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BY CARNEGIE LEARNING

SCRAP CAT
Teacher Manual

Contents

Goals/Objectives

English Language Arts Standard	Students will build vocabulary, grammar, and decoding skills by sorting words into appropriate categories.
Language/ Reading Skills	Students will... • understand structural features of the English language, including syntactic features like word order and parts of speech, and morphological features like prefixes, suffixes, plurals, and subject-verb agreement (English grammar) • recognize and manipulate units of sound in spoken language such as words, syllables, onset and rime, and phonemes (phonological/ phonemic awareness) • relate speech sounds to specific letters, and apply knowledge of letter-sound relationships to the process of sounding out and reading words (phonics/decoding) • recognize and apply knowledge of words and word parts such as morphemes and phonemes (word structure & knowledge)
Cognitive Skills	Students will… • hold a word in working memory while evaluating which category it belongs to (memory) • focus on specific information, sustain that focus, and ignore distractions while carrying out a task (attention) • rapidly interpret visual information to identify written words (processing)
Social-Emotional/ Executive Function Skills	Students will... • coordinate working memory and long-term memory to enhance reading comprehension • increase confidence in vocabulary recognition • enhance motivation for tasks requiring attention to content details • increase self-regulation

Icon Key

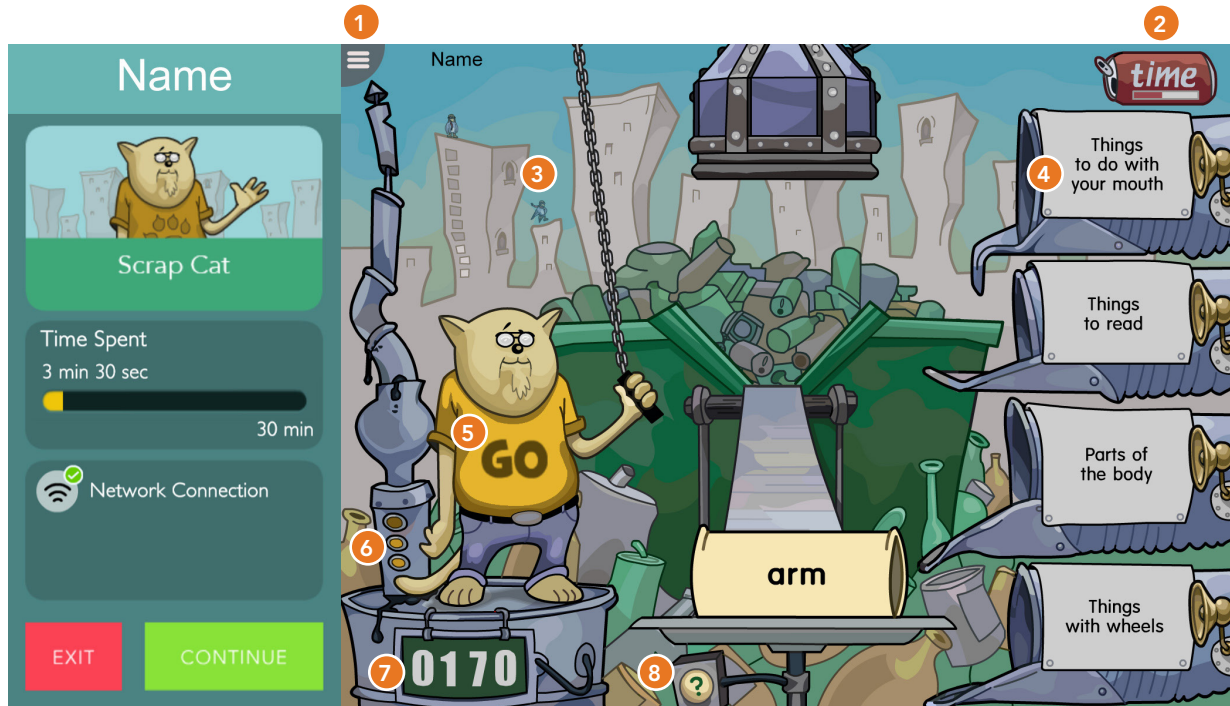| 🔊 Audio	⬇ Download	🌐 English Learner	✔ Quick Check	⚙ Settings	▶ Video

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Exercise Screen

❶ Menu
Shows:
- Time Spent / Time Scheduled for the exercise.
- Network connection status.
- Exit: Returns student to the Assignments screen.
- Continue: Returns student to the exercise.

