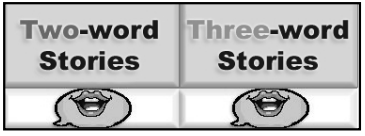
This button takes you back to the previous screen.

The Home button takes you back to the Home Page. Double-clicking the Exit button exits the program.

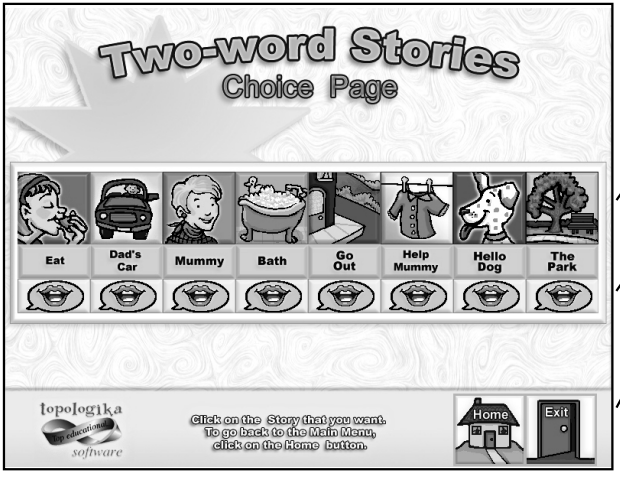
<Spacebar> scrolls through the picture halves. <Enter> speaks the text again if the halves don't match, or shows a reward if they do.

The Talking Stories

From the activity toolbar, clicking this Stories button brings you to the Story Activities Choice Page.



Select either Two-word Stories or Three-word Stories.



Select the story that you want by clicking on the picture.

Clicking on the mouth button speaks the story name.

Clicking the Home button takes you back to the Home Page. Double-clicking the Exit button exits the program.

<Spacebar> highlights each story in turn, <enter> selects the highlighted story.

A Talking Stories page

Clicking on the picture or the words speaks the text.

The activity toolbar is described on page 8.

The red arrow takes you to the next page of the story.

Clicking the Signalong button displays a video demonstrating the signs for the words on this page.

Clicking the symbol speaks the text.

This button takes you back to the previous screen.

Clicking the Home button takes you back to the Home Page. Double-clicking the Exit button exits the program.

<Spacebar> speaks the text, <enter> takes you to the next page of the story.

The Nursery Rhymes

From the activity toolbar, clicking on this Rhymes button brings up the Rhyming Activities Choice Page.

Clicking on the picture selects the rhyme of your choice.

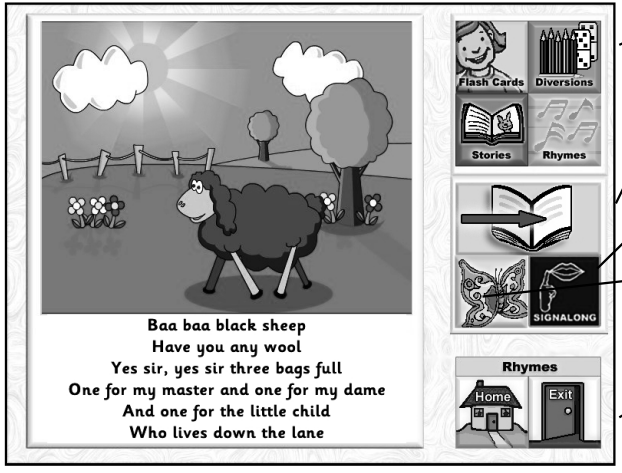
Clicking on the mouth button speaks the name of the rhyme.

Clicking the Home button takes you back to the Home Page. Double-clicking the Exit button exits the program.

<Spacebar> highlights each rhyme in turn, <enter> selects the highlighted rhyme.

Nursery Rhyme Activity 1

Here is the first activity in Baa Baa Black Sheep. This activity simply speaks the rhyme when you click on the text, then plays the animation. Activity 1 works the same way in each of the rhymes (Miss Polly and Row your Boat have two distinct verses and this activity speaks both verses and then plays the animation.)



The activity toolbar is described on page 8.

The red arrow takes you to the next rhyme activity.

Clicking the Signalong button displays a video demonstrating the signs for this rhyme.

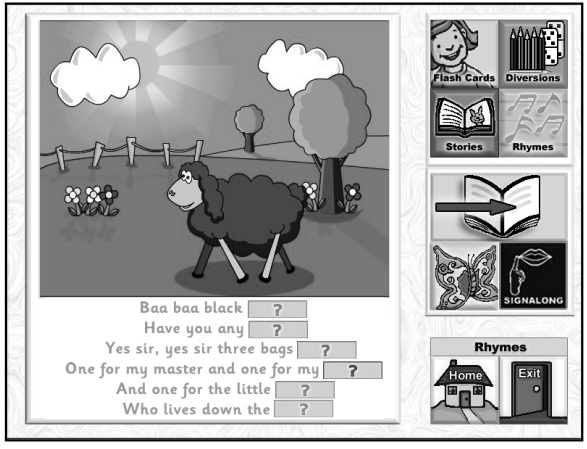
Clicking the butterfly plays the animation.

This button takes you back to the previous screen.

Clicking the Home button takes you back to the Home Page. Double-clicking the Exit button exits the program.

<Spacebar> speaks the rhyme, <enter> takes you to the next activity.

