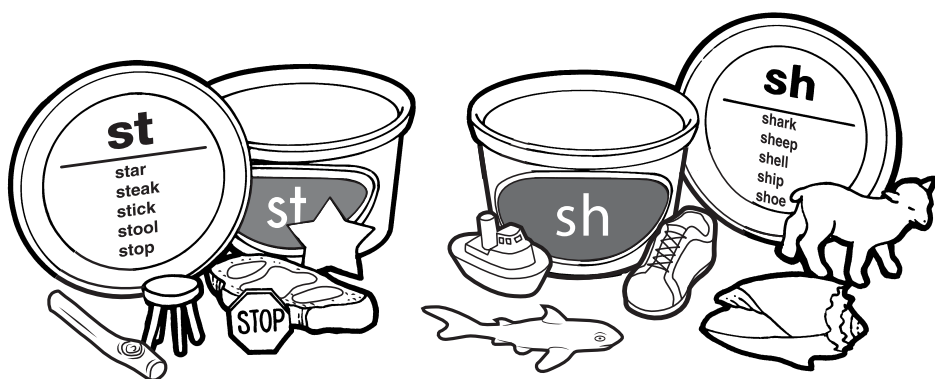


# Blends & Digraphs Teaching Tubs



The Blends & Digraphs Teaching Tubs are designed to help students develop early reading skills—and have fun in the process! As students use the miniatures in a variety of skill-building and creative activities, they will learn to hear, read, and write blends and digraphs. This in turn will help them gain greater confidence in oral and written language!

## What's Included:

- 12 stackable tubs with lids
- 36 labels
- Assorted miniature objects



### WARNING:

**CHOKING HAZARD**—Small parts.  
Not for children under 3 yrs.

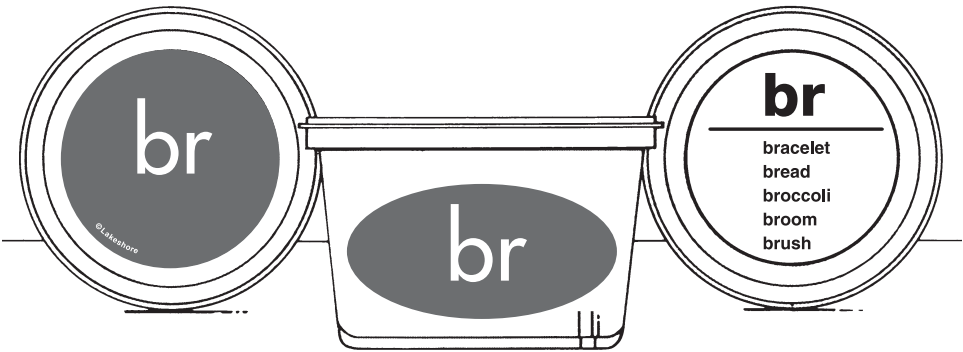


### WARNING:

This set contains a natural shell that can break into sharp point or edge if dropped. Handle with care and use adult supervision.

# Putting It All Together

First, place the self-adhesive sticker labels on the tubs. (Tubs for blends will have blue labels; tubs for digraphs will have red.) Label the lids one blend or digraph at a time: Put a round label with the blend or digraph on the top of one lid, then flip the lid over and place the label with the list of items on the back side. (The list will help you remember which five objects go in that tub.) Continue this procedure until all the lids are labeled. Afterward, label the tub sides with the oval labels, one per tub.



Now comes the exciting part—exploring and sorting the miniature objects! Use the list provided to help you sort the miniatures and place them in the appropriate tubs.

## Blends

<b>br</b> bracelet bread broccoli broom brush	<b>cr</b> crab cracker crayon crocodile crown	<b>fl</b> flag flamingo flashlight flower fly	<b>gl</b> glasses glitter globe glove glue	<b>pl</b> plane plate pliers plug plum
<b>sc</b> scale scarf scoop scooter scorpion	<b>st</b> star steak stick stool stop	<b>tr</b> train tree tricycle trophy truck		

## Digraphs

ch	sh	th	wh
chair	shark	thermometer	whale
cheese	sheep	thimble	wheat
chicken	shell	thirteen	wheel
chili	ship	thorn	whiskers
chocolate	shoe	thumb	whistle

## Listening and Speaking Activities

The first step for students is to recognize the sounds that blends and digraphs make. A *blend* is a combination of two or more letters; when sounded together, each letter can still be heard. A *digraph* is a combination of two or more letters that makes a single, unique sound. The following activities will give students practice at saying and listening for blends and digraphs.

### Introduction to the Blends and Digraphs Tubs

Use this small group activity to introduce any of the tubs to your class. Gather the group together at a table or on the floor. Begin by taking out each object from one tub and saying its name. Invite the students to examine the objects and say each word aloud. Then ask, "What beginning sound do you hear repeated in all the words?" Ask the students to say the words again with you, this time emphasizing the beginning sound. Show the tub lid to the group and point to the blend or digraph on the label. Tell them that these two letters make the beginning sound for each of the words they said.

