



Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired

Outreach Programs – Texas Deafblind Project

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## Tactile Symbols Used at Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired



Developed by Staff in Comprehensive Programs

Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired

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# Tactile Symbols

## Who can use tactile symbols?

A pre-requisite for using tactile symbols is the knowledge that one thing can represent another thing or be symbolic. For example, a spoon can represent the activity of eating a meal, a piece of toilet paper or diaper can represent going to the bathroom, a towel can represent bath time. Many children who are congenitally deafblind are not yet symbolic, and many who are only have a few symbols that are meaningful to them. These individuals are not ready to use tactile symbols yet. They need to use real, whole objects associated with familiar activities and routines for some time before they begin to associate it and have it symbolize the activity.



*Figure 1 Tactile symbol for anxious is an s-hook in the middle of a heart-shaped piece of poster board.*

In helping a child become ready for tactile symbols we follow this progression from concrete to abstract: whole object, part of an object, tactile symbol. Tactile symbols are very abstract. When you look at the symbols you will find that at first glance they have no obvious meaning. For example, there is nothing about an s-hook in the middle of a piece of heart-shaped poster board that conveys its meaning of “anxious”.

In teaching any individual to use tactile symbols, we usually start by pairing them with the more concrete symbol of a whole object or part of an object which the individual already understands. Children who are not well versed in using whole and part of an object to represent something are not ready to use tactile symbols.

## What are tactile symbols?

Tactile symbols are a static communication form that can be recognized by touch. This makes them a very valuable communication form for students who are blind or deafblind and who don't have another practical static form with which they can access to record or retrieve recorded information. For many students, tactile symbols are an alternative to braille. If the students who do not yet read or who cannot easily recognize braille letters by touch for some reason such as lack of sensitivity in the fingertips, tactile symbols can be a great option.

Secondly, tactile symbols are a communication form that can be used like pictures for someone who has trouble seeing and recognizing pictures. Many people are familiar with the use of picture symbols for students who haven't been able to successfully learn to read. Tactile symbols are an alternative for a student who might benefit from picture symbols, but who cannot see pictures well enough to make them practical to use.

Emerging communicators who are familiar with using objects as basic representative symbols have a need to have a form that is more portable. Tactile symbols are used the same way, but are smaller, so they are a more flexible and portable.

Tactile symbols may also serve as a literacy form for emerging communicators. Combining a series of symbols can create a sort of sentence in an experience story book to allow the

student to “read” to others or his/herself. It can also facilitate valuable interactions between the student and others to serve as a topical focus point for conversations using a dynamic form such as signs and gestures.

So tactile symbols are not “instead of” other communication forms, they are “in addition to” other forms. Does using multiple communication forms help learners? Evidence shows it does.

The potential benefits of using presentation graphics include:

- engaging multiple learning styles,
- increasing visual impact,
- improving audience focus,
- providing annotations and highlights,
- analyzing and synthesizing complexities.

If typical learner benefits from learning through more than one channel, wouldn't blind or deafblind students, who can't read or see pictures also benefit? One way we can provide this benefit is tactile symbols. It will help the students find their individual learning style and increase the impact of the message. The symbols may help the student focus, and provide additional information, or highlight what is important about what is being said. And finally, it can help simplify complex interactions, by helping the student reflect on the message and have a fuller understanding.

## Communication forms



We all use many forms of communication to share messages to and receive messages from other people. Some examples of communication forms that you may use include speech, sign language, printed words, braille, pictures, gestures, maps, and objects. Tactile symbols are just another form. We use various communication forms in different ways, and they have different strengths and weaknesses. We choose what form or combination of forms works best for what we need to communicate in any situation.

*Figure 2 An experience story using tactile symbols.*

## Static and Dynamic Forms

It may help if we break down forms of communication into two broad categories: dynamic, and static. For example, if we are trying to find our way to a friend's new home, we might have him tell us his address (speech/ sign – dynamic), ask him to text his address (print – static), or look at a map on Google maps (picture – static). In fact, we may utilize all three forms to help us get to our friends' home.



Dynamic forms are easily changeable, flexible, and immediately available. Examples of dynamic forms are speech, sign language, and gestures. We use them all the time. We can change their meaning slightly by changing our voices, the size and energy of our movements, even by combining them with facial or bodily expression.

Magazines, flyers, and brochures are examples of static forms of communication that incorporates images and print words.

The other broad category is static communication forms. They are called static because they don't change and they stay put so you can study them. You can frequently take them with you. You can use them now and also in the future. Some examples of static forms include print, braille, pictures, objects, emoji, maps, and tactile symbols.

There are several strengths to dynamic forms:

- Dynamic forms are immediately available.
- You can use them wherever you are, whenever you need to.
- There is typically no need for equipment or preparation. If you have something to say, you just say it!
- Topics are only limited by what you know or experience.
- They are very flexible; you can change topics easily.

There are also weaknesses to these forms.

- First of all, communication using dynamic forms is temporary. As soon as I stop signing or talking, my words are gone forever and can only be retrieved from memory unless I have made an audio recording of them – then they become more of a static form if I can replay them again and again.
- Dynamic forms hard to review, easy to miss, misinterpret, or simply forget.

Static communication forms, like print, braille, pictures, maps, have their own different set of strengths.

- These are tangible forms of communication that you can hold in your hand or tape to the wall.
- Static forms can be checked for gaps and accuracy. You can reread something if you didn't get it.
- Messages using static forms can be studied for more complete understanding.
- They can be kept for future reference. You don't have to rely on your memory. For example, grocery lists, maps, notes, and books.
- The message is still available, even if the person who created it isn't present.

So static communication forms are extremely important for us. But they also have weaknesses.

- Static communication forms are harder to produce than dynamic forms. Creating a document takes more preparation time than just saying what's on your mind.
- Static forms are limited in topics. They can't be changed readily. If I write a book about baby birds and publish it, the book will always be a book about baby birds. I may edit and make changes and print a new edition, but the book remains fixed.



*Figure 3 A brochure for house paint.*

- Typically, people use both dynamic and static communication forms daily. For any student to be a complete communicator, we want them to be able to use both dynamic and static communication forms.

## Making tactile symbols



*Tactile symbol for February is a heart-shaped pipe cleaner on a foil-covered diamond with the top point clipped.*

Before beginning with tactile symbols, you need to decide what the symbols should be. If only one student is in the environment using symbols, technically, the symbols themselves can be arbitrary. But many years ago at TSBVI we started standardizing the symbols to assist the students, staff and caregivers when the student moves from one setting to another, changes teachers or goes to a new school or classroom.

On the pages that follow we have created a sort of online dictionary of these standardized symbols. If you want, you can use that as a starting point. But even if you take advantage of a standardized system, symbols often need to be created specifically for your student. Every student's situation — their activities, their places, people they know and so forth — is different.

If you are starting from scratch with a symbol, try to pick something that will make sense to the student. A part or a piece of an object often works. By necessity, however, some symbols have to be arbitrary, because there is no obvious item to place on the symbol. When that's the case, the student will learn the meaning through repeated association.

All symbols eventually deteriorate, so plan time for creating and repairing symbols. Often times the classroom paraprofessional can help with this task, but volunteers may also be trained to help.

Speaking of replacement, it always helps to use materials that are easily available when replacement is needed.

When possible, give the student responsibility for his or her symbols. Get the student involved in making, storing, and caring for the symbols as much as possible. This will help increase how the student values the symbols, and help them be more independent in using them.

Some materials used by TSBVI staff in creating symbols include:

- a hot glue gun
- background textures such as poster board, foam paper, needlepoint backing
- Velcro
- carpet remnants
- puff paint
- foil
- netting
- contact paper
- satin acetate fabric, leather, other types of fabric with distinct textures
- bumpy vinyl wallpaper, foam paper, or other materials with distinct textures

- beads
- buttons
- pipe cleaners
- paperclips
- popsicle sticks
- sequins
- q-tips
- aluminum can tabs
- yarn
- shredded paper strips
- sandpaper
- pasta
- beans
- rice
- coins
- tile spacers
- pieces of small objects – part of a toothbrush, razor, spoon
- etc., etc., etc.

Below are the symbols created for use at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired that may give you some ideas for how to get started.

## Actions

Tactile symbols representing actions are made with triangle-shaped poster board covered with felt. The backing could be made with other materials, although in these examples none is used. The shape is most important, but the backing can vary depending on what materials you have and what the child can tactually discriminate.

**Note:** These symbols are ones utilized at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, so they reflect that social environment. You may need to create symbols or adapt symbols specific to the environment of the student.

If you are starting from scratch with a symbol, try to pick something that will make sense to the student. As you look at the symbols you will see that some are based on visual information and some on possible tactile information. It is important to consider the individual's perspective when creating the symbol. These symbols are highly abstract so it is important to note visual and tactile access when designing the symbol. A part piece of an object often works. By necessity, however, some symbols must be arbitrary, because there is no obvious item to use. When that's the case, the student will learn the meaning through repeated association.

**Shape: triangle-shaped**

**Background: felt or foam sheet**



**Aerobic exercise with a ball** is heart and piece of rubber on triangle.



**Bake** is 5 lines of puff paint positioned vertically and parallel to each other.



**Bathe** is a piece of soap glued to the center of the triangle.



**Box** is a flex straw bent like an arm with a boxing glove shape on one end.



**Bowl** is a rectangular piece of felt positioned horizontally.



**Brave (be brave)** is 5 short pieces of cord, 1 positioned horizontally at the top.



**Break** is an egg shape cut into 2 pieces along a jagged line.



**Brush (teeth)** is the head of a toothbrush.



**Budget** is 3 horizontal pieces of pipe cleaner with a penny on top.



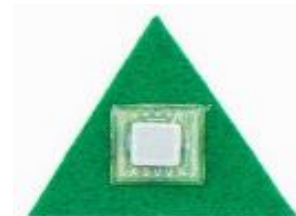
**Build** is 3 small rectangles of balsa wood stacked on top of each other.



