

Initial Consonants

phonicspelling

Activity & Idea Book

for Basic & Beginning 52- & 72-Card Decks

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Why use phonicspelling *Initial-Consonants Word/Picture Cards*?

TO TEACH AND LEARN LANGUAGE: The study of *phonics* and *spelling*—which presents, practices, and anchors basic skills for reading and vocabulary success, becomes inviting with attractive educational materials. In place of—or with—traditional pages for instruction in *the relationships between alphabet letters and the sounds they represent*, language-learners can use effectively designed *card decks* to acquire or strengthen their word-level reading/spelling abilities. Interactive activity with materials of this kind “lowers the affective filter” to learning success.

TO HAVE FUN: And just about everyone enjoys interesting, productive pastimes—especially the cooperative or competitive *card games* that have endured for centuries. So why not apply the appealing motivation of *distributing, arranging, strategizing, and playing with classically designed 52-card decks* to the teaching and learning of useful language skills? There are many smooth—not effortless, but pleasurable—ways to do so.

What makes phonics/spelling *Initial-Consonants Cards* effective?

THE CONTENT: At any level of study, *initial consonant sounds* and *letters* constitute a significant area of *phonics/spelling* instruction. All 26 *letters* of the English alphabet can *begin* words (or syllables). Also, the sounds made by the *consonants* b, d, f, j, k, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, v, w, y, z are generally *predictable* in initial position—and the letter-sound correlations for c, g, h, q, x are easily taught and learned. Instruction in *initial consonants* can provide a painlessly effective and efficient introduction to *phonics/spelling* in minimally stressful contexts.

THE BENEFITS THEY OFFER: *Initial Consonants Word/Picture Card* activities and games are *efficient* because all players/learners can actively participate at the same time. Learning time is well utilized. The materials are *effective* because they foster *phonemic awareness*—recognition of the meaningful sounds that make up speech. Their *printed* words reinforce “sound-symbol connections” in the mind’s ear; they fit well into elementary reading lessons. And card-users get to connect each word to an illustrated *context*, acquiring useful vocabulary *in meaning categories*, an effective motivator/promoter of language acquisition.

THEIR DESIGN: *Initial Consonant Word/Picture Cards* work in the classroom, in learning labs, and for home study because they encourage users to apply phonics principles to oral reading and spelling. There is no way to complete an activity—or to play (or win) a card game without correlating initial letters with the sounds they make and comparing the spelling/pronunciation of *contrasting items*.

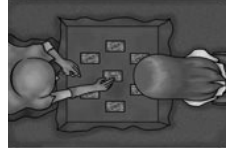
How might "playing cards" reinforce and improve teaching and learning?



THEY HAVE MANY USES. There are many reasons why *playing cards* exist in world cultures—and why *playing cards* has engaged, entertained, and motivated people of all ages for centuries! And because they're readily available, *playing cards* may be used for a variety of solitary and/or social purposes—including "building a house of cards," lining up "card dominoes," throwing or flipping cards, doing "magic tricks," fortune telling, gambling, etc.



IT BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER. Except for *Solitaire* (single-player games also called—and requiring—*Patience*), the activity of *playing cards* can connect people as partners or helpers, encourage positive coping behaviors, provide opportunity to display competitive abilities, stimulate creative or strategic thinking, promote concentration, and occupy the mind with pleasant activity in (hopefully) productive ways.



IT PROMOTES LEARNING SKILLS. While viewing the uniquely distinguishing markings on the *faces of playing cards* (uniformly sized pieces of stiff paper or thin plastic), card-users improve their visual perception by *recognizing, identifying, remembering, naming, interpreting, and differentiating among* (confusing) symbols and/or images.



Associating relevant card-face features with one another helps increase users' classification skills. Handling—shuffling, dealing out, arranging, picking up, discarding—(groups of) cards reinforces accurate vision and small motor skills.



THEY'RE USEABLE FOR A MAJOR ACTIVITY OF UNIVERSAL RECREATIONAL CULTURE.

Whether participants are using traditional decks of four *suits* (♠♣♥♦) of 13 *ranks* (*Ace* through *King*) each—or specially designed packs with educational content, knowing card-playing *terms* and mastering *its skills* will add to their advantages:



- ◆ A *pack* or *deck* of cards is a complete collection designed or compiled for specific activities or the procedures of particular games. A full 52-card *deck* contains 13 sets-of-four that *match* (go together) in some way. During *game play*, cards may be arranged in *face-up* and/or *face-down stacks*—or *spread out* on the *playing surface* (desk or table).



- ◆ A *hand* is the cards held at one time by a *player* during a *round* or *game*, who may *arrange*, *play*, *add*, and/or *discard* cards from it.



- ◆ The *face* of a card displays a *unique image* revealing its *value* and/or other useful info. The *card backs*, identical for all cards in *that deck*, identify them as belonging together.



- ◆ *Cutting* and *shuffling* a deck are ways to randomize the *order* of its cards. *Dealing* distributes them, more or less evenly, to all players. Cards are *collected* after each *game*.

