


1975

# Lipson Boxes: Square or Not

Edna Christina Graef

*School for International Training*

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Lipson Boxes  
Square or Not

Edna Christina Graef

"Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Master of Arts in Teaching degree at the School  
for International Training, Brattleboro, Vermont."

August, 1975

This project by Edna Christina Graef is  
accepted in its present form.

Date

10/28/75

Principal Advisor

Raymond C. Clark

Project Advisors/Readers:

John Chapman  
Peter McLeod Bagg

Acknowledgements

Alexander Lipson

John Chapman

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BE (IS)

BE (ARE)

NEGATIVE DO

NEGATIVE/POSITIVE DO

ADVERBS OF FREQUENCY I

ADVERBS OF FREQUENCY II

ADVERBS OF FREQUENCY III

PAST/FUTURE TENSES

LEND/BORROW

SAY/TELL

DO/MAKE

PRESENT PASSIVE (2)

PRESENT/PAST PASSIVE

PRESENT/PAST PERFECT

CONDITIONAL (FUTURE POSSIBLE)

CONDITIONAL (OPEN)

CONDITIONAL (IMPOSSIBLE OPEN)

IF

UNLESS

BECAUSE/ALTHOUGH

IF/UNLESS/BECAUSE/ALTHOUGH

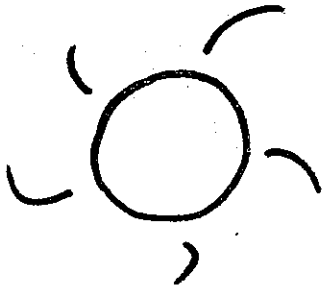
A series of approximately twenty Lipson boxes are catalogued according to possible linguistic features. The introduction includes suggestions as to why Alexander Lipson uses these boxes and how these boxes pertain to a language classroom. An explanation of how to construct Lipson boxes is included.

# THE BOX

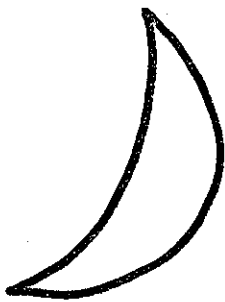
the young boy



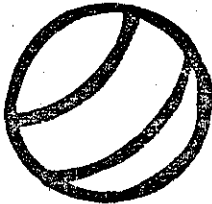
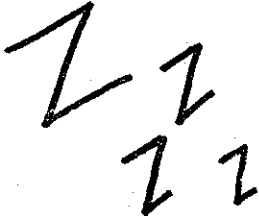

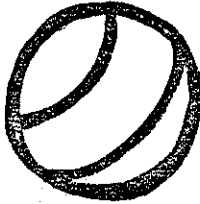
the old man



during the day



at night

 <p>plays</p>	 <p>sleeps</p>
 <p>sleeps</p>	 <p>plays</p>

Lipson boxes are a problem solving language teaching technique devised by Alexander Lipson, director of foreign language teacher training at Harvard University.<sup>1</sup> He created a successful Russian course based on the use of these boxes. This technique involves the student in constructing an answer to a problem through using newly learned vocabulary. In solving the problem the student is forced to use a correct language structure. This technique is also useful in teaching students to ask questions correctly. Wh-questions are introduced from the beginning of the course so that students are constantly in contact with these important structures.

The use of Lipson boxes, as demonstrated in Lipson's Russian course is based on a thematic continuity. Lipson uses a simple plot involving hooligans. He builds on it creating complex and difficult problems to solve. Using a thematic plot leads to numerous outlets for review material. Students also seem to enjoy the idea of a "mini-soap opera" while learning a language. It becomes a who's who, what, when, where's it going to happen next. The only drawback in using a thematic plot is the lengthy time element in developing a theme that is of interest to the students and flexible enough to use with any desired grammatical point.

A variation of the thematic Lipson box is the random Lipson box. The same technique is used, but with a different plot for each practice. The time element is shortened tremendously, but they seem to be less stimulating to the student and become more of a grammar drill.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Alexander Lipson, A Russian Course, Slavica Publications, Cambridge, Mass.

<sup>2</sup>Both thematic and random plot type boxes have been experimented with personally and the thematic plot always showed greater voluntary student participation.

## CONSTRUCTION OF LIPSON BOXES

Lipson boxes can be frustrating to devise, yet amusing to ponder. The plot can be humorous or serious so long as the instructor can create a stimulating experience for the students. Much of the success of a Lipson box stems from the instructor's cultural sensitivity, his familiarity with the technique, and his enthusiasm shown while conducting the exercise.

There are two basic steps in presenting a Lipson box; the plot and pre-drill, and the box drill. The plot may be presented first, but if the student's language ability is not up to this level of comprehension, it would be best to develop the plot while working with the pre-drill. The following is a summary of how to set up a pre-drill and a box-drill.

### PRE-DRILL

Six symbols are presented and drilled with the students. This must be done well, or the box-drill will fold. Alexander Lipson uses considerable repetition, but any technique may be used. The symbols should be drilled alone, and then with the wh-questions that correspond to each symbol. Tag and negative questions add variety and extra practice to the drill. If the students are having difficulty in remembering the vocabulary, or are confusing the question words, the words may be written on the board next to the corresponding symbol, but erased before starting the box-drill. The following are sample student/teacher exchanges when presenting the pre-drill. Students may use a long or short answer.



#### TEACHER

the young boy ..... the young boy  
(Point to the symbol and  
have the students repeat.)

Who? ..... the young boy  
(Point to the symbol.)

#### STUDENT(S)

TEACHER

STUDENT(S)

Who is he? ..... the young boy  
He's the young boy.

He's the young boy, isn't he? ..... Yes, he is.  
Yes, he's the young boy.



the old man ..... the old man

Who? ..... the old man  
He's the old man.

Who is he? ..... the old man  
He's the old man.

He's the old man, isn't he? ..... Yes, he is.  
He's the old man.

Once two of the six symbols have been presented and drilled randomly point to the symbols and ask questions about both symbols. Alternate the answers between the young boy and the old man. Cue the answers by pointing to the correct symbols.

TEACHER

STUDENT(S)



He's the old man, isn't he? ..... No, he isn't.  
(Point to the young boy.)

He isn't the old man, is he? ..... No, he isn't.  
(Point to the young boy.)

Isn't he the young boy?..... Yes, he is.  
(Point to the young boy.)



He's the young boy, isn't he? ..... No, he isn't.  
(Point to the old man.)

He's the young boy, isn't he? ..... Yes, he is.  
(Point to the young boy.)

He isn't the old man, is he? ..... Yes, he is.  
(Point to the old man.)