**Buy** is a piece of shopping bag with a penny on top.



**Call** is a piece of coiled telephone cord.



**Carry** is square piece of tile.



**Choose** is X made of tinsel pipe cleaner and O made of cloth separated by a vertical line of glue or puff paint.



**Chop** is a disc of wood.



**Clean** is a square piece of cloth with a square of sponge on top.





**Climb** is pieces of craft sticks stacked to form steps.



**Cook** is glue or puff paint forming "C".



**Cut** is blade of plastic knife.



**Dance** is ribbon tied in a bow.



**Dig** is and surrounded by glue or puff paint.



**Do chores** is 2 matchsticks, one with sponge and the other with straw.



**Do laundry** is 2 buttons glued side-by-side at bottom.



**Do science** is piece of notched craft stick.



**Do pull ups** is Q-tip bent into U with cotton ends pointing down and left.



**Draw** is piece of crayon.



**Dress** is small rectangle of needlepoint backing.



**Drink** is upside down T shape of cork.



**Fall (slip)** is 3 rectangular piece of laminated paper stacked as a set of stairs on top of each other.



**Fish** is matchstick position on the right edge with bead on bottom left and attached by a piece of fishing line.



**Flush** is button battery in the center.



**Go to language arts** is rectangular strip of wood with a poker chip on top positioned at the bottom of the triangle.





*Eat is head of a plastic spoon.*



*Exercise is piece of pom-pom tinsel.*



*Exit (emergency) is 2 matchsticks placed vertically and parallel to each other.*



*Explore is rectangular piece of needlepoint backing placed vertically*



*Go to math is puff paint or glue forming an equal sign.*



*Go to movement class is ribbon bow with a jingle bell in the center.*



*Go to orientation and mobility is piece of PVC pipe.*



*Go to physical therapy is piece of foam stick.*



*Go to Radio Club is small triangle of needlepoint backing with a metal washer glued on top.*



*Groom is piece of an Emory board.*



*Grow is an artificial leaf.*



*Jump is a mini clothes pin positioned vertically with legs up.*



*List is bullet points with lines from glue or puff paint.*



*Listen to music is Jingle bell*



*Listen to is the radio is a metal washer.*



*Live is small bead with tinsel around it.*



**Make a snack** is square piece of cloth.



**Massage** is A rectangular tile piece with a hand shape cut from felt.



**Masturbate** is a piece of fur.



**Meet** is a triangle of needlepoint backing.



**Mop** is a matchstick with a square of foam on the bottom.



**Open** is hole punched in the center of triangle.



**Pack** is suitcase-shaped pipe cleaner.



**Plant** is small paperclips crisscrossed with seed underneath.



**Play** is a game piece.



**Play balloon game** is deflated balloon.



**Play baseball** is shape of baseball with stitching from glue or puff paint.



**Play CD** is circle of felt with a piece of macaroni on top.



**Play soccer** is ping pong ball.



**Pour** is a piece of a flex straw.



**Push** is a small round bead.



**Read** is several pieces of paper stapled together to form a book.



***Read braille*** is several small papers forming a book with a small rectangle of brailled paper beside it.



***Relax*** is rectangle of fleece.



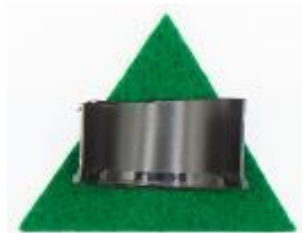
***Roll*** is piece of curled ribbon.



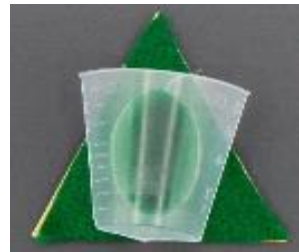
***Root*** is seed with pipe cleaner to form roots below.



***Run*** is piece of shoelace in a circle.



***Scoop*** is piece of plastic tube split in half to form a scoop.



***Take medicine*** is medicine cup spit in half.



***Toilet*** is rectangle of needlepoint backing with a piece of yarn tied in bottom corner.



## Animals



*4 Tactile symbol for bear is a piece of fur with small matchsticks or toothpicks for claws on the shape*

Tactile symbols representing animals are made with a 2 ¼ inch piece of corrugated bulletin board boarder. Various backgrounds could be used, although none are used in these examples. The shape is the most important; the backing can vary depending on what materials you have and what the child can tactually discriminate.

**Note:** These symbols are the ones utilized at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, so they reflect that social environment. You may need to create symbols or adapt symbols specific to the environment of the student.

If you are starting from scratch with a symbol, try to pick something that will make sense to the student. As you look at the symbols you will see that some are based on visual information and some on possible tactile information. It is important to consider the individual's perspective when creating the symbol. These symbols are highly abstract so it is important

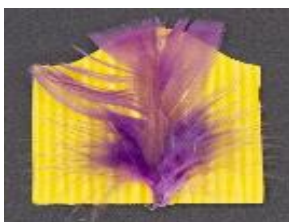
to note his/her visual and tactile access when designing the symbol. A part or a piece of an object often works. By necessity, however, some symbols have to be arbitrary, because there is no obvious item to place on the symbol. When that's the case, the student will learn the meaning through repeated association.

**Shape: 2 ¼" piece (roughly a square)**

**Background: corrugated bulletin board border**



***Bear** is a piece of fur with small toothpicks for claws.*



***Bird** is a small feather.*



***Cat** is rectangle of fur positioned horizontally on the shape.*



***Cow** is small square of leather.*



***Cricket** is a piece of tinsel pipe cleaner in a Z-shape.*



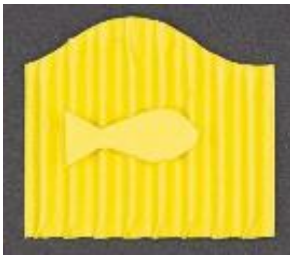
***Dog** is rectangle of fur positioned vertically on the shape.*



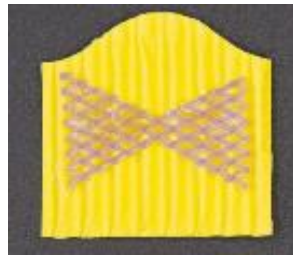
***Duck** is feather with piece of foam sheet shaped as a duck's foot on top.*



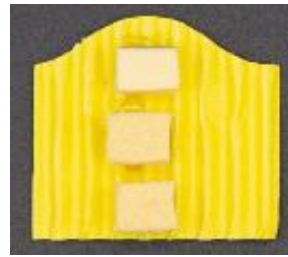
***Elephant** is cork sheet cut in a bowl shape, scalloped edge on bottom.*



**Fish** is piece of foam sheet cut in the shape of a fish.



**Fly** is piece of plastic fly swatter in the shape of a bow tie, placed horizontally.



**Frog** is 3 small squares of foam sheet aligned vertically and parallel to each other.



**Goat** is piece of unraveled cord tied at the top end.



**Horse** is loop of piece of shoelace secured to the top of the shape and dangling like a rein below.



**Lion** is cotton ball glued on top of notch craft stick.



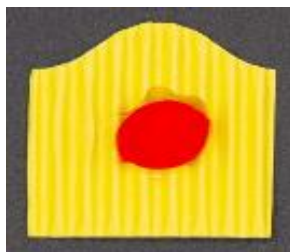
**Mouse or rat** is piece of pipe cleaner in a shaped a question mark placed horizontally.



**Owl** is feather with a small toy eye glued on top.



**Pig:** piece of pipe cleaner coiled like a pig's tail.



**Rabbit:** small pompom



**Rooster or chicken** is feather with a cock's comb shape of foam sheet on top.



**Sheep** is piece of fleece with a teardrop shape of foam sheet on top.



**Snake** is thin strip of rubber placed diagonally on the shape.



**Turtle** is piece of shell.



## Emotions and feelings



*Tactile symbol for anxious:  
heart-shaped poster board  
with s-hook in the middle.*

Tactile symbols representing emotions are made with heart-shaped poster board. The backing could include materials such as foil, contact paper, and netting material although in these examples none is used. The shape is the most important, but the backing can vary depending on what materials you have and what the child can tactually discriminate.

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**Shape:** heart-shaped

**Background:** none or various materials such as netting, foil, contact paper



***Anxious or scared**  
is metal S-hook  
glued horizontally to  
the heart shape.*



***Bored** is heart  
shape with holes  
punched around  
the outside edge.*



***Embarrassed** is  
piece of frayed  
cord.*



***Excited** is piece of  
curly ribbon.*



***Frustrated** is  
piece of nylon cord  
tied in a single*



***Gentle / peaceful**  
is feather with a  
small pom-pom on  
top.*



***Grouchy** is  
rectangle of  
sandpaper placed  
horizontally.*



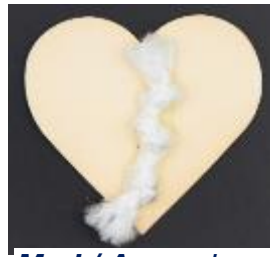
***Happy** is piece of  
cord in a smile  
shape.*



**Hurt** is a match positioned horizontally.



**Loving / Affectionate** is piece of cord in the shape of a heart.



**Mad / Angry** is piece of cord with three knots in it.



**Missing** is pieces of cord forming a X shape.



**Patient** is small silk flower.



**Playful** is a game piece.



**Proud** is star-shaped piece of foam sheet or felt.



**Questioning** is small felt triangle with a question mark shape of glue on top.



**Sad** is piece of cord forming a frown shape.



**Sick** is very short piece of cord glued vertically.



**Sorry** is piece of cord forming an O shape



**Surprised** is popped balloon.



**Tired** is cord forming an arrow that points downward.

## Holidays, special events, and trips



*Tactile symbol for birthday is a birthday candle glued horizontally on yellow rectangle.*

Tactile symbols representing events, holidays, and special trips are rectangular shapes that can be made from poster board, or light-weight plastic. They are colored yellow, but this may be changed based on the needs of your student. For example, they may be able to see another color better if they have some usable vision. Just remember, touch is the sense primarily in use so the texture of the material should be distinct.

**Note:** These symbols are the ones utilized at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, so they reflect that social environment. You may need to create symbols or adapt

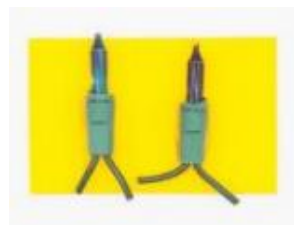
symbols specific to the environment of the student.

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### Shape: Rectangle

**Background: Poster board, foam sheet, or plastic sheet – yellow**

### Holidays



**Christmas** is two small Christmas tree lights glued vertically on rectangle.



**Cinco de Mayo** is balloon with zig-zag tinsel, pipe cleaner and bean underneath.



**Easter** is fake grass with bead in the center.



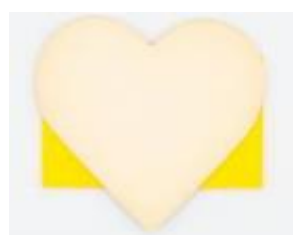
**Halloween** is jack-o-lantern



**Mother's Day** is tiny bow and ribbon form a gift package with a foam peanut glue in the bottom right corner of the rectangle.



**Thanksgiving** is deflated balloon with a feather in the center.



**Valentine's Day** is heart shape made from poster-board or other material on rectangle.

### Special events and trips



**Birthday** is candle glued horizontally on the rectangle



**Beach trip** is small sea shell in the center of the rectangle



**Carnival** is small star-shaped bead in the center of the rectangle.



**Graduation** is small paper scroll tied with a string in center of the rectangle.



**Music concert** is jingle bell in the center of the rectangle.



**Party** is deflated balloon in the center of the rectangle.



**Party featuring music like karaoke or sing-a-long** is two deflated balloons with a jingle bell in the middle.



**Picnic** is a piece of plastic or Styrofoam plate in the center of the rectangle.



**Vacation** is sequin above a v-shaped pipe cleaner.



**Water park outing** is "W" made from glue in center of the rectangle.



**White Cane Day** is small piece of PVC with matchstick above it.

## Food



**Sprite:** rectangle of felt with soda tab on top.

Tactile symbols representing food are made with oval-shaped poster board that has been laminated. The backing material could be changed if necessary using materials such as foil, contact paper, or thin foam sheeting material, although in these examples none is used. The shape is the most important, but the backing can vary depending on what materials you have and what the child can tactually discriminate.

