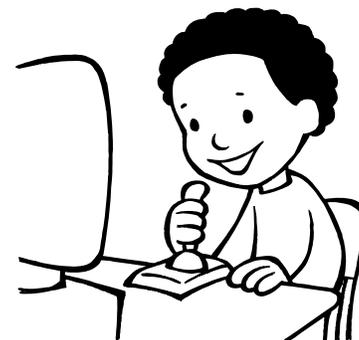


Getting the Most Out of Boardmaker™

By Lisa Priddy

Boardmaker™ is a computer software database of *Picture Communication Symbols (PCS)* and is the MOST flexible platform on which to create all symbol adapted print-based materials! By using pre-made templates and learning additional skills, you can maximize your use of *Boardmaker™* and create spectacular symbol-based instructional and therapy tools!



1. Calendars

- Find a free collection of calendars either in your **templates folder** or on the Mayer-Johnson website (www.mayer-johnson.com).
- Use the calendars for therapy schedules, schedule of visits with specialists, birthdays, or other special events.
- Import **digital images** to personalize the calendars.

2. Add a Name

- Use this feature to add as many different names for a symbol as you would like. Great for adding proper nouns!
- Click on the **picture frame** icon in the symbol-finder and type in the name you want to add.
- Next, click **Add a Name**. Then, just click **OK**.
- Try adding the name of your favorite restaurant. Just get the symbol for restaurant, click on the picture frame, and you are ready to go!

3. Select a Portion of a Symbol

- Without selecting any tools in the symbol finder window, draw a square around the portion of the symbol that you want.
- To avoid getting excess portions of the symbol, click on the dotted square (this is the **Marquee Tool**) and you will find the **Lasso Tool**. Remember, the **Lasso Tool** is a hidden tool!
- Click in the symbol finder window and drag a lasso around the portion of the symbol that you want.

4. Using Templates to Create

- Beyond Boardmaker™ Volumes I and II* are a phenomenal collection of activities that make creating on *Boardmaker™* easier than ever. Select from a collection of activities including symbol-adapted books, behavioral forms, worksheets, reviews, a graph, a web and more!
- Simply (1) select the template you want to use, (2) plug in symbols and text to complete the template for the student, (3) do a **Save As** and (4) print and enjoy!

5. Efficiently Selecting Symbols from Thumbnail Views

- a. This is a little known trick! Create a grid on your board.
- b. Open up your **Symbol Finder**.
- c. Type a word you are searching for.
- d. Click on the **Thumbnail View** (Red Square, Blue Circle, Green Triangle Button). To place the symbols from the thumbnail onto the board, you can simply Right-Click on the symbol you would like. Continue to \Right-Click to fill up your board!
- e. This is a quick, efficient way to fill up your screen with symbols!



6. Customizing and Creating New Symbols

Here is an example of how to create and save a symbol for the book, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.

- a. This is the **MOST** important additional skill to learn! Open the **Symbol Finder** and get the symbol for "caterpillar."
- b. Click on the background of your board.
- c. Open the **Symbol Finder** and get the symbol for "hungry."
- d. Use the **lasso tool** to grab only the hungry bubble.
- e. Paste on the background and select **Add to**.
- f. Position the hungry bubble to the right of the caterpillar.
- g. To save this new combined symbol, highlight (or select) all parts of the new symbol (both the caterpillar and the hungry bubble).
- h. Go to **Edit-Copy**. Open up the **Symbol Finder** and select **Edit-Paste**. You now name the symbol *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and assign it to a category (Story Characters).

7. Enhancing Your Activities on *Boardmaker™ Plus!*

- a. **Boardmaker™ Plus** allows you to create on-screen interactive computer activities with *Boardmaker™*. Now, in addition to printing invaluable symbol-based materials you can create on-screen activities.
- b. Using the **free templates** that come with *Boardmaker™ Plus*, create an on-screen interactive book. This lets students have extra practice and repetition reading any book.
- c. Also, use the free templates to create an on-screen **photo album**. It's a great way to share pictures on the computer!
- d. *Boardmaker™* continually adds new features and options to its software. Check with *Boardmaker™* frequently to shop for features that may be beneficial for you.

**These tips are applicable for *Boardmaker™ Version 5.0*