TEACHER

STUDENT (S)

Who is he? ..... He's the old man.  
(Point to the old man.)

Is he the old man, or the young boy?... He's the young boy.  
(Point to the young boy.)

When the students have learned the first two symbols, add the third and then the forth symbols. Drill the third symbol alone, and then with the first and second. Repeat this proceedure with the forth symbol.

TEACHER

STUDENT (S)



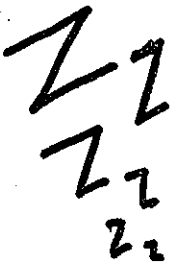
plays ..... plays

What? ..... plays

What does he do? ..... He plays.

Who plays? ..... The young boy does.  
(Point to the young boy.)

What does the young boy do? ..... He plays.



sleeps ..... sleeps

What does he do? ..... He sleeps.

Who sleeps? ..... The young boy does.  
(Point to the young boy.)

Who sleeps? ..... The old man does.  
(Point to the old man.)

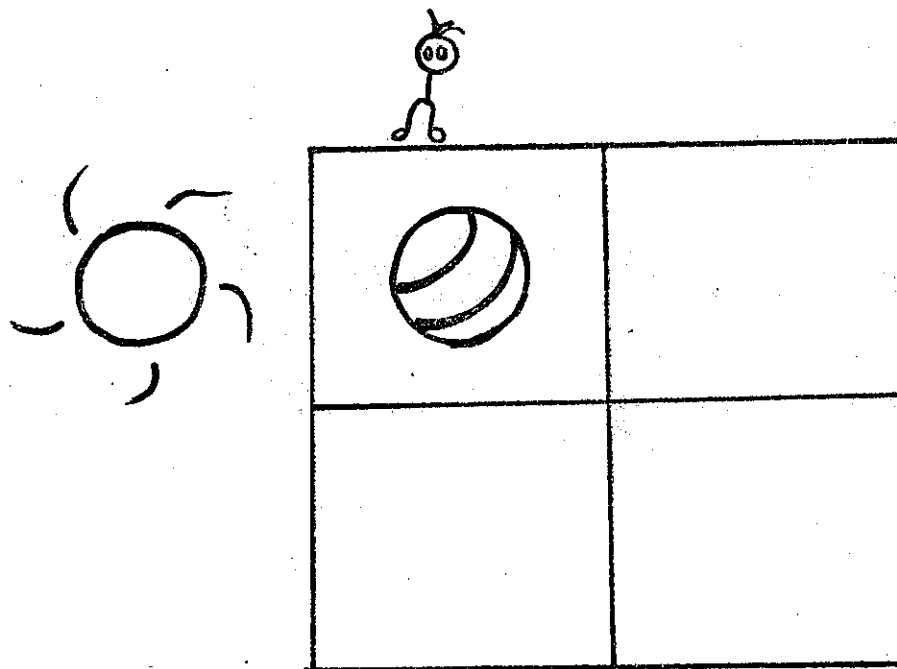
What does the young boy do? ..... He sleeps.  
(Point to "sleeps".)

Drill these four symbols thoroughly before proceeding to the fifth and sixth symbols. Ask all possible wh-questions. Drill the fifth and sixth symbols in the same manner. Once the students know all of the symbols well, procede with the box-drill.

### BOX-DRILL

Begin this stage by drawing a large box on the board. If no board is available this could be drawn on large paper. Only one square should be filled in at a time, drilling all possible wh-questions with that square. While drilling, none of the symbols except for the answer symbols should be cued. Students may answer with a long, or short answer. As the box is being filled in, start telling the plot.

### SQUARE I



### PLOT

The young boy always plays soccer during the day. Today is his birthday. He is sixteen years old.

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who is he?

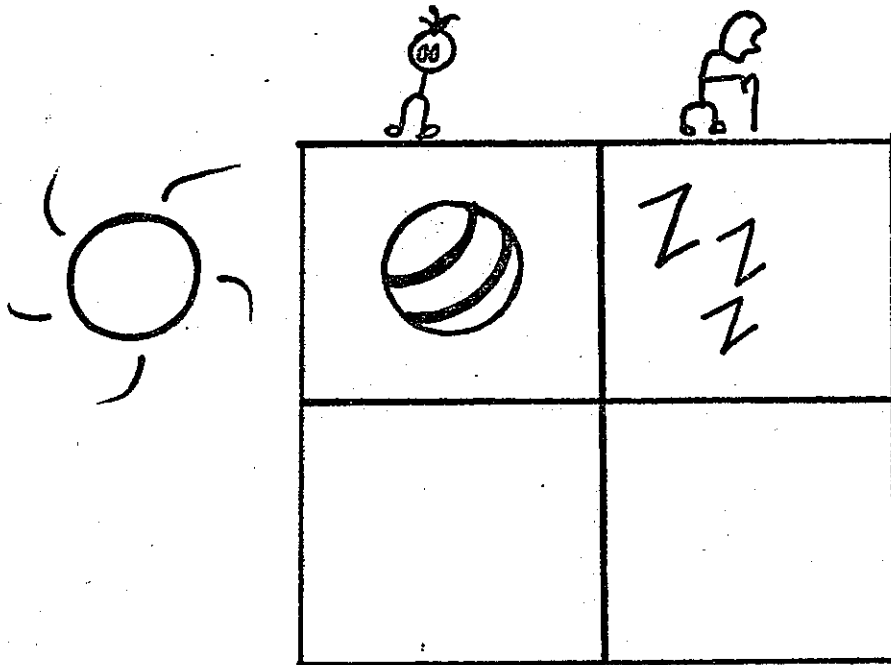
What does he do?

When does he play?

Who plays during the day?

What does the young boy do during the day?

SQUARE II



PLOT

The young boy talks with the old man. The old man is his grandfather. His grandfather says it is better to sleep during the day.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who is he?

(Point to the old man.)

He isn't the old man, is he?

(Point to the young boy.)

He's the young boy, isn't he?

(Point to the young boy.)

Who sleeps during the day?

Who plays during the day?