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**Shape:** oval-shaped

**Background:** laminated poster board



## Meals



*Breakfast: capital letter B made with glue in the center of the oval.*



*Dinner: capital letter D made with glue in the center of the oval.*



*Lunch: capital letter L made with glue in the center of the oval.*



*Snack: 5 vertical lines of puff paint or glue in the center of the oval.*

## Beverages



*Chocolate Milk: top of milk carton and fuzzy pipe*



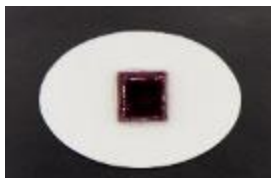
*Coffee: coffee grounds glued in a nickel-sized circle.*



*Cola: tab from soda can glued horizontally in center.*



*Dr. Pepper: 2 soda can tabs glued vertically in the center.*



*Ice Cube: small square tile.*



*Juice: plastic pull tab from frozen juice can glued*



*5Root Beer: 3 soda tabs forming an H shape.*



*Smoothie: up-side-down T shape of cork with 3 dots of paper or felt below.*



*Sprite: rectangular piece of cloth with soda tab glued horizontally in center of the oval.*



*Water: W-shaped paper or foam*

## Breads, Grains, Cereal, and Starche



*Bagel: cord in the shape of a circle with a bread tie on top in the center of the oval.*



*Biscuit: 2 bread bag ties twisted together on each end, rounded like a biscuit in the middle.*



*Bread: twist tie from bread bag.*



*Cereal (cold): piece of cereal box in triangle with piece of wax inner wrapper.*



*Cereal (hot): blob of oatmeal flakes.*



*Donut: piece of felt cut in the shape of*



*Dough: small piece of styrofoam peanut.*



*French Fries: rectangle of corrugated cardboard.*



*French toast: bread tie in a loop twisted, ends protruding, blob of glue above it.*



*Grain (generic): 2 small beads above pieces of oats glued in a circle.*



*Hashbrowns: strips of soft part of Velcro forming a grid of 4 squares.*



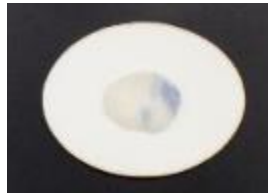
*Macaroni / Noodles: single macaroni noodle glued to center of oval.*



*Pancake: round piece of felt.*



*Popcorn: 5 grains of popcorn in a flower shape.*



*Potato: piece of foam peanut.*



*Rice: teaspoon sized circle of grains of rice.*



*Spaghetti: 5 short pieces of spaghetti glued vertically and parallel to each other.*



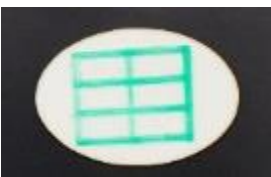
*Tater Tots: 3 dots styrofoam glued horizontally and parallel to each other.*



*Toast: 2 matchstick sized pieces of wood glued vertically and parallel to each other.*



*Tortilla: circle of felt with a bread bag tie on top.*



*Waffle: piece of plastic basket forming a grid shape.*

## Condiments, Spices and Spread



*Basil: circle of felt, Easter basket grass, rectangle of sand paper glued in diagonal along face of oval.*



*Butter: empty butter packet glued to the center of the oval.*



*Garlic: rectangle of felt with x-shape piece of felt glued on top in center of the oval.*



*Jelly: empty jelly packet glued in the center of the oval.*



*Ketchup: 4 small circles of cork in horizontal row with x-shaped puff paint on top of each one.*



*Mayonnaise: 4 small circles of cork in a horizontal row in the center of the oval.*



*Mustard: 4 small circles of cork in horizontal row with dot of puff paint on top of each one.*



*Oil: puff paint forming an O-shape on the oval.*



**Salad dressing** is 6 cork circles glued to the edge of the oval.



**Seafood sauce** is 4 dots of cork with spiral of tinsel, tip pointing left.



**Steak sauce** is nickel-sized circle of leather with 4 small dots of cork on top.



**Sugar** is packet of sugar.



**Syrup** is bottle top of syrup container.



**Peanut butter** is P shape cut from paper.



**Pickle** is shape of a pickle cut from felt or foam sheet.



**Salt** is packet of salt.



**Salsa/taco sauce** is 4 dots of cork with spiral of tinsel, tip pointing down.

## Dairy



**Butter** is empty butter packet glued to the center of the oval.



**Cheese** is square piece of foam sheet.



**Chocolate milk** is part of a milk carton with a pipe cleaner below.



**Egg** is round blob of glue.



## Desserts



**Candy** is small piece of hard candy in the wrapper.



**Chocolate** is small piece of bent pipe cleaner inserted into a hole in the bottom of the oval.



**Cookie** is circle of soft leather.



**Cupcake** is muffin paper folded in half.



**Donut** is felt cut in the shape of a donut.



**Ice cream** is wooden ice cream spoon.



**Marshmallow** is cotton ball.



**Milkshake** is wooden ice cream spoon with three dots of felt above it.



**Ice cream** is a wooden ice cream spoon.



**Milk** is top piece of a milk carton glued so the top flap is upright.



**Milkshake** is wooden ice cream spoon with 3 dots of paper above the oval.



**Whipped cream** is small square of sponge.



**Yogurt** is pie-shaped piece of the top to a yogurt.



**Pie** is pie-shaped piece of aluminum pie pan.



**Pizza (dessert type)** is circle with a pie-shaped wedge cut out and a packet of sugar beside it.



**Pudding** is a circle cut from the plastic top of a pudding cup.



**Snow cone** is cone-shaped piece of paper with a cotton ball on top.



**Yogurt** is pie-shaped piece of the yogurt top.



## Fruits



**Apple** is large sequin in the center of the oval.



**Banana** is 7 small sequins forming a banana shape.



**Blueberry** is round blue bead with pipe cleaner around it.



**Cherry** is small round red bead.



**Fruit (generic)** is 2 sequins above a set of 6 beads in the shape of a banana.



**Grapes** is 2 bead in horizontal line.



**Lemon** is 6 beads (3 on the top curve and 3 on the bottom curve).



**Lime** is round beads forming a circle with one bead in the middle.



**Orange** is circle of small beads.



**Peach** is 3 small round beads on top of piece of soft part of Velcro aligned horizontally.



**Pear** is 1 small round sequin with a piece of stem attached to it pointing downward.



**Pineapple** is 4 beads in a square pattern with some paper tinsel in the middle.



**Raisins** is small box of raisins.



**Strawberries** is 3 small sequins on top of a round piece of sandpaper.

## Entrees, fish, meat and other proteins



**Bacon** is 2 zig-zag horizontal lines parallel to each other.



**Burrito** is circle of felt folded in half and tied with piece of tinsel pipe cleaner.



**Casserole** is grains of rice and beans glued in the center of the oval.



**Chicken** is short piece of a q-tip glued horizontally.



**Chicken nuggets** is 4 very short pieces of q-tips placed vertically and parallel to each other.



**Clams** is blob of tiny pieces of aquarium gravel.



**Corn dog** is small safety pin with 3 kernels of corn placed horizontally underneath



**Enchiladas** is zig-zag piece of tinsel pipe cleaner placed horizontally.



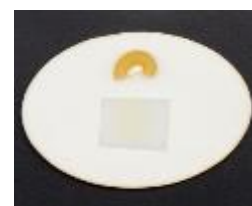
**Fish** is puff paint in shape of a fish placed horizontally.



**Hamburger** is medium sized button.



**Hot dog** is small safety pin placed horizontally.



**Macaroni and cheese** is piece of macaroni with a square of foam sheet below.



**Nachos** is rectangle of felt with rectangle of foam sheet on top.



**Pigs in a Blanket** is circle of leather folded in half, tied with bread bag tie.



**Pizza** is circle with pie shaped wedge removed, rectangle of foam sheet to right.



**Ravioli** is pie-shaped piece of plastic top with ridge position at bottom.

## Functions or form words



*6 Tactile symbol for cancel is an X made of glue or puff paint in the center of the diamond shape.*

Tactile symbols representing function or form words are made of a green diamond-shaped piece of poster board. Various backgrounds could be used, although none are used in these examples. The shape is the most important; the backing can vary depending on what materials you have and what the child can tactually discriminate.

**Note:** These symbols are the ones utilized at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, so they reflect that social environment. You may need to create symbols or adapt symbols specific to the environment of the student.

If you are starting from scratch with a symbol, try to pick something that will make sense to the student. As you look at the symbols you will see that some are based on visual information and some on possible tactile information. It is important to consider the individual's perspective when creating the symbol. These symbols are highly abstract so it is important to note his/her visual and tactile access when designing the symbol. A part or a piece of an object often works. By necessity, however, some symbols have to be arbitrary, because there is no obvious item to place on the symbol. When that's the case, the student will learn the meaning through repeated association.

**Shape: diamond**

**Background: green poster board**



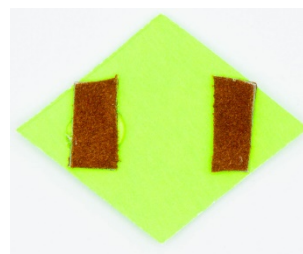
**Cancel** is an X made of glue or puff paint in the center of the diamond shape



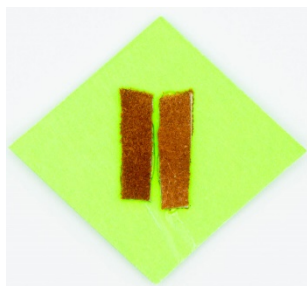
**Finish** is a diamond-shape that has the lower edges sliced as if they have gone through a paper shredder.



**Good** is a smiley face drawn with puff paint in the center of the backing shape.



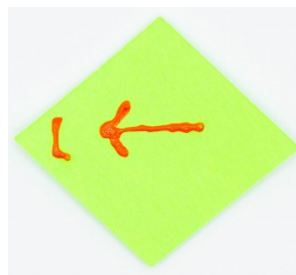
**Goodbye** is two thin rectangles of leather placed vertically and parallel to each other at the extreme left and right of the diamond shape



**Hello** is two thin pieces of leather placed vertically together in the center of the diamond shape.



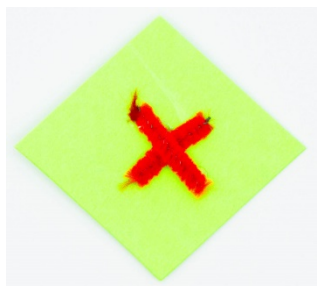
**Help** is a puff paint question mark made vertically in the center of the diamond.



**Left** is an arrow that points left towards the letter L placed on the left point of the diamond.



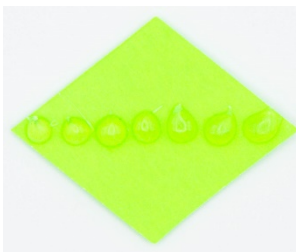
**More** is a mini binder clip attached to the upper left side of the diamond shape.



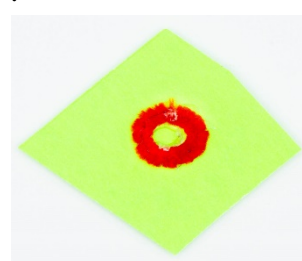
**No** is an X made from pipe cleaners in the center of the diamond.



**Right** is an arrow that points right towards the letter R placed on the right point of the diamond.



**Wait** is a series of glue or puff paint dots running the width of the diamond.



**Yes** is an O-shape made of pipe cleaner and glued to the center of the diamond.



## Numbers, cooking measurements, mathematic functions



*7 Tactile symbol for measurement of one drop is a single bead on a half-oval shaped piece of poster board or foam sheet.*

Tactile symbols representing numbers and mathematic functions are made with trapezoid-shaped poster board or foam sheet. The shape representing cooking measurements is a half-oval shape. Various backgrounds could be used, although none are used in these examples. The shape is the most important; the backing can vary depending on what materials you have and what the child can tactually discriminate.

Most students at this level of communication are beginning to experience only basic measurement concepts generally tied to a cooking activity or routine.

