Reviews

Monster Phonic Fun Word Families

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Monster Phonic Fun consists of two packs of laminated playing cards, which can be used to teach children to produce sounds correctly. Each pack has 56 cards, giving practice in 14 sounds, and a leaflet with instructions for a game that can be played with them. A reference list of the target sounds also appears on this leaflet.

Each card has four words which contain the target sound, printed underneath a picture of a monster with the mouth and tongue in the position needed to create that sound. (The monster pictures also often include illustrations of at least some of the words in the lists.) One word on each card is printed in bold, with the target sound highlighted in red. The game consists of trying to collect an entire set of four words (ie four cards) containing the same target sound by asking another player if they have a particular word.

The Level 1 pack introduces basic sounds, including the short vowels, /t[/





fish shape shop wash

and /ʃ/. The Level 2 pack includes

more complex sounds made up of

photo and the /[ən/ of action.

more than one letter, such as the /f/ in

Games that can be played with

these cards are not limited to the one

suggested on the accompanying

leaflet. Creative teachers will find

many ways to use them,

perhaps getting students to

words on the cards in their

hands.

make up stories containing the

A colleague tried these cards

with a nine-year-old Russian boy

Although the monsters, with their

exaggerated mouths, may appear

they were a hit with this

a little grotesque to adult eyes,

particular child, who was soon

clamouring to 'play monsters' in

every lesson. His teacher remarked

that monsters are always a favourite

with children and that card games

involving monsters are sure to go

down well. The only drawback she

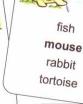
could see was that the words were

so were concealed when held in the

printed at the bottom of the cards and

and they were a great success.

elephant giraffe lion monkey





airplane bus car motorcycle

apple banana lemon

mango



balloons cake clown

party

child's hand. However, the layout probably reflects the developers' concern to teach the correct mouth positions for the words via the monster pictures, and the position of the words on the cards was not considered an insurmountable obstacle to playing the game successfully.

Word Families is a vocabulary-teaching game

also involving a pack of cards. As with Monster Phonic Fun, the cards each have an illustration and four words, one of which is printed in bold. The difference is that here the words are grouped according to categories rather than sounds, eg sports, animals, transport, colours. Again there are two packs of cards, one at a higher level than the other. In the higher-level pack, more abstract concepts are introduced. A similar game is recommended on the accompanying leaflet, ie collecting four cards in a set by asking other players if they have a particular word. Once again, teachers are not limited to this and the cards would lend themselves to many other possibilities. The Word Families illustrations are attractive and, as with Monster Phonic Fun, the cards are laminated and durable.

> lan Mainwaring Harrogate, UK



box hot job top



mother there with



feather



baby body cherry lady



cook look took



hut mud up

fish shape shop

wash