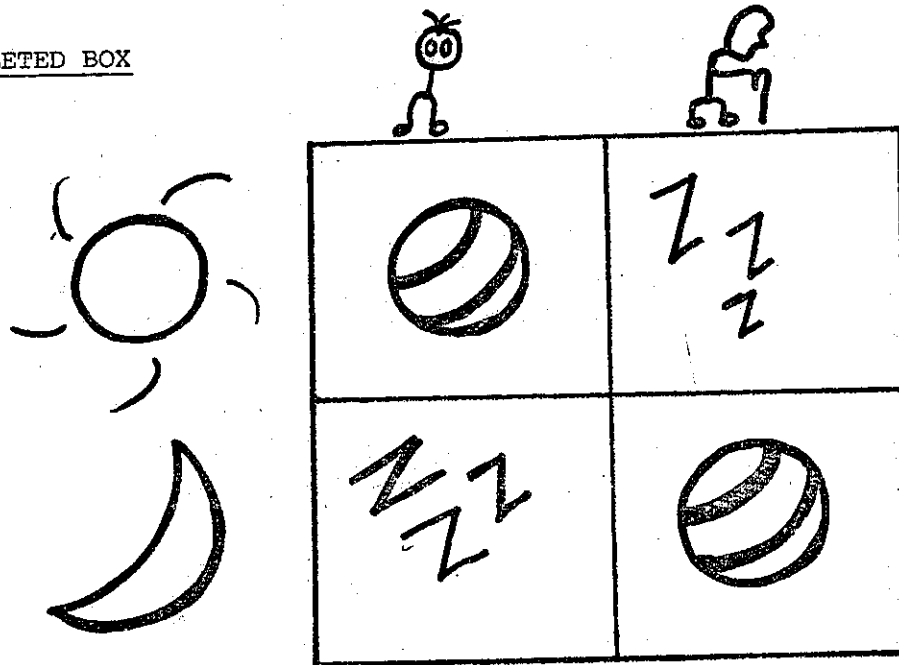
When does the young boy play?

What does the old man do during the day?

Does the old man sleep during the day, or does he play?

Continue this procedure with squares three and four. Once a simple box has been learned more symbols may be added to each square, adding complications to the plot. After the students have become confident enough with their answers, have them ask the questions and answer them.

THE COMPLETED BOX



PLOT

The little boy then asks what the old man does at night. The old man decides to enlighten the boy.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who plays at night?

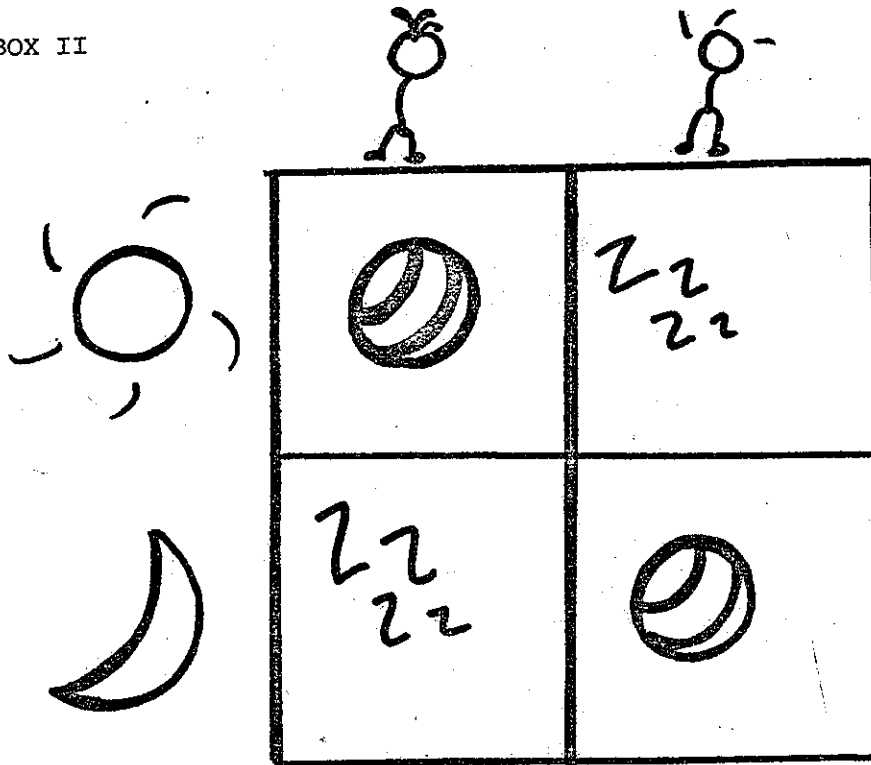
Who plays during the day?

Why does the old man sleep during the day? (Because he plays at night.)

When does the young boy sleep?

If doing a thematic plot this box may be continued. In subsequent lessons develop the plot, add new grammatical structures, and vocabulary.

BOX II



PLOT

After hearing his grandfather's life style the enlightened boy decides to try it for himself.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

What did the little boy do during the day?

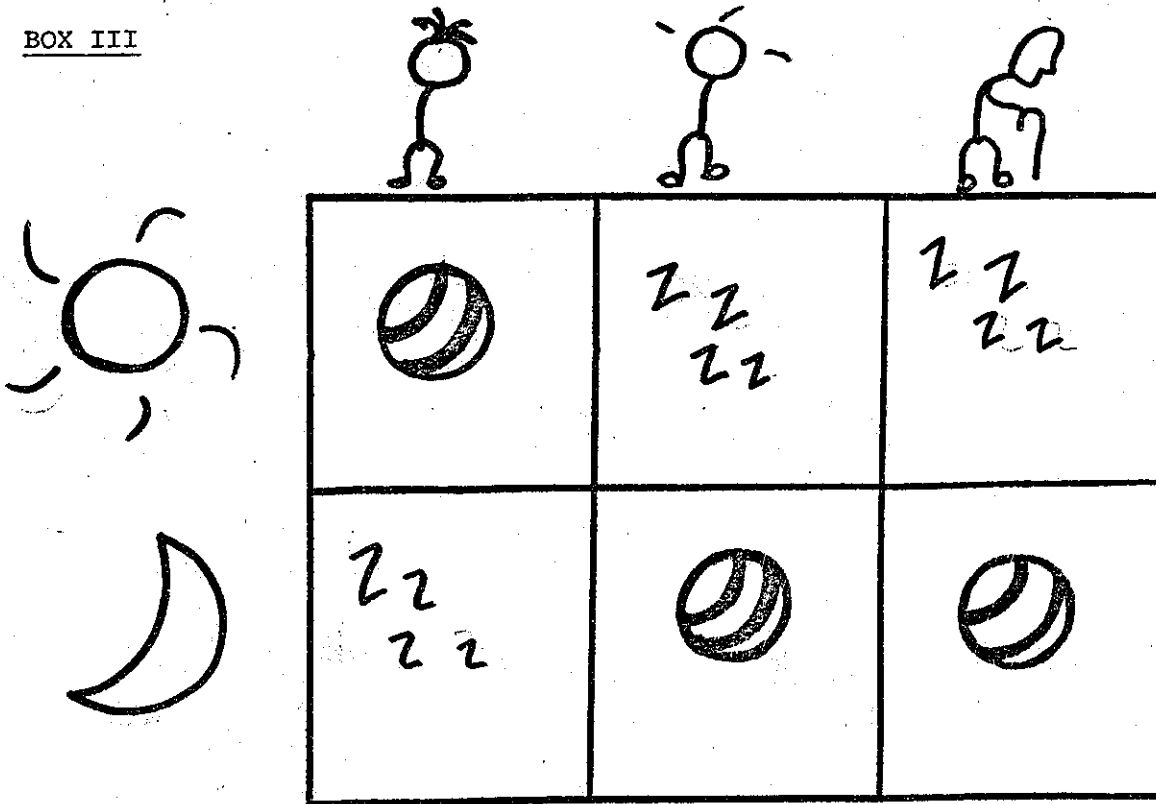
Who slept during the day?