**Note:** These symbols are the ones utilized at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, so they reflect that social environment. You may need to create symbols or adapt symbols specific to the environment of the student.

If you are starting from scratch with a symbol, try to pick something that will make sense to the student. As you look at the symbols you will see that some are based on visual information and some on possible tactile information. It is important to consider the individual's perspective when creating the symbol. These symbols are highly abstract so it is important to note his/her visual and tactile access when designing the symbol. A part or a piece of an object often works. By necessity, however, some symbols have to be arbitrary, because there is no obvious item to place on the symbol. When that's the case, the student will learn the meaning through repeated association.

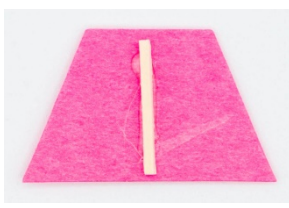
**Shape: trapezoid-shaped (numbers and functions) or half-oval shaped (measurements)**

**Background: poster board or foal sheet**

### Numbers



**Zero** is a trapezoid-shaped piece of foam sheet.



**One** is a trapezoid-shaped piece of foam sheet with a matchstick sized piece of craft stick glued longwise in the center.



**Two** is a trapezoid-shaped piece of foam sheet with 2 matchstick sized piece of craft stick glued longwise in the center.



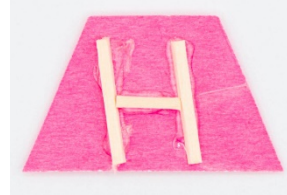
**Three** is a trapezoid-shaped piece of foam sheet with 3 matchstick sized piece of craft stick glued longwise in the center.



**Four** is a trapezoid-shaped piece of foam sheet with 4 matchstick sized piece of craft stick glued in a square in the center.



**Five** is a trapezoid-shaped piece of foam sheet with 4 matchstick sized piece of craft stick glued in a X-shape in the center.



**Six** is a trapezoid-shaped piece of foam sheet with 3 matchstick sized piece of craft stick glued in a H-shape in the center.



**Seven** is a trapezoid-shaped piece of foam sheet with 4 matchstick sized piece of craft stick glued in a diamond shape in the center



**Eight** is a trapezoid-shaped piece of foam sheet with 3 matchstick sized piece of craft stick glued in an I-shape in the center.



**Nine** is a trapezoid-shaped piece of foam sheet with 3 matchstick sized piece of craft stick glued in a z-shape in the center.

## Objects



8 *Tactile symbol for clothing*

Tactile symbols representing objects are made with oval-shaped poster board. Various backgrounds could be used, although none are used in these examples. The shape is the most important; the backing can vary depending on what materials you have and what the child can tactually discriminate.

**Note:** These symbols are the ones utilized at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, so they reflect that social environment. You may need to create symbols or adapt symbols specific to the environment of the student.

If you are starting from scratch with a symbol, try to pick something that will make sense to the student. As you look at the symbols you will see that some are based on visual information and some on possible tactile information. It is important to consider the individual's perspective when creating the symbol. These symbols are highly abstract so it is important to note his/her visual and tactile access when designing the symbol. A part or a piece of an object often works. By necessity, however, some symbols have to be arbitrary, because there is no obvious item to place on the symbol. When that's the case, the student will learn the meaning through repeated association.

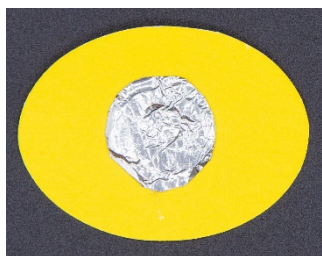
**Shape: oval-shaped**

**Background: poster board**

### A-Bu



**Airplane** is a toy airplane glued to the oval.



**Aluminum foil** is a nickel sized piece of foil glued to the oval.



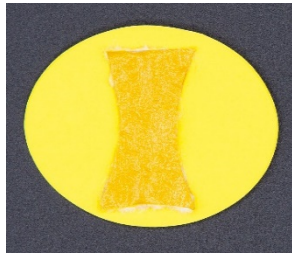
**Ambulance** is an X-shape made from pipe cleaners next to an O-shaped piece of paper..



**Arm** is a piece of round cord glued horizontally to the center of the oval.



## Ba-Boo



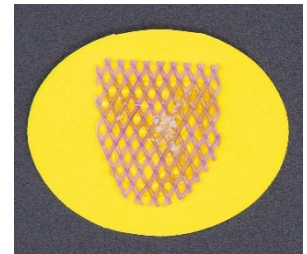
**Back** is an hour glass shaped piece of felt glued vertically on the oval.



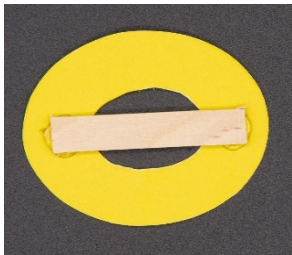
**Aluminum pan** is a rectangular piece of an aluminum pan glued horizontally to the oval.



**Barn** is a barn-shaped piece of felt with bits of straw glued where the door would be and centered in the oval.



**Basket** is a piece of needlepoint backing cut in the shape of a basket and glued to the oval.



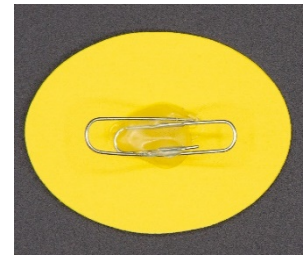
**Bass bar** is an oval shaped piece of felt with a piece of craft stick glued horizontally in the oval.



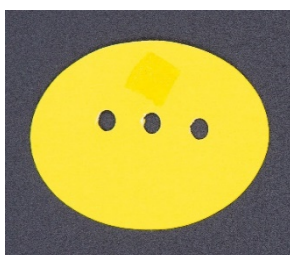
**Bean bag** is a piece of bean bag cover with some stuffing inside glued to the oval.



**Bed** is a small rectangular sack of fabric with soft stuffing glued in the center of the oval.



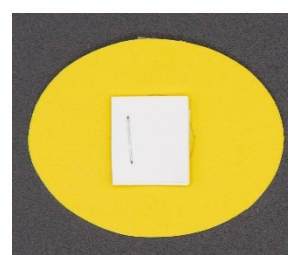
**Bicycle** is a metal paperclip glued to the center of the oval.



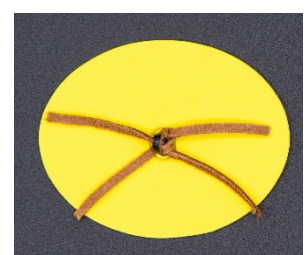
**Blender** is three holes punched horizontally in the center of the oval.



**Boat** is a triangle shape of sandpaper glued to the center of the oval.



**Book or journal** is several small rectangles of paper stapled together and glued to the center of the oval.



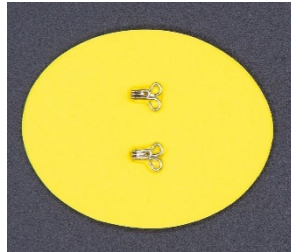
**Boots** is leather boot lace tied in the center and shaped in an X pattern on the oval.



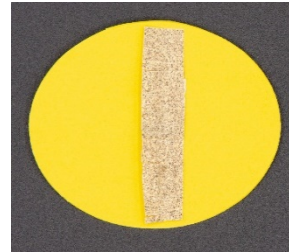
## Bow-Cla



**Bowl** is a smooth piece of paper cut in the shape of a bowl and glued to the center of the oval.



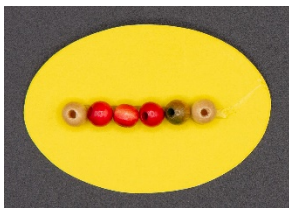
**Bra** is two metal hook fasteners glued vertically on the oval.



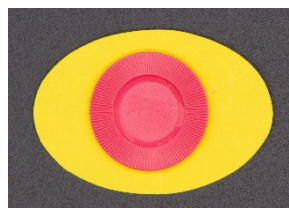
**Brush** is a long thin rectangle of rough sandpaper glued vertically on the oval.



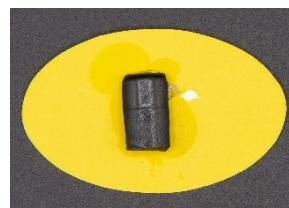
**Bus** is a small piece of bubble wrap glued to the center of the oval.



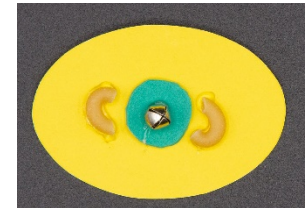
**Cabasa** is a horizontal line of small wooden beads in the center of the oval.



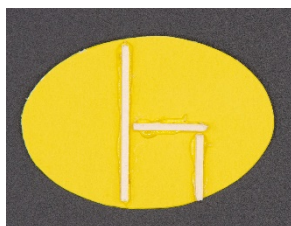
**Calendar** is a poker chip glued to the center of the oval.



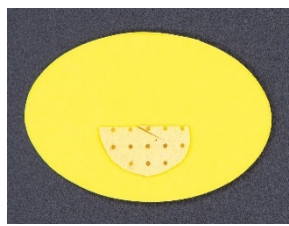
**Cane** is the tip of a real travel cane glued to the center of the oval.



**Compact disc player** is a small circle of felt with a jingle bell on it and pieces of macaroni to each side in the center of the oval.



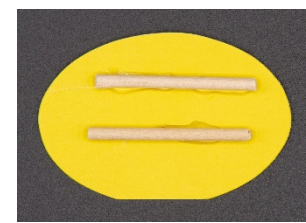
**Chair** is a chair shape formed from match sticks glued on the oval.



**Chin** is a piece of band aid cut in the shape of a chin and glued to the oval.



**Christmas tree** is tinsel and a small tree light glued to the oval.

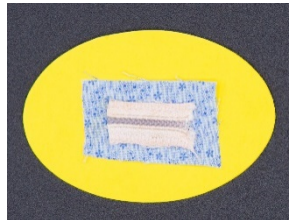


**Claves** is two matchstick sized piece of wood placed parallel to each other horizontally on the oval.

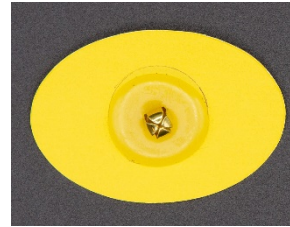
## C-Elec



**Clothing** is several pieces of fabric together with a button placed on the oval.



**Coat** is a small rectangle of fabric with a piece of zipper on top glued in the center of the oval.



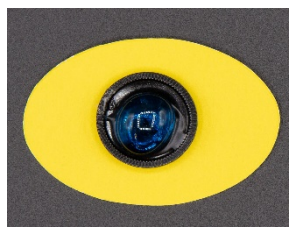
**Compact disc** is a circle of glue or puff paint with a jingle bell inside the circle centered on the oval.



**Computer** is a square of felt with a circle of cork placed on top and glued to the oval.



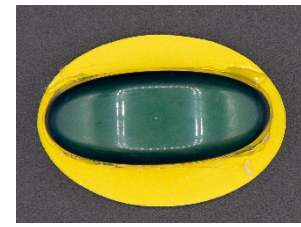
**Conga drum** is a piece of cloth glued on top of a poker chip placed in the center of the oval.