❷ Time
Bar fills in from left to right to show time spent in the exercise.

❸ Number of Streaks (Birds)
An aviator pigeon squeezes through the steam pipe after the student makes each 3-in-a-row streak. After 4 streaks, the pigeon's head pops out, and after the 5th streak it flies to the roof of a building (up to 24 pigeons).

❹ Answer Buttons (Sorting bins)
The sorting categories are presented on 2, 3, or 4 bins. The student must click on the correct bin to sort a word. Students may click the speaker attached to a bin to hear the category description read aloud.

❺ Go Button
Clicking the Scrap Cat's shirt starts sending recyclables down the conveyor belt. Each bottle or can displays a word to sort into one of the collection bins. When a word is displayed, students can click the Go button again to hear the word read aloud.

❻ Current Streak (Lights on steam pipe)
The steam pipe displays three lights, which illuminate to show the current number of consecutive correct answers. Resets after 3 correct in a row or an incorrect answer.

❼ Points
Shows total points awarded across all of today's sessions.
- Correct answers:
  - Without dictionary help: 4 points
  - With dictionary help: 1 point
- Bonus points: 10 points after 10 correct answers
- High score: Animates when the student surpasses the highest score ever achieved in one session

❽ Help Button
When a word is displayed, students can click the help button to access a dictionary definition. However, when the dictionary help is used, a correct answer is worth fewer points and will not count toward progress.

Task

In Scrap Cat, the student reads words and sorts them into 2-4 categories.

Content

Progression

In Scrap Cat, the student sorts more than 300 words into categories that focus on various aspects of word knowledge:

- word meaning (semantics)
- part of speech (syntax)
- sound (phonology)
- structure (morphology)

As students progress, they are challenged to decode words with a variety of lengths and spelling patterns (e.g., pear, crown, practical, laughter, salamander, elevation), and to think about increasingly abstract aspects of the words. This design helps students build word reading fluency and vocabulary knowledge, as well as the ability to selectively attend to relevant aspects of the words.

Did you know?

Vocabulary knowledge involves networks of associations between various words and concepts. These associations include words with the same or similar meanings, words with the opposite meaning, and categorical relationships between concepts. The more associations a student has to a given word, the easier it will be for them to remember that word and rapidly access its meaning while reading. A text that contains the words *bank*, *cash*, and *save* requires a different set of associations than a text that contains the words *bank*, *river*, and *shore*. In these examples, the word *bank* has two very different meanings, but a reader who has both sets of associations can use those networks to anticipate upcoming content. Categorization tasks are one effective strategy for building vocabulary knowledge. Word sorting exercises like Scrap Cat provide the opportunity to build vocabulary knowledge through semantic category associations.[1] Studies indicate that sorting words into conceptual categories provides practice in decoding words without context cues, while helping students build associative vocabulary knowledge.[2] This knowledge deepens comprehension during reading and improves retention.

[1] Word Sorts | Learner Variability Project (digitalpromiseglobal.org)

[2] Helman, L. A., & Burns, M. K. (2008). What does oral language have to do with it? Helping young English-language learners acquire a sight word vocabulary. *The Reading Teacher, 62*(1), 14-19.

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Introduce

Engage

To introduce this exercise to your students, start by saying: Today, we are going to practice sorting words into categories. Use a t-chart graphic organizer to sort the words into their matching categories. Say: Our first category is things that you can drive. Our second category is things that you can write with. Demonstrate writing the categories, "Drive" and "Write," at the top of the t-chart, then say: Write the categories at the top of each column of the t-tchart. Pause. When I say "Go" write as many words as you can think of that fit in each category in _____ minutes. Ready? One, two, three, go! After students complete their charts, write their answers in the displayed t-chart.