### Sound Detectives

Tell the students that they are going to be "sound detectives" as you say several words. Choose a blend or digraph, such as "gl," that you want to emphasize. Explain that each time they hear a word that begins with "gl," they are to stand; if the word begins differently, they are to sit. Then say the words one by one, giving each child enough time to distinguish the initial sounds. If a student has difficulty identifying the blend or digraph, encourage the student to say the word with you. Encourage the group to take time to listen.

### Find the Partners

Put three objects on a table. Two of the objects should begin with the same blend or digraph. Ask students, one by one, to say the names of the objects out loud, then find the "partners." Repeat the activity with other sets of three objects.

Challenge older students with this fun variation: Choose two items from each tub, and scramble them in a pile. Ask the students to choose an item from the pile and say its name out loud. They can then look for the item's partner by choosing and saying the names of some other items until they find one that shares the same blend or digraph. Once they've found the partner, ask them to pick up another object and find its partner. They'll end up with 12 pairs of manipulatives.

## **Feely Bag Fun**

Place the objects from several tubs into a feely bag. Put the empty tubs in the center of the group. Pass the feely bag around the group, and invite one student at a time to reach in and pull out an object. Ask the student to look at the object, name it, and identify the blend or digraph sound. Ask the student to put the object in the correct tub and pass the bag to the next player. (Students can also do this activity at a learning center.)

For another fun game, try this variation: Select an object from a tub and put it in a small paper bag. Then tell a riddle about the object, such as, "This is an animal that has four legs. Its name begins the same way as 'shoe' and 'shell.' What's in the bag?" When a student volunteers the answer, "sheep," ask the student to remove the object from the bag to see if the answer was correct. That student can then choose the tub in which the miniature belongs. Repeat this game with a few other items.

## **Add-a-Word Game**

Help your students develop their ear for blends and digraphs with this activity. Invite the students to sit in a circle. Choose one of the tubs (the "th" tub, for example). Begin the game by asking the class to think of as many words as they can that begin with "th." Create a simple sentence, such as "I'm thinking of a thorn." Say the sentence out loud, then ask a student to repeat it, adding to the list: "I'm thinking of a thorn and a thermometer." The next student adds another "th" word to the list. Play continues until the students run out of words. Start a new round with another tub. Examples of easy sentences to begin the game are: "I am bringing a broom," "I stared at a stop sign," "Please give me a plum" and "I tried to ride a train." Let the class know that silly sentences are part of the fun of this activity!

## **Tell a Stunning, Stupendous Story**

Take all of the objects from one tub and place them in the center of a group of students. Ask, "Can we tell a story using all of the objects?" If you wish, you may start this activity, then let the students finish. You'll be surprised at the imaginative tales they can create! (You may find that it is easier for students to create stories with some tubs than with others.)

Here are some examples:

"King Crocodile wore a crown.  
He liked to eat crab salad on  
a cracker. After lunch, he colored  
with a crayon."

"My mom made chicken chili for  
dinner. I sat down in my chair and  
filled my bowl. I put cheese on top.  
For dessert I had chocolate cake."

## Reading Activities

### Object-Word Matching

This activity may be played as a silent game after you've explained it to the class. First, choose two or three tubs; spread their contents out on a table next to the empty tubs. Write the names of the tub items on the board or on an easel. Point to one of the words on the list. The group remains quiet, but thinks of the object represented by the word. Then ask for a volunteer (or wait until a student raises his or her hand, if you are playing a silent game). The student you select will find the appropriate miniature and put it in the correct tub. Continue the game by choosing a new word and inviting another student to look for the appropriate miniature and tub.

A variation of the game is to reverse it! This time, hold up a miniature and invite a student to point to the word it represents. Repeat the process for the rest of the group. Students can repeat this activity by working with partners at a learning center.

### Look in Your Books

Encourage students to "hunt" for familiar blends and digraphs in the books they've finished reading. Invite them to read and enjoy the book first, then go back and see what familiar letter combinations they can find.

## Writing Activities

### Letter Cards

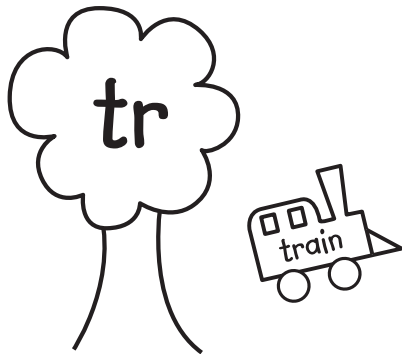
This activity has two variations: one for younger students and one for older students. For younger students, write each blend or digraph on its own 3" x 5" index card. Put one object from each tub on a table. Ask the students to place each index card next to the appropriate miniature. For older students, put five objects from different tubs on a table, each one on its own *blank* 3" x 5" index card. Ask the students to identify the object and write its beginning blend or digraph on the index card. Students can work individually or in pairs at a learning center.