**Connect 4 game**, is a poker chip with a glass bead on top glued to the center of the oval.



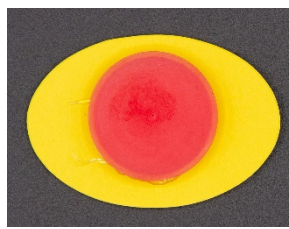
**Cup** is a small plastic cylinder glued to the center of the oval.



**Deodorant** is the cap to a stick of deodorant glued to the center of the oval.



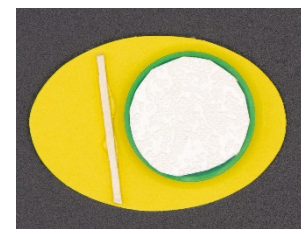
**Dishes** are part of a plastic fork, bowl shaped piece of paper and cylindrical bead glued to the oval.



**Drum** is a plastic bottle cap glued to the center of the oval.



**Ear** is the ear shape made from glue or puff paint in the center of the oval.



**Electric drum** is a plastic bottle cap covered in paper with a piece of cord glued beside it on the oval.



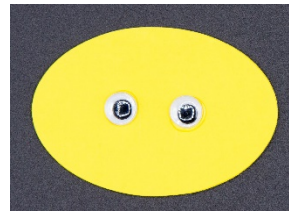
## Elev-Gra



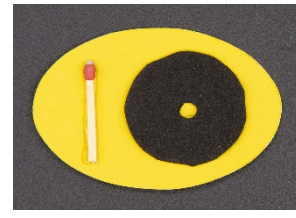
**Elevator** is two flat round beads glued side-by-side to the center of the oval.



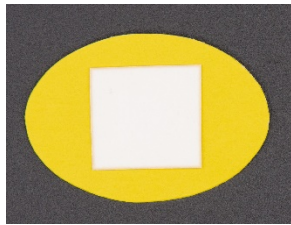
**Escalator** is a piece of pipe cleaner bent to resemble a stairs, colored red and blue, on the oval.



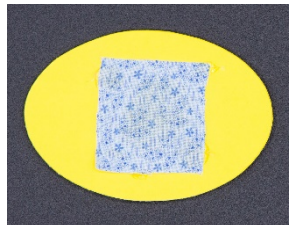
**Eyes** are a pair of eye beads glued horizontally to the center of the oval.



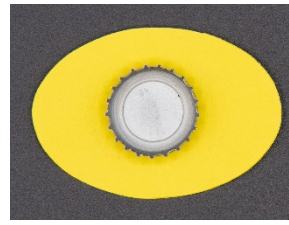
**Fire truck** is a wheel-shaped piece of rubber with a match beside it on the oval.



**Floor** is a small rectangle of plastic in the center of the oval.



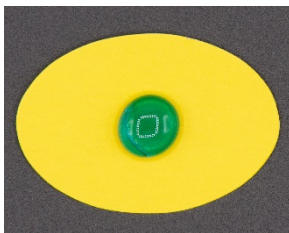
**Foot** is a rectangular piece of sock glued to the center of the oval.



**Foot massager** is a bottle cap glued to the center of the oval.



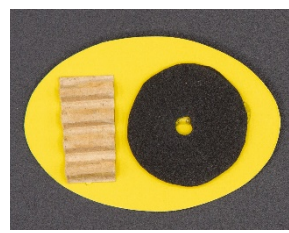
**Fork** is the head of a plastic fork glued on the oval.



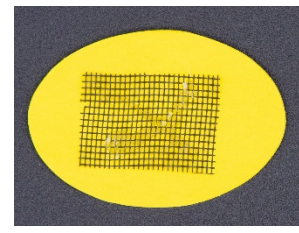
**Game** is a glass marble glued to the center of the oval.



**Garbage truck** is a wheel-shaped piece of rubber with a piece of plastic bag beside it on the oval.

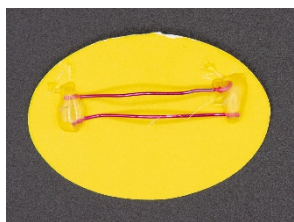


**Go-cart** is a wheel-shaped piece of rubber with a rectangle of corrugated cardboard beside it.



**Grater** is a rectangular piece of wire mesh glued horizontally on the oval.

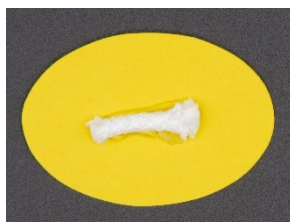
## Gui-Med



**Guitar** is 2 small pieces of guitar string placed horizontally and parallel to each other on the oval.



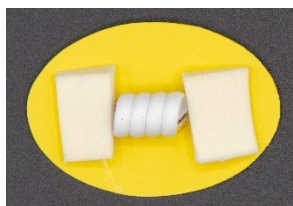
**Hair** is a piece of wig or doll hair glued to the oval.



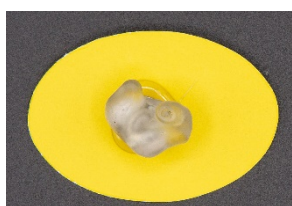
**Hammock** is a piece of cord glued horizontally in the center of the oval.



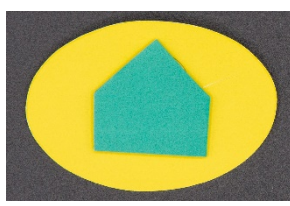
**Hand** is a small hand-shaped piece of paper glued to the oval.



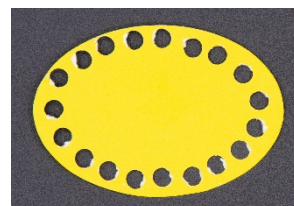
**Headphones** are 2 pieces of soft foam connected by a piece of coiled telephone cord.



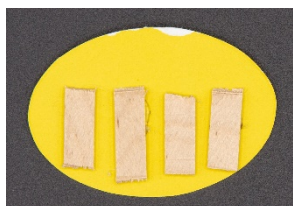
**Hearing aid** is an earmold glued to the center of the oval.



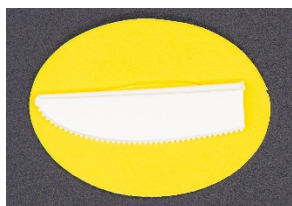
**House** is a piece of felt cut into the shape of a house in the center of the oval.



**Juicer** is a series of holes punched on the outside edge of the oval.



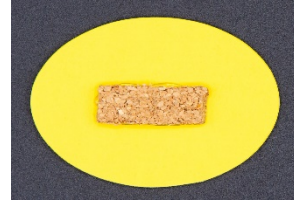
**Keyboard** is 4 short pieces of craft stick positioned vertically and parallel to each other on the oval.



**Knife** is the blade portion of a plastic knife glued horizontally on the oval.



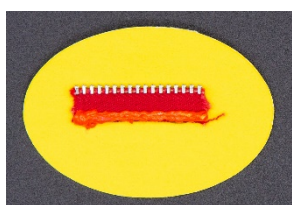
**Leaf** is an artificial leaf glued horizontally on the oval.



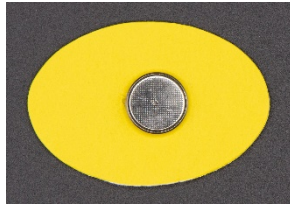
**Leg** is a thin rectangular strip of cork placed horizontally on the oval.



**Lotion** is the cap from a lotion bottle glued upside down on the oval.



**Lunch bag** is a piece of zipper glued horizontally on the oval.



**Machine** is a button battery glued in the center of the oval.



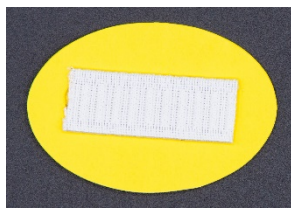
**Medicine** is dosing cup from liquid medicine glued to the center.



## Mel-Pan



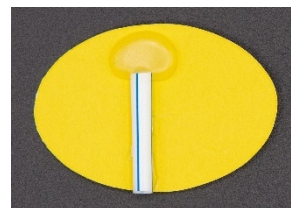
**Melodica** is four craft sticks glued vertically and parallel to each other with a bent straw above them.



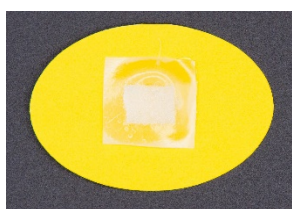
**Men's underwear** is a piece of wide elastic glued horizontally on the oval.



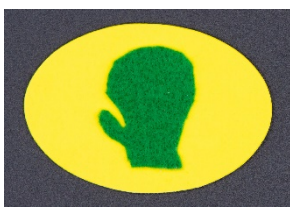
**Merry-go-round** is a piece from barrel of monkeys glued to the oval.



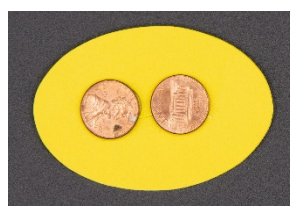
**Microphone** is a straight piece of straw with a blob of glue at the top end positioned vertically on the oval.



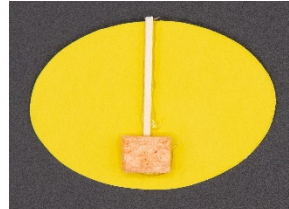
**Microwave** is a square of waxed paper glued to the center of the oval.



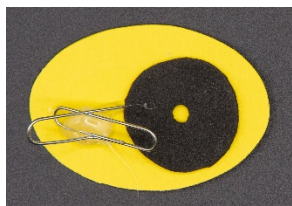
**Mittens** is a piece of felt cut in the shape of a mitten and glued to the oval.



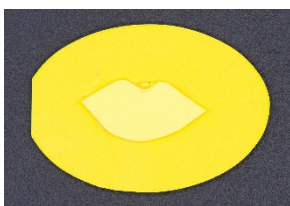
**Money** is two pennies glued on the oval.



**Mop** is a match stick glued vertically on the oval with a piece of sponge on the bottom end.



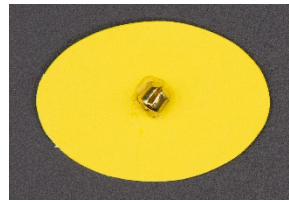
**Motorcycle** is a metal paperclip glued to the side of a piece of rubber cut in the shape of a wheel.



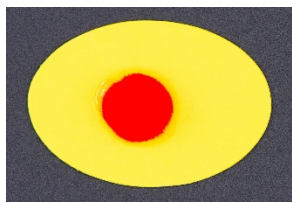
**Mouth** is a piece of felt cut in the shape of closed lips glued to the center of the oval.



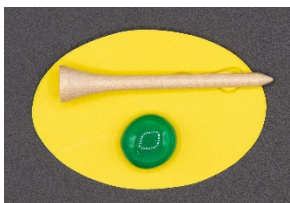
**Movement game** is a marble and a piece of tinsel glued together on the oval.



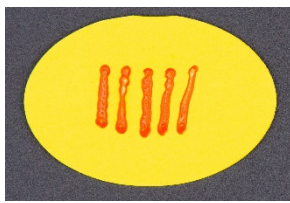
**Music** is a jingle bell glued to the center of the oval.



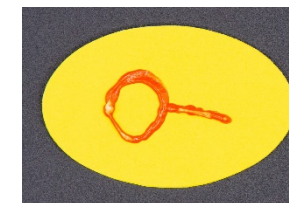
**Nose** is a small fuzzy pompom glued to the center of the oval.