Who plays during the day now?

What do the enlightened boy do during the day?

A more complicated version of this box may be drawn using the young boy, the enlightened boy, and the grandfather.

BOX III



SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who slept at night?

Who sleeps during the day? (The old man does/The enlightened boy does.)

Who sleeps at night? (No one does.)

What did the young boy do during the day?

When did the young boy play?

Why didn't the young boy sleep during the day? (Because he wasn't enlightened.)

REPERCUSSIONS

1. A slow and torturous deterioration of the mind with tendencies towards madness as the instructor attempts to construct a box.
2. The students become uncontrollable as they argue out their answers.
3. The teacher may become totally confused and necessarily fade into the wall as students take over by recombining old and new material they have been taught.

One may wonder now, "Why bother going insane over a Lipson box? Of what use is a Lipson box in the classroom?" As previously stated the instructor must be well acquainted with them, or they will be of no use in the classroom. after a few successful attempts though, the instructor should notice several advantages in teaching with Lipson boxes.

One of the greatest advantages is that students can learn a grammar point through creating their own sentences when asked a question. A sentence must be constructed to convey specific information. In using a complicated plot the student is forced to focus on the content of the sentence. Their motivation lies in finding a correct response to a challenging question by combining old and new elements to form a totally new sentence. The student can use newly learned vocabulary, recombine the symbols, and give a correct response; correct both in meaning and in structure.

Students of various age groups and backgrounds enjoy the game-like process of the box-drill, and the humor of the plot.<sup>3</sup> The pace of a Lipson box is meant to be fast and of high intensity. Because of the pace, students must pay attention, especially to the pre-drill. There is no time for the student's mind to wander, or he will not be able to participate in the game.

The use of symbols can usually replace translation. A picture is implanted in the student's mind through use of the plot and the symbols. When the student gives a response he is not merely putting some words together randomly. He is visualizing information which he then transforms into a sentence.

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<sup>3</sup> Age groups observed were from eight years old to twelve; and from eighteen years old to twenty-eight. Numerous nationalities were included and interests ranged from grade school children to mechanics and teachers.

There is often rivalry in the classroom between good students or friends. When this occurs they enjoy arguing out an answer and defending their point of view. In the process they are using a foreign language in order to communicate meaningful knowledge.

There are also various minor uses of Lipson boxes such as the learning of adverbs of time and place, and their respective prepositions. Tag questions and negative questions can be used along with wh-questions, which also provides more variety in the drilling. Vocabulary learned in this manner is difficult to forget.

A language laboratory program could be developed based on the Lipson box. Students would be given a manual of boxes. A tape would take the place of the instructor either by teaching and drilling a box, or by doing further exercises with a previously taught box. The exercises could consist of oral, aural, and written work. In this way, students would not be drilling a group of unrelated, meaningless sentences.

As the instructor experiments with Lipson boxes in the classroom he will begin to see these advantages and many more while conducting the exercise. He will also notice a change in the way his students formulate a sentence. They will see an image, not words and will then compute a sentence which represents those images.

The following is a catalogue of twenty-two Lipson boxes. Some were created by MAT students and used during a practice teaching situation. Most of the boxes were created to suit a particular teaching situation involving Iranian mechanic students taking a pre-technical English course. The boxes could be adapted to a different teaching situation by changing the characters, but most students should enjoy the plots as they are. Many of these boxes were also designed as a humorous device to reinforce student discipline, or student morale.

## BE (IS)

### PLOT

Pedro and Peter are exchange students. Pedro is Mexican and Peter is American. Pedro goes to school in the United States and Peter goes to school in Mexico. Since their homes are so close to their schools, they often visit their parents.

When Pedro is in the United States he is sick, but happy. The food is very different and makes him sick, but he also has a girl friend which makes him happy. The same is true for Peter. At home in their own countries they are both well, but unhappy because their girl friends aren't with them.

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who is sick in the United States?

Who is happy in the United States?

Who is from Mexico?

Where is Pedro from?

Why is Pedro happy in the United States?

Why is Pedro sick in the United States?

### NOTE

The last two sample questions are not pictured in the box-drill, but can be asked if the questions and answers are included in the pre-drill.

BE (IS)

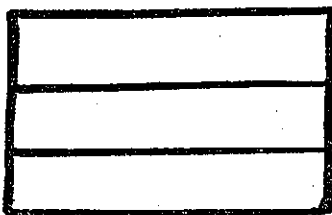
Pedro











Peter



United States



Mexico

  happy sick	  sad well
  sad well	  happy sick

## BE (ARE)

### PLOT

The plot is the same as for the previous box, but now the girl friend's true feelings come forth. The girl friends are bored when Peter and Pedro are around because they like to date around. While the boys are at home they are happy because they can date all their old boy friends. (Why do they go out with Pedro and Peter? Because Peter and Pedro's parents are rich!)

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who is happy when the boys are at home?

Where are the boys when the girls are happy?

How are the girls when the boys are at home?

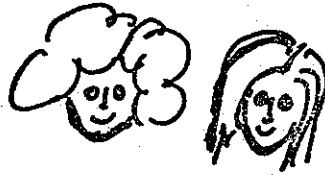
The boys aren't bored when they're at school, are they?

Who is bored when the boys are at school?

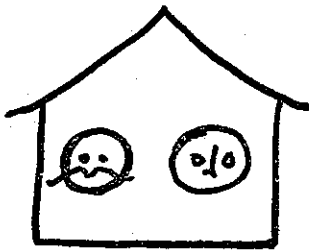
Why are the girls bored when the boys are at school?