Demo

1. Say: Today, we're going to practice sorting words into categories. Together, we'll work on an exercise called Scrap Cat. I'll get us started, and then I'd like for you to try.

2. Project the "Introduction - English or Spanish" demo for Scrap Cat.

3. Follow along with the demo, which explains how the exercise works.

4. Keyboard shortcuts:

   - Go button = Space bar

   - Possible answers (top to bottom) = Number keys 1 - 4

Direct students to log in and work individually on the Scrap Cat Demo for approximately 10 minutes. This time period mimics the timing of the exercise once it's assigned. Debrief with students to ensure they understand the task and objective of the exercise. Ask: What did you notice? Have students share anything that they have questions about.

Scrap Cat includes instructional audio for the exercise introduction and instructions. By default, these are presented in English. You can, however, select Spanish instructions for all, some, or individual students on the Manage page in mySciLEARN.

Monitor Student Progress

Review Scrap Cat reports regularly to monitor student progress. Use the data to determine which students are succeeding and which students might be struggling to make progress.

| **Where to look...** | **What to look for... what it means** |

PROGRESS: Reading Level 3 Exercise Progress - Scrap Cat

The colored line shows student progress and their percent complete. Each dot indicates a day the student worked on the exercise.
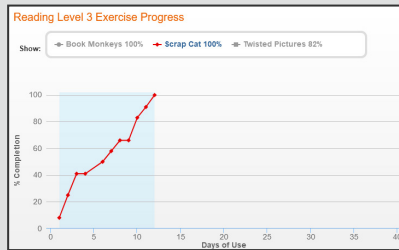
Is the line going up?

The student is completing content accurately and making progress.

Is the line flat across several dots?

The student may be struggling and you need to find out why.

Are there long lapses between dots?

The student may be skipping this exercise.

USAGE: Usage Details - Schedule

Do you see half-filled gray circles?

The student is working on this exercise, but not meeting the scheduled time. Make sure that they have time to complete their daily schedule. If fatigue is an issue, add some breaks to their schedule.

Do you see red circles?

The student is skipping this exercise. Provide support to help them re-engage.

USAGE: Usage Details - Minutes/Questions

Are many days highlighted in red?

The student is not meeting their daily schedule. Check the Schedule tab in this report to investigate further.

Is the student answering fewer questions than usual?

They may be distracted or losing focus. In comparison to their previous activity, a low number of questions to minutes may indicate the student is not applying themselves to the task.

Is the student answering more questions than usual?

They may be rushing. In comparison to their previous activity, a high number of questions to minutes may indicate that the student is trying to amass points or progress through the content without actually learning it. Remind them that making progress depends on accuracy, not speed.

Where to look...

PROGRESS: Progress Details - Scrap Cat Progress

Percent Correct

To pass a group, students must complete a 20 question unit with at least 90% correct. Smaller units may be presented for extra support. The criteria for passing the smaller units ranges from 83% to 94% correct. Note that each row may show the average of multiple attempts and/or units of different sizes. If you see a check mark with a correct score of less than 90%, it is because less accurate earlier attempts have been averaged in with the final, passing attempt.

Questions

The standard unit has 20 questions. However, students may be presented with smaller units for extra support. This occurs whenever students begin a new category type. It can also occur when starting a new group, if the prior group was not passed after three attempts.

What to look for... what it means

Are there red bars under Progress?

Each category type includes from one to five groups. To pass a group, the student must correctly answer at least 18 questions in a unit of 20. Red bars indicate that the student did not pass the group within three attempts. This student will move on to new content but they will revisit the group later. Make sure that the student remains focused and motivated.

Is Correct below 70%?

The student may be struggling with the task. See the "Adjust Instruction/Intervene" section in this teacher manual for suggestions on supporting struggling students.

Has the student answered too many questions without passing?