**Outdoor game** is a golf tee glued above a marble on the oval.

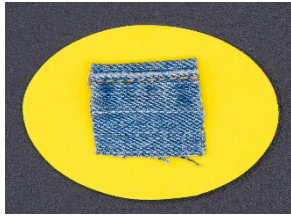


**Oven** is five vertical lines of puff paint parallel to each other in the center.

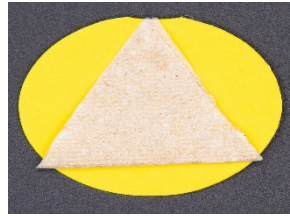


**Pan** is a skillet shape of puff paint, seen from above, in the center.

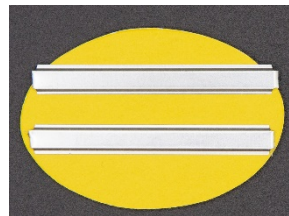
## Pant-Ro



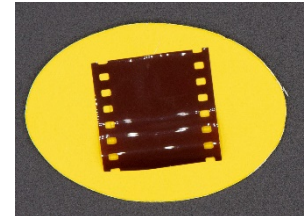
**Pants** is a square of denim glued to the oval.



**Paper towel** is a triangular piece of paper towel glued to the oval



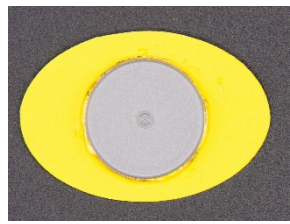
**Piano** is two pieces of plastic strips glued vertically and parallel to each other on the oval.



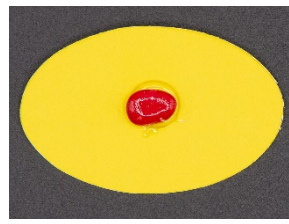
**Photograph** is a piece of film negative glued to the oval



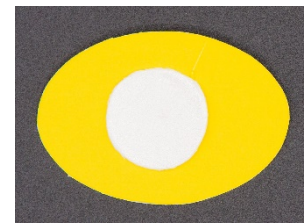
**Piñata** is a candy wrapper and a piece of a piñata glued to the oval.



is a plastic button-shape glued to the center of the oval.



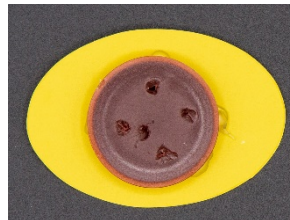
**Plant** is a seed glued to the center of the oval.



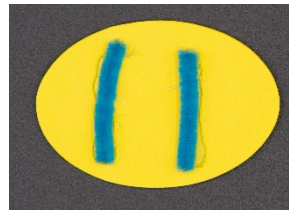
**Plate** is a piece of plastic plate cut in a round and glued to the center.



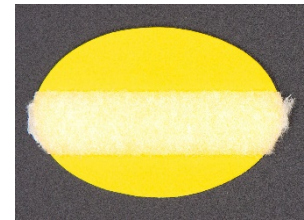
**Police car** is a star-shaped blob of glue or puff paint beside a wheel-shaped piece of rubber.



**Powder** is the top from a baby powder bottle glued to the oval.



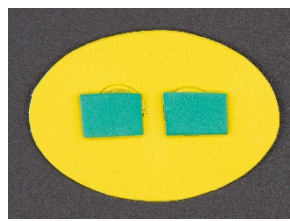
**Rain stick** is 2 short pieces of pipe cleaner glued vertically and parallel l.



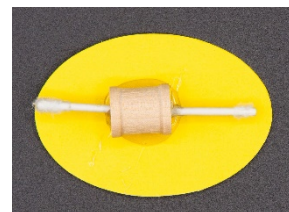
**Recipe** is a strip of iron-on interfacing glued horizontally and covering both sides of the oval.



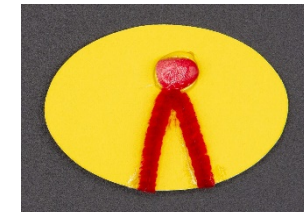
**Refrigerator** is a piece of a plastic fruit basket glued to the oval.



**Remote control** is 2 small rectangles of foam sheet glued side-by-side in the center of the oval.



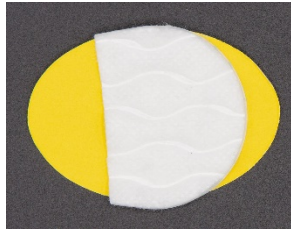
**Rolling pin** is a cylindrical wooden bead with a q-tip inserted for handles.



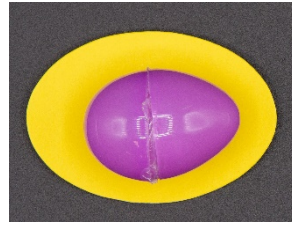
**Root** is a seed with two pieces of pipe cleaner on the bottom.



## San-Swe



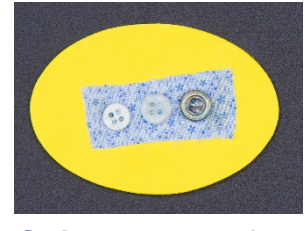
**Sanitary napkin** is a piece of the pad glued to the oval.



**Shaker** is a small plastic egg, with rice or beans inside, glued to the oval.



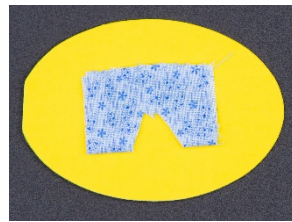
**Shampoo** is the cap to a shampoo bottle glued to the oval.



**Shirt** is a strip of cloth with three buttons glued on top in the center of the oval.



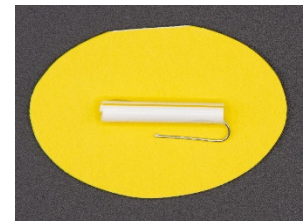
**Shoes** is two pieces of shoelace in an + pattern on the oval.



**Shorts** is a piece of cloth cut in the shape of a pair of shorts on the oval.



**Shot** is an empty plastic syringe glued horizontally on the oval.



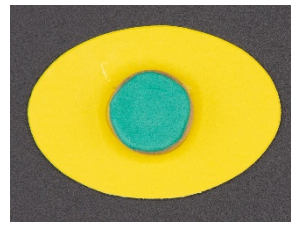
**Slide whistle** is a piece of straw with part of a paperclip representing the slide stuck inside.



**Soap** is a rectangle of a wrapper from a bar of soap.



**Socks** is a piece of sock glued to the oval.

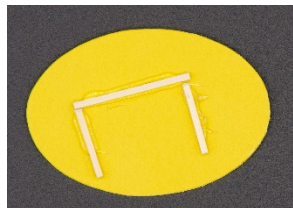


**Spin board** is a round piece of foam sheet glued to the center of the oval.

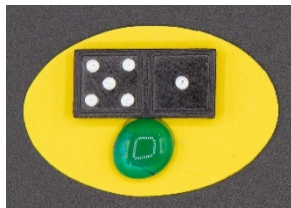


**Spoon** is the head of a plastic spoon glued to the oval.

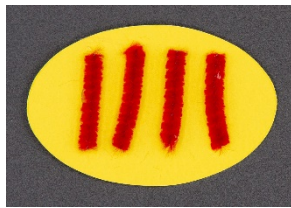
## Swe-Vib



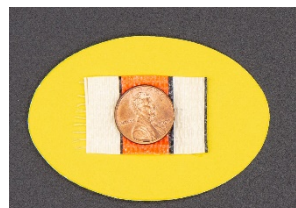
**Table** is 3 match sticks forming a table shape glued to the oval.



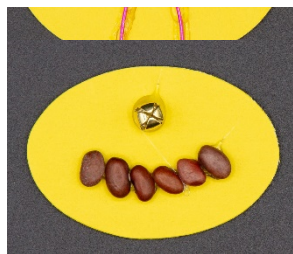
**Table game** is a domino glued above a marble on the oval.



**Tape recorder** is 4 vertical pieces of pipe cleaner glued parallel to each other.



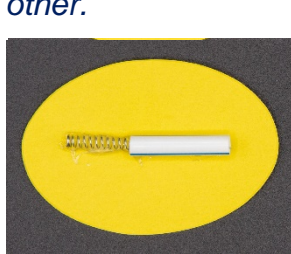
**Taxi** is a piece of fabric with a penny glued on top in the center of the oval.



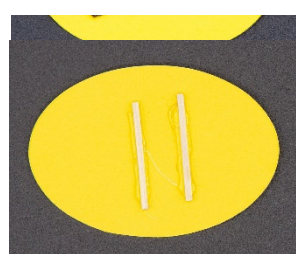
**Tejano music** is a jingle bell with six beans glued below it on the oval.



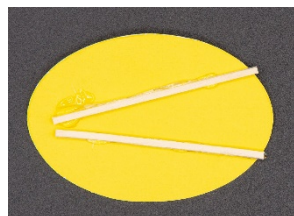
**Television** is a paper brad with the button at the bottom and the legs of the brad open in a v-shape.



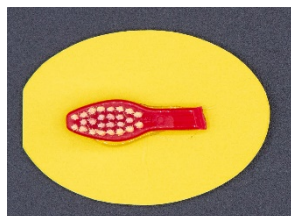
**Thunder tube** is a piece of plastic straw with a spring from a pen poked inside and glued to the oval.



**Toast** is two match sticks placed vertically and parallel to each other in the center of the oval.



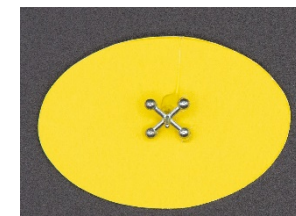
**Tongs** are 2 long matchsticks position



**Toothbrush** is the head of a



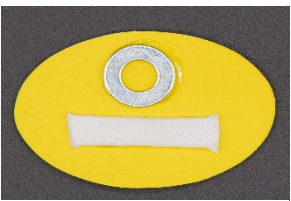
**Toothpaste** is the cap from a tube of



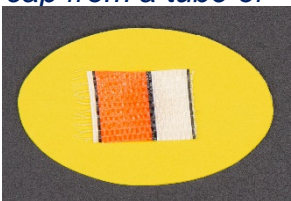
**Toy** is a jack glued to the center of the



**Tractor** is a wheel from a toy car glued in the center of the oval.



**Train** is a metal washer above piece of ribbon glued horizontally.



**Van/car** is a piece of upholstery fabric cut in a square on the oval.



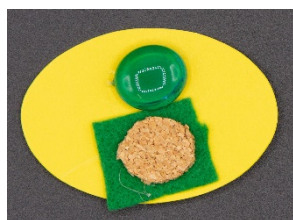
**Vibrating mat** is foam sheet with a v-shaped piece fuzzy fabric glued on top.



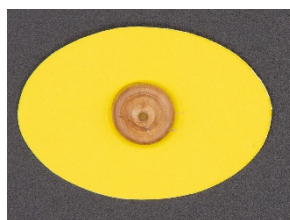
## Vib-Wom



***Vibrating pillow*** is a v-shaped piece of fuzzy fabric glued on the oval.



***Video game*** is a marble with a square of felt topped by a round of cork on the oval.



***Wagon*** is a round bead with a raised edge glued in the center of the oval.



***Women's panties*** is a piece of panties with some of the elastic attached.

## People



***9 Tactile symbol for sister*** is a gold ring with a sponge-shaped heart inside and a bow at the bottom on the circle.