BE (ARE)

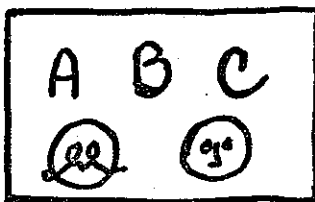
the girlfriends







Pedro and Peter



the boys are  
at home



the boys are  
at school

 happy	 bored
 bored	 happy

## NEGATIVE DO

### PLOT

Many times students wonder how to do well in school. Some students don't know why they can't stay awake in class. This story is about a good student's success and a bad student's failures in class.

The good student knows that in order to stay awake during class he must go to sleep early. Bad students don't realize this. Bad students stay up late trying to study, but since they slept in class they don't even know which lesson to study. Then they walk the streets looking for mischief. Of course they have no alternative other than to soleep in class the next day.

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who doesn't sleep at school?

Why doesn't the good student study at bedtime?

Why doesn't the good student sleep at school?

What doesn't the good student do at school?

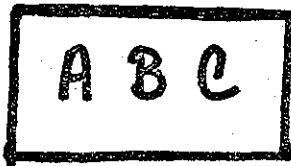
Which student doesn't sleep at school?

# NEGATIVE DO

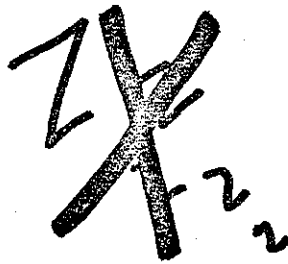
good student



bad student



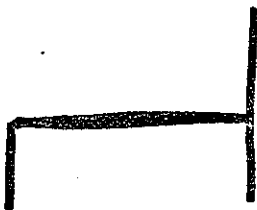
at school



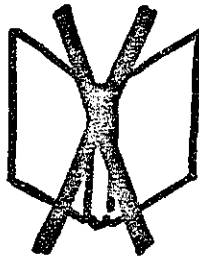
doesn't sleep



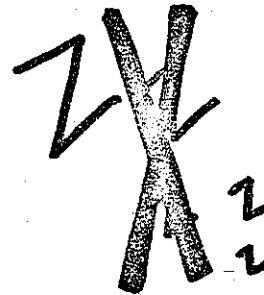
doesn't study



at bedtime



doesn't study



doesn't sleep

## NEGATIVE/POSITIVE DO

### PLOT

The same as for "negative do".

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who doesn't study at bedtime, but studies at school?

Who doesn't study at school?

Who sleeps at school?

Why does the bad student sleep at school?

Which student sleeps and studies at bedtime?

What does the bad student do at bedtime?

### NOTES

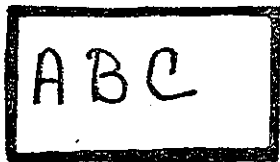
This box is a continuation of "negative do". It can be presented without first doing "negative do". It is broken up into two stages so that beginning students can become familiar with Lipson boxes and so that a definite contrast between the negative and positive can be made.

# NEGATIVE/POSITIVE DO

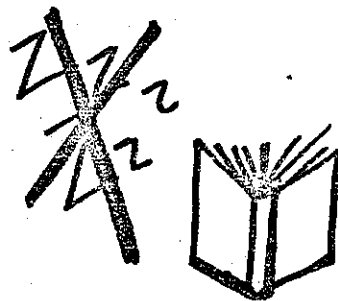
good student



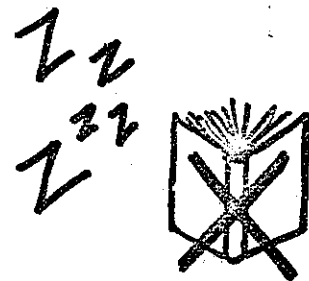
bad student



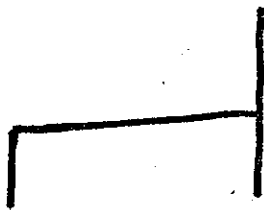
at school



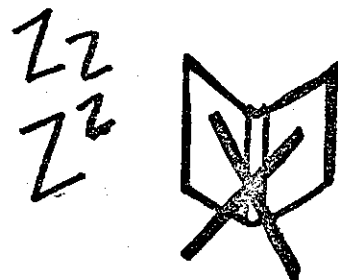
doesn't sleep  
studies



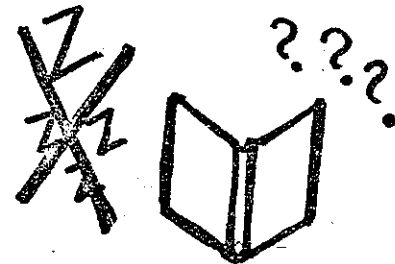
sleeps  
doesn't study



at bedtime



doesn't study  
sleeps



doesn't study  
doesn't sleep

## ADVERBS OF FREQUENCY

### STAGE I

#### PLOT

Bill and Joe are helicopter mechanics. They work in a hangar in the mornings. Joe and Bill have known each other since their days at the technical school. Joe and Bill are friends, but they are quite different from each other. Bill is a good, conscientious mechanic whereas Joe is a lazy, untidy mechanic. In this episode we discover the work habits of Bill and Joe.

#### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

How often does Joe work at home?

Where does Bill always work?

What does Bill do in the hangar?

What does Joe do in the hangar?

Who is the lazy mechanic?

When does Bill sleep?

#### NOTES

1. Although this lesson has three stages, one or two of the stages may be eliminated. The purpose of the first two stages is to build up the plot gradually, and to give ample practice in reading the symbols. Three stages also allows the student enough time to learn several adverbs of frequency over a longer period of time.
2. More adverbs of frequency such as "often" and "rarely" could be added.
3. In the pre-drill full caricatures of Bill and Joe were drawn which helped the students understand the basic plot. Afterwards only their hats were used.

# ADVERBS OF FREQUENCY

## STAGE I

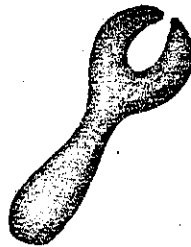
Bill



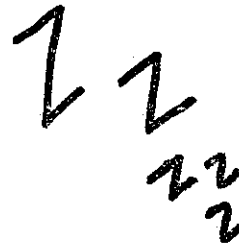
Joe



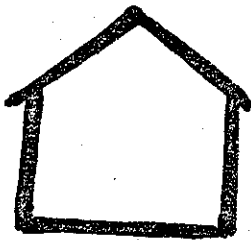
hangar



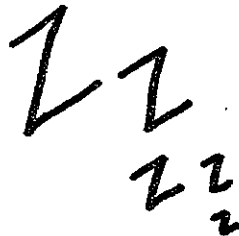
always works



sleeps



home



sleeps



never works

## ADVERBS OF FREQUENCY

### STAGE II

#### PLOT

Recently some changes have taken place at the hangar. There is a new supervisor and he has been making daily inspections in order to get to know the mechanics. Bill is very worried about Joe. The supervisor might fire him if he sees him sleeping so Bill wakes him up when the supervisor comes by. Now he usually sleeps at the hangar, but not always. Of course, he still doesn't work at home. Bill on the other hand isn't so tired anymore because Joe helps him once in a while at the hangar. Bill now only sleeps at home sometimes.

#### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who always works at the hangar?

How often does Bill work at the hangar?

Which mechanic usually sleeps at the hangar?

What does Bill do at home?

Joe always sleeps at the hangar, doesn't he?

Does Bill sometimes sleep at home, or does Joe?

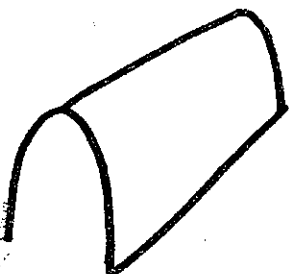
ADVERBS OF FREQUENCY

STAGE II

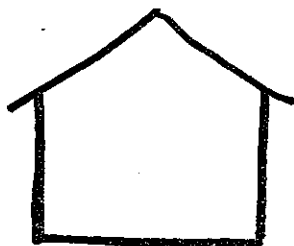
Bill



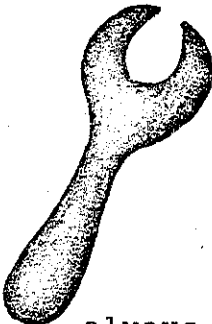
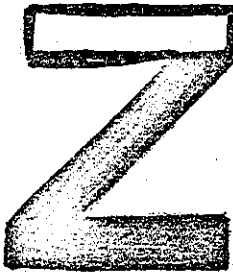
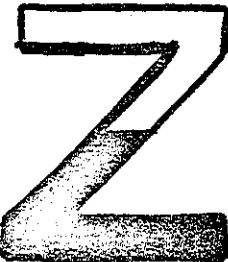

Joe



hangar



home

 always works	 usually sleeps
 sometimes sleeps	 seldom works

## ADVERBS OF FREQUENCY

### STAGE III

#### PLOT

The same as for stage II, but "sleep" and "work" and paired adverbs of frequency are included in each square.

#### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Where does Bill sometimes sleep?

Where does Bill sometimes work?

Where does Bill always work?

Who usually sleeps at the hangar?

What kind of mechanic seldom works?

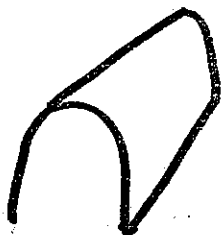
ADVERBS OF FREQUENCY

STAGE III

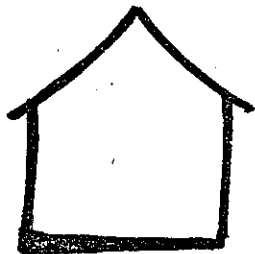
Bill



Joe



hangar



home



Z

always works  
never sleeps



Z

seldom works  
usually sleeps



Z

sometimes works  
sometimes sleeps



Z

never works  
always sleeps

## PAST/FUTURE TENSES

### PLOT

Once upon a time there were two friends who were rather different: one was a playboy while the other remained a virgin. The playboy made love to his girlfriend last year and he is going to marry her next year. The virgin, on the other hand, is a very timid soul. He got married last year, but as of yet he's still a virgin. He is, however, going to make love to his wife for the first time next year.

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who did the playboy make love to?

Who did the virgin marry?

Who is the playboy going to marry?

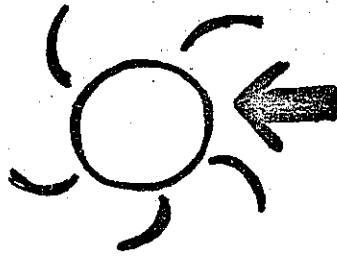
Who is the virgin going to make love to?

When is the playboy going to marry?

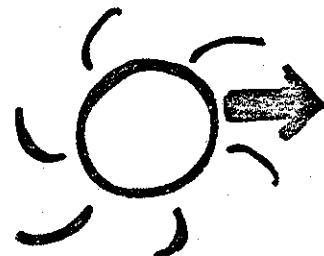
What is the virgin going to do?

# PAST/FUTURE TENSES

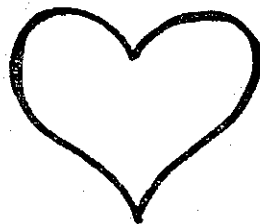
Last year



this year



playboy



made love



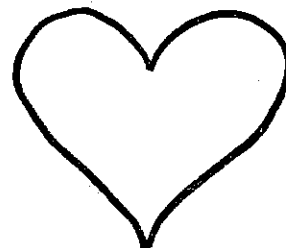
will marry



Virgin



married



will make love

## LEND/BORROW

### PLOT

There was once a teacher who lived in a poor town with only one school. Now this town had no library, so the teacher could give no assignments, as there were no reference books. The children couldn't even write a book report! As a result, the teacher decided to change professions and start a library.

In this same small, poor town there lived a banker. Although he saw money all day he never had much of his own to spend because he had thirty children. All day he lent money to others, but of course he could not lend any to himself. (He had a low credit rating.)

One day the librarian made a deal with the banker. If he would lend her the money to start a library, his children could borrow books at no charge. The agreement was made and now both the librarian and the banker are happy. (Why? The children read books all day and never bother either of them!)

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who lends books?

Whose children reads the books?

What does the librarian lend out?

Who borrows books?

Why does she lend out books?

### NOTE

Since this is a random plot box, the plot need not be explained, but in using the plot more questions may be asked such as "why" and "whose" which cannot be asked without explaining the plot.

LEND/BORROW

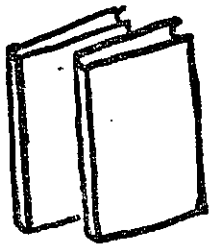
librarian



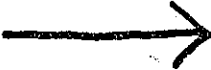



banker



money



books

 borrows	 lends
 lends	 borrows

## SAY/TELL

### PLOT

Joe is having dinner at Bill's house. As usual, Bill and Joe are trying to influence each other. The topic of discussion is the virtues of reading comic books versus the reading of technical manuals. Bill tells Joe to read technical manuals. He says that technical manuals are interesting and that comic books are boring. The friendly fight continues late into the night.