## Copy the Word

Younger students can develop early writing skills with this activity. First, write a word from one of the tubs on a piece of paper (or prepare a worksheet in advance). Ask students to write the word several times underneath your example. After they've had some practice writing the word, ask them to underline the blend or digraph they've just written. Older students can copy and underline the words directly from the tub lids.

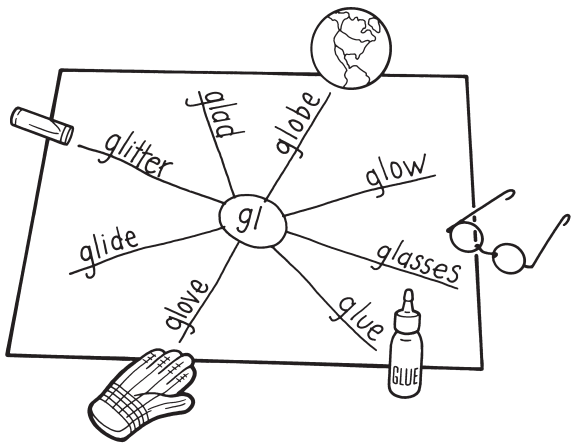
## Shape Booklets

Invite the class to make booklets shaped like an object that begins with a particular blend or digraph. For example, for "tr," ask them to cut out three or four pages in the shape of a tree and staple the pages together. Then they can print "tr" clearly on the cover page and in small letters at the top of each page. Invite the students to draw a picture of tub items or other words that begin with "tr" on each page. Older students can write the words in their books below each illustration.



## Circle of Words

After you explain this activity, students can do it independently at a learning center. Ask the students to select one tub. Then, on a piece of paper, ask them to write the blend or digraph in the center and circle it (for example, write "gl" and circle it). Next, they can draw lines from the center circle outward, like the spokes of a wheel. Ask them to place a miniature at the end of each spoke, then write the word represented by the miniature on the spoke itself. Encourage older students to think of and write out words not represented by objects in the tub.



## Write a Story Together

Try this interactive writing activity to develop students' writing and reading skills. Ask the class to write a story together using all the objects from one tub. Use the board or a large piece of paper clamped to an

easel. Before you start, brainstorm some ideas and words; then invite the students to begin writing the story. If necessary, help them spell the words and create complete sentences as they do the writing. When the story is finished, invite the students to read the story aloud as a group.

Older students may be able to write their own stories; ask them to underline the letter combination they're working with. Provide story paper for the final version. Encourage them to illustrate their stories.

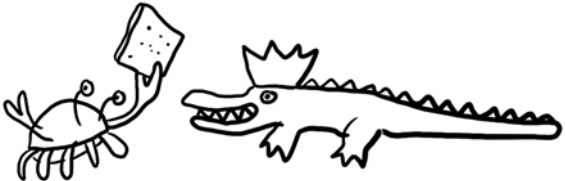
Note: Some of the tubs lend themselves more easily to story writing than others. Students may want to leave one of the tub items out of the story or substitute another word that begins with the same blend or digraph. At first, it may be a challenge to think of stories or poems. Be assured that it gets easier with practice!

Flynn the fly fell in love with Flossie Flamingo. That night, he picked a flower for her. Since it was dark, he flew with a flashlight. The light scared Flossie, so she fled.

The movie star came into the restaurant. He sat on a stool and ordered a steak dinner. When he was finished, he didn't stop eating! He ordered strawberry ice cream for dessert!

Poems and Limericks

Encourage older students to write poems using the items in just one tub. (The poem may be rhymed or unrhymed.) Brainstorm a few ideas and words, then invite students to write their ideas creatively. If your class is familiar with the limerick form, invite them to try writing one using some or all of the items in one tub. Ask them to underline the blends or digraphs.



I drew a crab with a cracker  
and a crocodile with a crown.  
Just give me one crayon  
and I'll draw a whole town!

The students may illustrate their poems, if they wish. When students are finished, ask them to switch poems with a partner. The students can take turns reading their partners' poems aloud to the class.



The whale at the wheel whistled  
As he thought of things that tickled,  
Like wheat on your feet  
And crumbs on your sheet  
And whiskers on cats when they sniffled.

### What If I Lose an Object?

Not to worry! Replacement objects are available as long as our supply lasts at a cost of \$1.50 and \$2.00 shipping. (If you are ordering more than one object, you need only include the shipping charge once.) We will try to supply you with the exact object you are missing. If we are unable to give you the exact object, we will ship an object with the same blend or digraph in its name.