Tactile symbols representing people are made with circle-shaped poster board. Various backgrounds could be added, although none are used in these examples. The shape is the most important, but the backing can vary depending on what materials you have and what the child can tactually discriminate.

**Note:** These symbols are the ones utilized at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, so they reflect that social environment. You may need to create symbols or adapt symbols specific to the environment of the student.

If you are starting from scratch with a symbol, try to pick something that will make sense to the student. As you look at the symbols you will see that some are based on visual information and some on possible tactile information. It is important to consider the individual's perspective when creating the symbol. These symbols are highly abstract so it is important to note his/her visual and tactile access when designing the symbol. A part or a piece of an object often works. By necessity, however, some symbols have to be arbitrary, because there is no obvious item to place on the symbol. When that's the case, the student will learn the meaning through repeated association.

**Shape: circle-shaped**

**Background: poster board**

## Family



**Brother** is a gold ring with a heart-shaped sponge inside and a marble glued to the bottom right of the gold ring.



**Father** is a piece of cloth cut to resemble a necktie glued to the center of the poster board circle.



**Family** is a ring of gold glued to the center of the poster board circle.



**Grandmother** is a heart-shaped piece of sponge glued in the center of the poster board circle.



**Mother** is a heart-shaped piece of sponge inside a gold ring glued in the center of the poster board circle.



**Grandfather** is a heart-shaped piece of sponge inside a gold ring with a piece of cloth resembling a necktie on the right of the ring.



**Sister** is a heart-shaped piece of sponge inside a gold ring with a ribbon bow underneath.

## People On-Campus at TSBVI



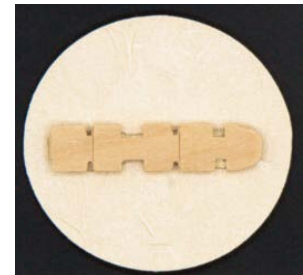
**Class** is a c-shaped plastic piece glued in the center of the circle poster board.



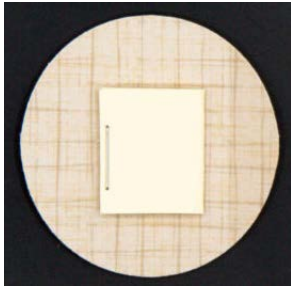
**School doctor** is a short piece of Q-tip glued in the center of the poster board circle.



**School nurse** is a medicine cup glued to the poster board circle.



**Substitute teacher** is 1/2 of a textured craft stick glued in the center of the poster board circle.



**Classroom**  
**teacher** is a tiny  
 book of Post-It  
 notes glued in the  
 center of the poster  
 board circle.

## Places



*10 Tactile symbol for  
 outdoors is a small  
 piece of twig on top of  
 artificial leaves glued to  
 the needlepoint square.*

Tactile symbols representing places are made with squares of needlepoint backing. The backing could be made from other material, depending on what materials you have and what the child can tactually discriminate.

**Note:** These symbols are the ones utilized at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, so they reflect that social environment. You may need to create symbols or adapt symbols specific to the environment of the student.

If you are starting from scratch with a symbol, try to pick something that will make sense to the student. As you look at the symbols you will see that some are based on visual information and some on possible tactile information. It is important to consider the individual's perspective when creating the symbol.

These symbols are highly abstract so it is important to note his/her visual and tactile access when designing the symbol. A part or a piece of an object often works. By necessity, however, some symbols have to be arbitrary, because there is no obvious item to place on the symbol. When that's the case, the student will learn the meaning through repeated association.

**Shape: square**

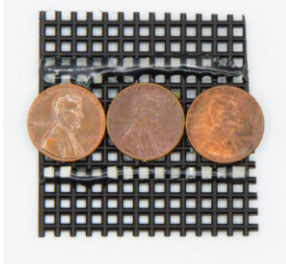
**Background: plastic needlepoint backing**



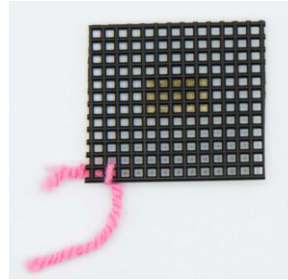
## A-CI



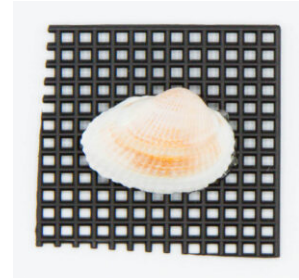
**Bakery** is a cupcake paper with a drinking straw above on a square.



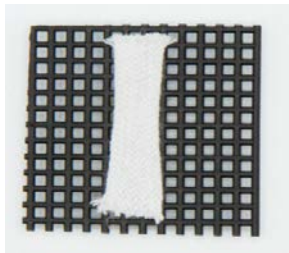
**Bank** is made of 3 pennies glued in a horizontal row on the square.



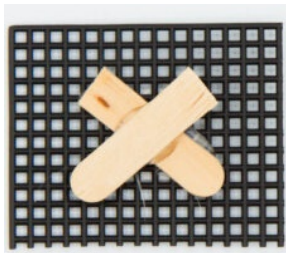
**Bathroom** is a piece of yarn tied in the corner of the needlepoint square.



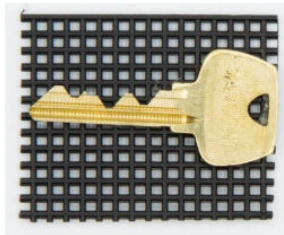
**Beach** is a small seashell glued in the center of the needlepoint square.



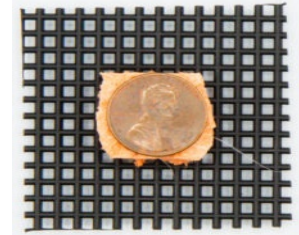
**Bowling alley** is a piece of flat shoe lace glued vertically on the square.



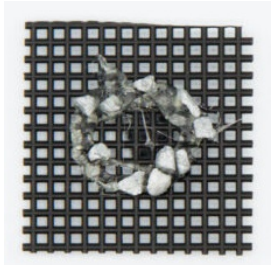
**Cafeteria** is short pieces of popsicle sticks forming an x-shape glued to the center.



**Car or van** is a key glued horizontally to the needlepoint square.



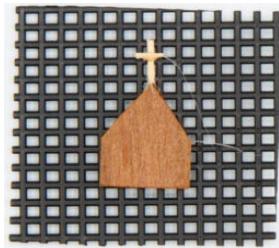
**Car wash** is a penny glued on top of a piece of chamois cloth glued in the center.



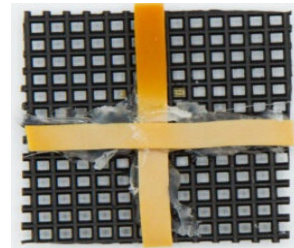
**Cave** is an open circle of glue with tiny pebbles on top in the center of the square.



**Central Market** is a scoop of a plastic spoon with tinsel pipe cleaner surrounding it.



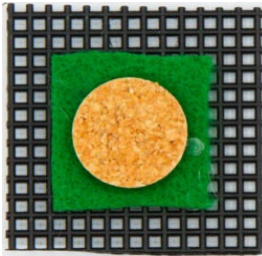
**Church** is a house-shaped piece of balsa wood with a tiny cross on top glued to the center.



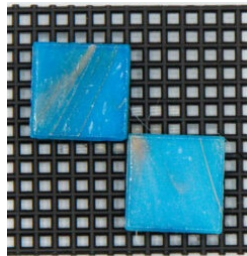
**Classroom** is 2 pieces of rubber band in a t-shaped glued to the center of the square.



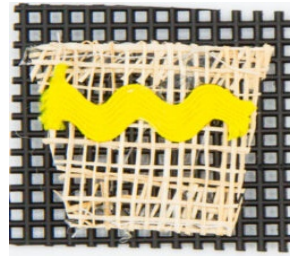
## Co-Ho



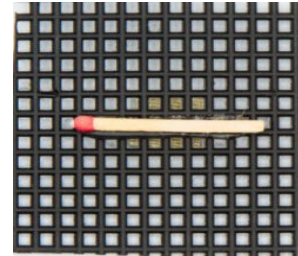
**Computer room** is a piece of felt with a circle of cork on top glued to the center of the square.



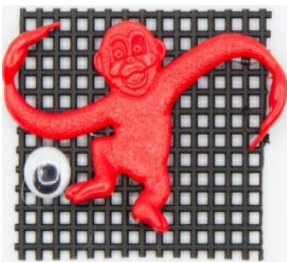
**Dorm** is 2 small square glass tiles, one above and one below with 1 corner touching.



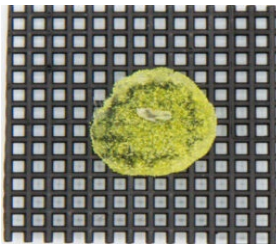
**Farmer's Market** is a piece of straw placemat cut into the shape of a basket with rickrack on the top.



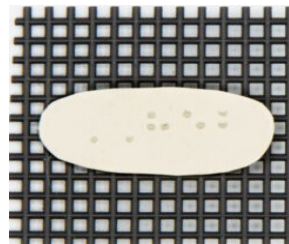
**Fire station** is a match glued horizontally to the center of the needlepoint square.



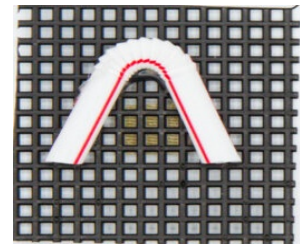
**Game room** is a piece from the game Barrel of Monkeys and a small googly eye.



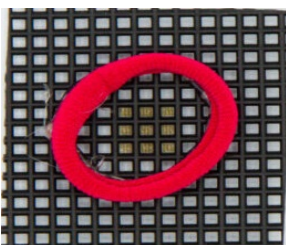
**Garden** is a circle of glue with sand on it in the center of the needlepoint square.



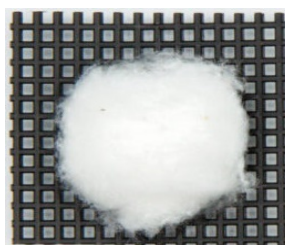
**HEB Grocery** is an oval-shaped piece of braille paper with HEB in braille on it.



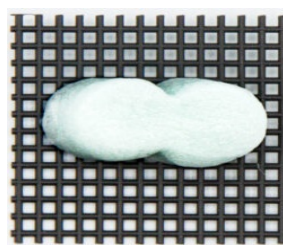
**Group home** is a bending straw formed in the shape of a roof glued to the square.



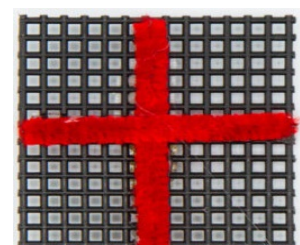
**Gym** is a terry cloth wrist band glued in a circle shape in the center of the square.