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

What does Bill tell Joe?

What does Joe tell Bill?

Who tells whom to read technical manuals?

Who says that technical manuals are boring?

Why does Bill tell Joe to read technical manuals?

What does Joe say about comic books?

### NOTE

This box is set up differently because of the nature of "say" and "tell". Although "say" and "tell" are used in different situations, their meanings are the same. In this box the stress is on the structural differences between the two.

# SAY/TELL

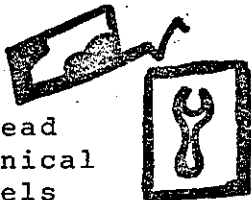
Bill



Joe



to read  
technical  
manuels



technical  
manuels  
are boring







to read  
comic books



comic books  
are boring



 tells	 says
 says	 tells

PLOT

Bill and Joe are friends. They both are helicopter mechanics. It seems whatever Bill does well at work, Joe can do well at home and visa versa.

At work Bill does favors for his fellow employees. He always does the best he can so that he will be promoted to a supervisor and he makes extra money by working over time. But he feels sorry for Joe. Joe is rather lazy and Bill is afraid that Joe will be fired, so whenever the supervisor comes by he makes excuses for Joe's lazy ways. The supervisor always believes Bill because he's such a good mechanic. Joe spends his days making fun of Bill's favors. Because he rarely works he makes numerous mistakes when he does try to work.

After work, Bill's life is fairly dull, but Joe is always up to something. Joe has lots of girl friends. He is always doing all kinds of favors for them. Bill thinks this is foolish because he isn't interested in girls. Joe often invites Bill to his house, but Bill is so nervous around girls that he makes gross mistakes and prefers not to go. Then Joe is upset and has to make up excuses for his absence. (How does Joe make money at home? He sells missing helicopter parts of course!)

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who makes money at work?

What does Bill do for his fellow employees?

Who makes up excuses at work?

Who does Bill make up excuses for?

Where does Bill do his best work?

Does Bill do his best work at the hangar, or at home?

## DO/MAKE

### NOTE

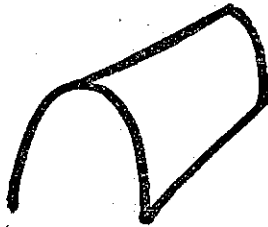
"Do" and "make" are usually idiomatic expressions. In this box a few of the more common expressions used with "do" and "make" are introduced, but it is not designed to teach a difference between the two. This box could be done in stages if it is too lengthy for one lesson.

DO/MAKE

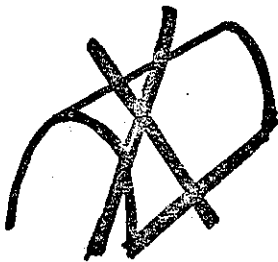
Bill















Joe



at work



not at work

 well favors  ??? excuses money 	 mistakes fun of  ??? doesn't make excuses doesn't make money 
 mistakes fun of  ??? doesn't make excuses doesn't make money 	 well favors  ??? excuses money 

## PRESENT PASSIVE

### PLOT

There always seems to be some kind of excitement going on at the hangar to keep the work crew gossiping. Lately the helicopters have been damaged nightly by some unknown person. The helicopters are checked and repaired daily, but the problem is getting worse because the tools are breaking from over-use. There is no time to fix the tools at the hangar so they must be taken home and repaired there. Security will have to be better or there will be a strike, and the mechanics will be paid without having to work. Who could be behind such a scheme?

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

What is repaired during the day?

What happens during the day?

When are the tools damaged?

What happens to the helicopters at night?

Where are the tools repaired?

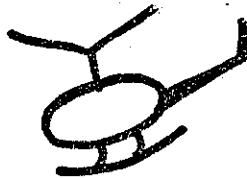
Where are the tools damaged?

### NOTE

The active could be compared to the passive by changing the question word order, or by asking "who". The students might infer that the mechanics do the repairing and that Joe is the master mind behind the scheme.

# PRESENT PASSIVE

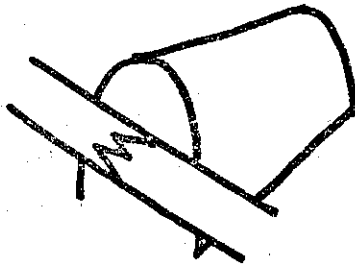
helicopters



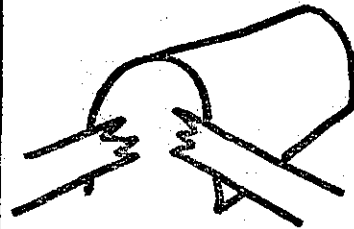
tools



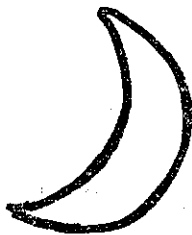
day



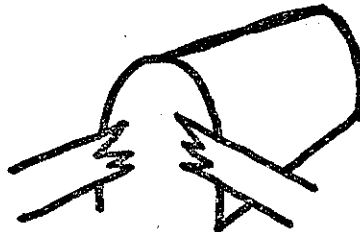
repaired at  
the hangar



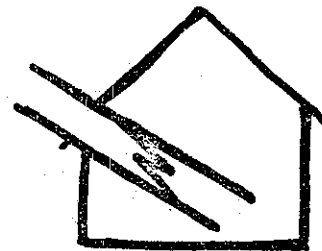
damaged at  
the hangar



night



damaged at  
the hangar



repaired at  
home

## PRESENT PASSIVE

### PLOT

As all students know, some are bad and others are good. How do you know which are bad and which are good? It's simple. Good students write in their notebooks during class, whereas bad students excuse themselves from class and write on the bathroom walls. Good students are too busy to write on the bathroom walls. Both types of students attend Wellwood High School.

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Notebooks are written in by bad students, aren't they?

They aren't written in by good students, are they?

Aren't notebooks written in by good students?

What happens in class?

Why aren't bathroom walls written on by good students?

### NOTES

1. It is not possible to ask most wh-questions while drilling this box unless the instructor wishes to compare the active with the passive.
2. The instructor can have the students respond to all questions with a long answer so as to have practice using the full passive form.
3. The instructor may, as a second drill, have the students ask the questions.

Example: Teacher ..... notebooks/when.

Student<sup>1</sup> ..... When are notebooks written in?

Student<sup>2</sup> ..... They're written in during class.