Nursery Rhyme Activity 2



Click one of the grey lines to hear the text spoken, then click on the ? to hear the last word in that line. The lines and ? must be clicked on in the correct order, i.e from top left to bottom right. The animation plays when the last ? has been spoken.

Nursery Rhyme Activity 3

Click on the grey text to hear it spoken then click on the ? to hear the last line of the rhyme. The animation plays after the last line has been spoken.

<Spacebar> speaks the rhyme, <enter> takes you to the next activity.

The Resources and How to Use Them

This section describes the resources that accompany the pack and aims to give people who may not know a great deal about the teaching of reading and the links between reading and spoken language some tried and tested ideas on how to go about it. So, if you're an educator and know what works for you, you can skip most of this section.

How to do it
The stages described below (matching, selecting and naming) can be used to teach a variety of skills. They should first be applied to pictures and then to words. Symbols can be used as a bridge between them if necessary. They should not be attempted until children can successfully match pictures to pictures. Strong visual learners will progress from pictures to text without intermediate stages, and the use of symbols to support text should only be used when the child doesn't relate to the text as a visual clue in itself.

As for all teaching activities, children should be helped to achieve success by carefully explaining what you want them to do and showing them how to do it. Always give praise and try to end each activity on a successful note. If things don't go well, leave the activity for a while and try again later.

Vocabulary knowledge
Before they begin to read words it helps if children can recognise a picture from a spoken or signed word, and flash cards are a good way to help a child to build a visual sight vocabulary. The words in this program can be supplemented with words for family members, pets, friends and personal familiar objects. A flash card will usually consist of a picture of an object with its name beneath it – an error free association is made between the two representations – word and picture.

With the pack we've provided two similar sets of ready-to-use flash cards. One set still has the words attached; the other set doesn't. You can also print all the other flash cards used in the program from the CD. See page 27.

You can first work through a set of flash cards with the words attached, naming or signing each object as the child views it. You can then find out if children can recognise pictures from spoken words or signed words. You can check this by naming some picture cards with them (ones with the words removed) then asking them to select one picture card from a choice of two or three, clearly visible in front of the child. It is helpful if the child names or signs the word as they select the picture, but this is not essential for going on to teach reading. If selecting is difficult try a visual prompt by showing another picture of the same object. If it's still too hard, return to simple picture matching but always use the spoken and signed word to reinforce as appropriate.

Word matching
The next stage is to teach how to match word to word. Start with the flash cards for two words. Show them how to match written words, naming or signing the word as you do so. Make sure that you enjoy and reward the child's success in this game as in the others.

Selecting
When they can match a selection of words, ask them to select a word from a group clearly visible in front of them, starting with a small group of just two or three words and progressing to groups of five or six.

Comprehension and meaning
When children can select words, practise placing written words (including new words) with their corresponding pictures. This helps to teach comprehension and establish the pattern of reading for meaning which will be particularly important later when they start to read words in phrases. There are many ways that you can vary these activities to avoid loss of interest and keep children motivated, for example posting games and fishing games.

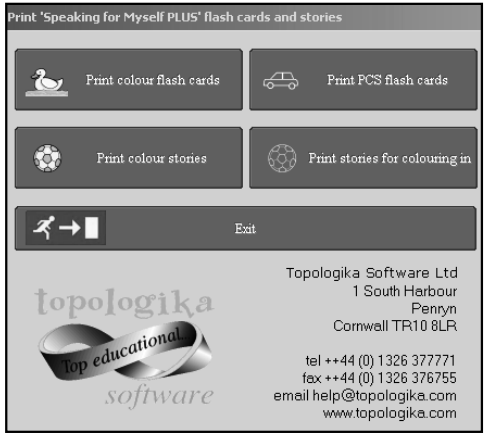
If children experience major difficulties, the use of the supplied PCS to accompany the text on the word cards can help to create a bridge between the picture and written word. PCS versions of the flash cards are on the CD and can be printed out if desired. Whatever way the symbols are used, the aim is to get children to recognise the written word to maximise the strengths of the visual learner. The less use of symbols the better in the long run, removing or blanking out the symbol as the child demonstrates a recognition of the written word.

Extending sight vocabulary
All exercises can be developed using an increasing number of words. The 'Print Flash Cards and Stories' utility on the CD (see next section) will let you print the pictures in the program and a simple word processor will allow you to add personalised words and vocabulary.

Naming words
It may take some time before children are able to name the words by sign, speech or both, so be patient and praise their efforts. Once they have begun to do so they are reading, and you will then need to keep the activities fun and get them to join words together in short, two and three word phrases. The words used in these activities will be the words that next emerge in spoken or signed communication. Our two and three word talking stories will help to identify simple phrases about everyday things.

Printing and accessing the Resources on the CD

You can print all the words and pictures for the flash cards and stories by running the program called *Print Flash Cards and Stories* which is installed alongside *Speaking for Myself PLUS*. You will need to have the CD in the drive as they are all held on the CD itself. When you run the program you will see the following screen:



From here you can choose whether you would like to print colour flash cards, PCS flash cards, colour stories, or stories for colouring in.

Click on any of these, and you can then view the images in turn to print just a selection, or print all of the images in that set.

The images are stored in the Resources folder on the CD as bitmaps (.bmp files). They can be copied from here onto your own computer if you would like to use them in other software packages.

Notes