**Health center or nurses' office** is a ball of cotton glued in the center of the square.

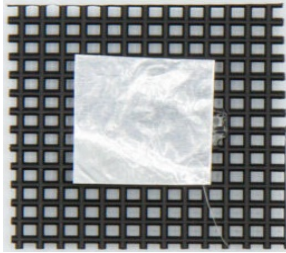


**Home** is a Styrofoam peanut glued horizontally in the center of the square

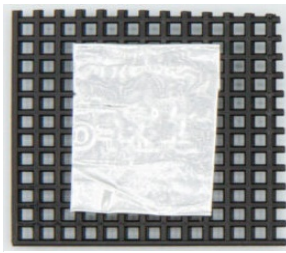


**Hospital** is a a cross made from red pipe cleaner that divides the square into 4 quadrants.

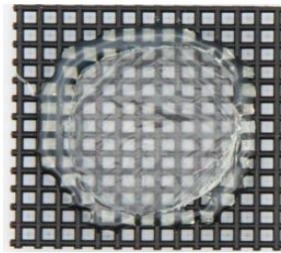
## Hot-Off



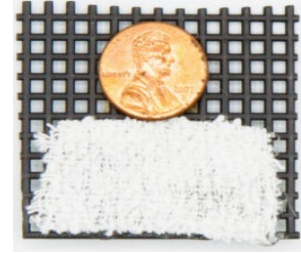
**Hot tub** is a square of aluminum glued in the center of the needlepoint square.



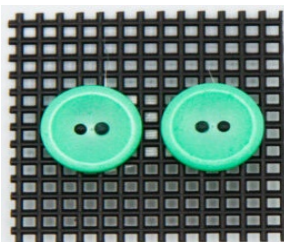
**Kitchen** is a rectangle of aluminum pan glued in the center .



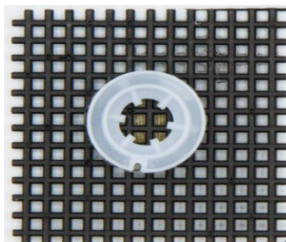
**Lake** is a large circle of plastic wrap glued in the center.



**Laundromat** is a rectangle of terry cloth with a penny glued above.



**Laundry room** is 2 small buttons in a row in the center of the square.



**Learning Resource Center (library)** is the center cog of a cassette tape glued to the square.



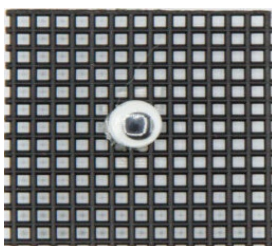
**Mall** is four pieces of rickrack along the edges of the needlepoint square



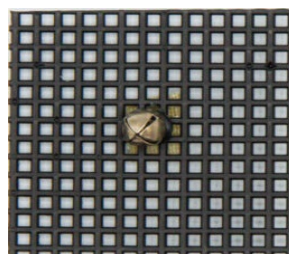
**Austin Barton Creek Mall**, is the symbol for mall plus a short piece of twig.



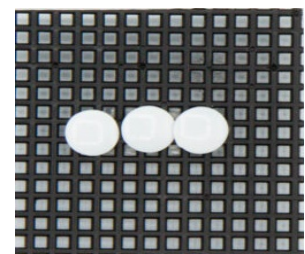
**Movie** is a paper candy wrapper glued in the center of the square.



**Museum** is a small googly eye glued to center of the square.



**Music room** is a single jingle bell glued in the center of the square.



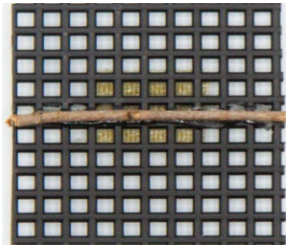
**Office** is 3 hole-punch circles in a horizontal row in center of the square.



## Ou-Re



**Outside/outdoors** is a small piece of twig on top of artificial leaves on the square.



**Park** is a piece of twig glued horizontally in the center of the square.



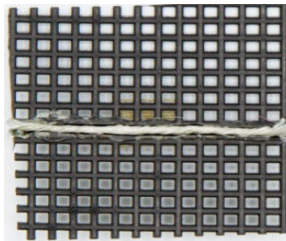
**Austin Zilker Park,** is a piece of twig with a z-shaped piece of pipe cleaner above it.



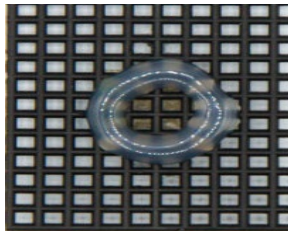
**Playground** is blob of glue with tiny pebbles in it at the center of the square.



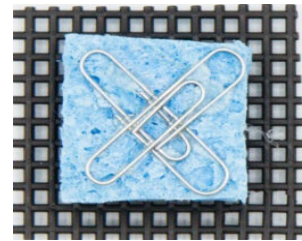
**Pool** is a triangular piece of terry cloth glued to the center of the square.



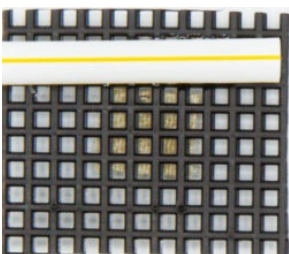
**Post office** is a piece of package string glued horizontally in the center of square.



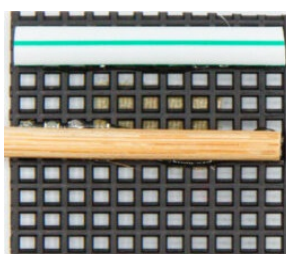
**Swimming pool** is an o-shape of glue in the center of the square.



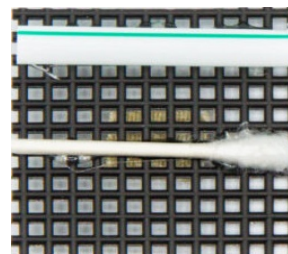
**Recycling center** is a square of sponge with two paper clips forming an X-shape on top.



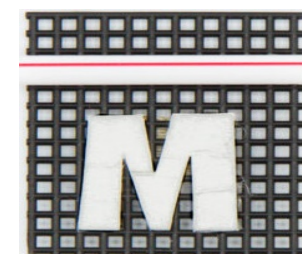
**Restaurant** is a piece of straw glued along one edge of the square.



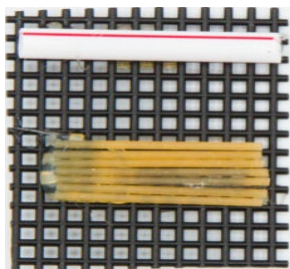
**Restaurant -Asian** is the symbol for restaurant above a piece of wooden chop stick glued horizontally in the center.



**Restaurant - Chicken** is the symbol for restaurant with a small piece of Q-tip glued below it in the center of the square.



**Restaurant – Fast Food** (e.g. McDonald's) is the symbol for restaurant with the letter M cut from paper underneath it.



**Restaurant**  
**(Italian)** is  
restaurant symbol  
with 7 short piece of  
spaghetti glued  
beneath it on the  
square.

## Time



**11 Tactile symbol for**  
**April is pipe cleaner**  
**shaped like a capital “A”**  
**on the shape.**

Tactile symbols representing elements of time made with diamond shaped poster board with the top point clipped off. The backing includes materials such as foil, contact paper, and netting material. The shape is the most important, but the backing can vary depending on what materials you have and what the child can tactually discriminate. Using different backings to form smaller categories can be helpful. For example, you will see that months of the year have foil backing while the days of the week have netting. Just remember, touch is the sense primarily in use so the texture of the material should be distinct.

**Note:** These symbols are the ones utilized at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, so they reflect that social environment. You may need to create symbols or adapt symbols specific to the environment of the student.

If you are starting from scratch with a symbol, try to pick something that will make sense to the student. As you look at the symbols you will see that some are based on visual information and some on possible tactile information. It is important to consider the individual's perspective when creating the symbol. These symbols are highly abstract so it is important to note his/her visual and tactile access when designing the symbol. A part or a piece of an object often works. By necessity, however, some symbols have to be arbitrary, because there is no obvious item to place on the symbol. When that's the case, the student will learn the meaning through repeated association.

**Shape: diamond with top point clipped off**

**Background: various materials such as netting, foil, contact paper**



## Days of the Week

All days of the week use netting material for a backing.



**Sunday** is shape with white cord glued in spiral



**Monday** is an open brad in the center.



**Tuesday** is rubber band glued on horizontally.



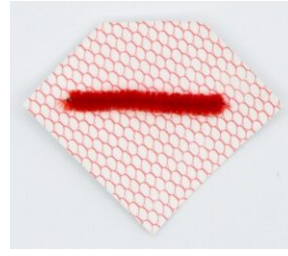
**Wednesday** is shape with button glued on in the center.



**Thursday** is shape with tiny Lego block glued in the center.



**Friday** is with piece of popsicle stick glued horizontally in the center.



**Saturday** is shape with piece of pipe cleaner glued horizontally in the center.

## Seasons

All season symbols use plain tag board for backing.



**Fall** is a rectangle of felt with an artificial leaf on top in the center of the shape.



**Spring** is a small artificial flower on top of a rectangle of felt and glued to the center of the shape.



**Summer** is a rectangle of felt with a seashell underneath it on the shape.



**Winter** is a rectangle of felt with five small dots of puff paint or paper below on the shape.

## Months

The backing material for months is foil.



**January** is a J-shaped from pipe cleaner and glued to the shape.



**February** is an F-shaped from pipe cleaner and glued to the shape.



**March** is an M-shaped from pipe cleaner and glued to the shape.



**April** is an A-shaped from pipe cleaner and glued to the shape.



**May** is four brad heads glued in a square pattern to the center of the shape.



**June** is a circle formed from pipe cleaner glued to the center of the shape.



**July** is a square shape formed from pipe cleaner and glued to the center of the shape.



**August** is a piece of craft stick glued vertically to the center of the shape.



**September** is a paper clip glued horizontally in the center of the shape.



**October** is an X-shape formed from pipe cleaner in the center of the shape.



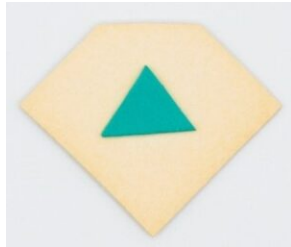
**November** is a triangle shape of pipe cleaner in the center of the shape.



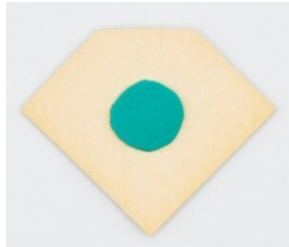
**December** is a circle shape made from sequins in the center of the shape.

## Informal Time of Day

The backing material for informal time of day is plain tag board. Note: Since these were designed for use in school, we do not have a picture for symbols for evening or night. When creating your own symbol for these time concepts use the same shape and backing material. Consider using other shapes in the center such as a square, zig-zag, or curve or some other type of material such as a pipe cleaner or puff paint.



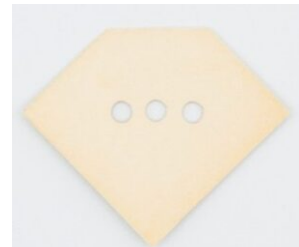
**Morning** is a small triangular shaped piece of felt or foam glued to the center of the shape.



**Afternoon** is a small round shaped piece of felt or foam glued to the center of the shape.



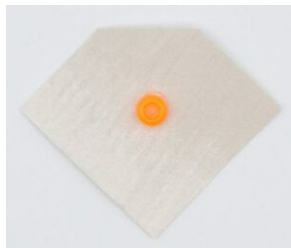
**Later** is a small tile spacer glued to the center of the shape.



**Sometime** is three dots of puff paint placed horizontally on the center of the shape.

## Time Clock Units

The backing material for time clock units is contact paper.



**Second** is one small bead in the center of the shape.



**Minute** is two small beads placed horizontally in the center of the shape.



**Hour** is three small beads placed horizontally in the center of the shape.



Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired  
Outreach Department



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