Each attempt at a group typically takes 20 questions, but may include as many as 63 when the student starts with smaller units for extra support. Typically, students will pass a group after one or two attempts. Some groups, especially those pertaining to parts of speech, may require an additional attempt. A student who has not passed a group after three attempts may be struggling. See the "Adjust Instruction/Intervene" section in this teacher manual for suggestions on supporting struggling students.

Reading Level 3 Progress Monitoring Chart in Student & Teacher Resources

Adjust Instruction/Intervene

Differentiation Activities

Differentiating instruction requires continually striving to know and to respond to each student's needs in order to maximize learning. Use the data in Scrap Cat reports to adjust instruction to meet each student's needs and respond to variance among learners. The activities below are suggestions to support students who might be struggling with their progress in Scrap Cat.

> **☑ Does the student understand the exercise goal/task?**
>
> After initially reviewing the exercise goal/task with the student, if the student is demonstrating difficulty, consider clarifying the instructions, setting a goal based on student area of need, and modeling and practicing self-monitoring to encourage accuracy, confidence, and independence.
>
> - First, start by setting a clear goal:
>   - Set a goal in student-friendly language prior to beginning the exercise. The goal should be positively stated, written using clear and concise language, and be observable and measurable.
>   - Review the goal with the student and check for understanding.
> - Next, introduce and model how the student will monitor their goal:
>   - Choose or create a self-monitoring chart for students to track their progress (aligned with the Reading Level 3 Progress Monitoring Chart found in Teacher Resources). Use the chart to motivate, encourage, and allow the student to practice self-monitoring. Include the goal on the self-monitoring chart.
>   - Explain and model the steps needed to complete and interpret the self-monitoring chart.
>   - Practice completing and interpreting the self-monitoring chart with the student.
> - Then, clarify the expectations by modeling and reviewing the specific steps required to complete the exercise:
>   - Review the steps of the activity with the student.
>   - Model or explain the steps of the activity.
>   - Practice completion of the task with the student.
>   - Encourage the student to explain or show you how to complete the task.
>   - Monitor independent practice and provide feedback and prompts as needed.

✓ Is the student on task and engaged with the activity?

When a student is struggling to stay on-task and engaged, consider the strategies below as a starting point to increasing student engagement.

- Adjust the pacing or duration of instruction.
- Provide built-in breaks and allow the student to request breaks as needed. Involve the student in determining their preferred and most successful work schedule. Some students prefer longer work periods and longer breaks while others prefer shorter work periods and more frequent breaks. Adjust as needed to increase student momentum, success, and confidence.
- Consider student motivation. Motivation can be intrinsic and extrinsic. How to motivate the student is largely dependent on their learning needs, preferences, and reinforcers. Student observation, reinforcer surveys, rapport building, and parent and student questionnaires can be helpful in determining how to increase student motivation.

✓ Are there words in the phrases or sentences that the student doesn't know?
- Have the student write down any unfamiliar words.
- Define and review key vocabulary used in the task.
- Display key vocabulary words and definitions.
- Promote student practice with vocabulary sentence strips, guided-notes, response cards, or note cards.

✓ Is the student struggling to identify details within a picture?

Print the Scrap Cat Sorting Worksheet, or draw your own t-chart.

- Start by choosing a chart with two to four columns. You may need to adjust the number of columns based on the activity and student needs.
- Determine the sorting categories. Choose the type of sorting categories based on student needs. Here are some examples to get you started:
  - Sort by sound (e.g., words that begin with short *a* vowel sound)
  - Sort by function (e.g., things that we write with)
  - Sort by feature (e.g., things that are blue)

Facilitate and Encourage

Adjust Instruction/Intervene

Student Resources

You may decide to use the following worksheets with your students:

⬇ Scrap Cat Sorting Worksheet in [Student & Teacher Resources](#)

⬇ Reading Level 3 Completion Chart in [Student & Teacher Resources](#)

Students can self-monitor their progress in each Reading Level 3 exercise by filling in the bar each day with their actual completed percentage. This provides students with an overall view of how much content they've completed compared to how much they have left to do. Students will need one copy.

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