PRESENT PASSIVE

good student

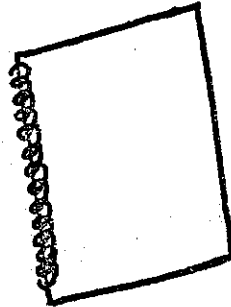


bad student



ajefk

writes



notebooks



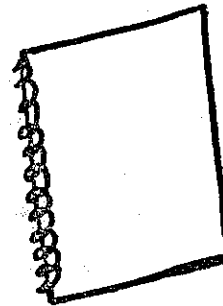
bathroom walls

~~ajefk~~

doesn't write



bathroom walls



notebooks

## PRESENT/PAST PASSIVE

### PLOT

If you remember, Wellwood High School had a problem. The bathroom walls were continually written on by bad students. This is no longer the problem.

For a long time the bathroom walls were cleaned after school by the good students so that the whole school would not be punished by such an act. But, as fate would have it, a good student was caught washing the walls one day and the truth came out. Only the bad students were punished by having to clean the bathrooms for a week. When the good students found this out they decided to take revenge and write on the walls so that the bad students would be kept busy forever.

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

What was written on by the bad students?

What was done by the good students?

Why are the bathrooms cleaned by the bad students?

What is ruined?

What happens in the bathrooms after school?

What happened in the bathrooms before they were cleaned by the bad students?

### NOTES

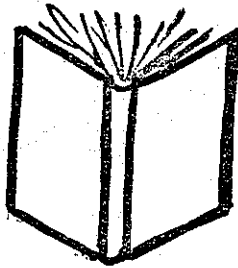
1. This is not a typical four-square Lipson box, but it is read the same way.
2. The present passive version of this box should be presented first so that the students understand the present/past contrast given in this box.

PRESENT PASSIVE/ PAST PASSIVE

good student



bad student



notebook

ajefk

writes

~~ajefk~~

doesn't write



bathroom walls

~~ajefk~~

doesn't write

ajefk

write



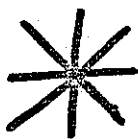
before



cleans the  
bathroom walls



ruins the  
bathroom walls



now



ruins the  
bathroom walls



cleans the  
bathroom walls

## PRESENT/PAST PERFECT

### PLOT

Mr. Vapon has worked two jobs for the last twenty-two years in order to put his son, Wayne, through school. Wayne has finally graduated and is now working to help his father through college. His father only has three more years of schooling before he receives his degree.

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

What has Mr. Vapon done for twenty-two years?

Why did he work?

What did he do for twenty-two years?

Who has studied for twenty-two years?

Who has studied for one year?

How long has Wayne worked?

Who has studied at college?

PRESENT PERFECT/PAST TENSES

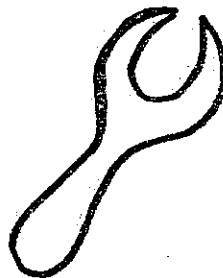
son



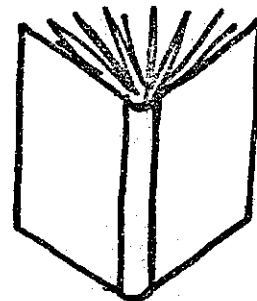
father



1  
one year



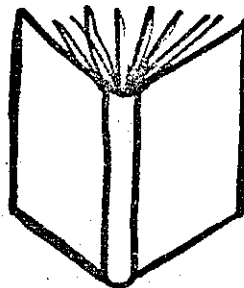
has worked



has studied

22

twenty-two years



studied



worked

## CONDITIONAL

### FUTURE POSSIBLE

#### PLOT

Joey is very young. He's not even in high school yet, but his father already has big plans for him. His father is telling him how to become both rich and happy. He wants Joey to study hard now so that he can make a lot of money as a doctor.

#### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who will go to college if he studies hard?

Will Joey go to college if he studies hard?

Where will Joey go if he studies hard?

What will Joey become if he studies hard?

If Joey studies hard what will happen?

What will Joey become if he goes to college?

#### NOTES

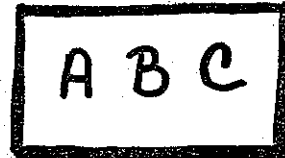
1. This is a good introduction to the conditional because the plot is so simple that the student hears the same statement several times and will not become confused easily.
2. To practice the conditional impossible, the date could be changed and Joey would be old. An example statement would then read: If Joey had studied, he would have gone to college.

CONDITIONAL (FUTURE POSSIBLE)

Joey



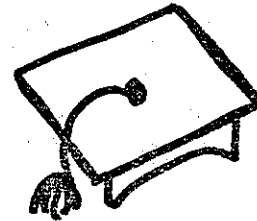
go to college



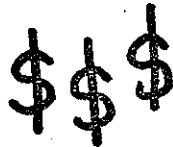
study in  
highschool



become a doctor



go to college



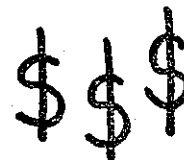
become rich



become a doctor



be happy



become rich

CONDITIONAL

OPEN

PLOT

None

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who will work less if Bill works harder?

Who will work if Bill doesn't?

Who will work more if Bill works less?

What will happen if Bill works harder?

If Joe reads comic books, will he work harder, or will he work less?

NOTES

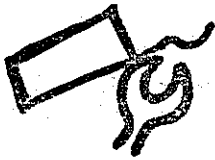
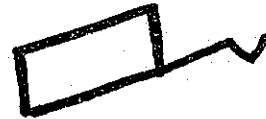
1. If students have already been introduced to Bill and Joe no plot is needed.
2. Or-questions work well with this box as not many wh-questions can be asked.
3. The instructor may wish to ask questions which are not answered in the box  
such as: Why does Joe read comic books?

CONDITIONAL (OPEN)

Bill



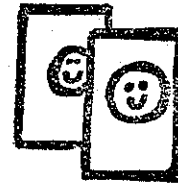
Joe



work less



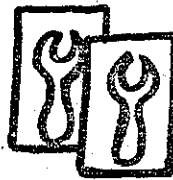
works harder



reads comic books



know more  
about helicopters



reads technical  
manuels



works harder

CONDITIONAL  
IMPOSSIBLE/OPEN

PLOT

This is a short history of how Joe became such a lazy mechanic and Bill such a good mechanic.

Joe's problem is that he cheated while in school. He wanted good grades so that he could be a mechanic, but now that he is a mechanic, he can't work much because he doesn't know much. He could learn if he helped Bill more, but he has given up. He is very unhappy and bored. Bill though didn't cheat while at school. He is happy with his job because he knows that he is an important member of his company.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

If Bill had cheated at school would he be a good mechanic, or a bad mechanic?

Will Bill be a better mechanic if he works harder?

Who will be a better mechanic if he works harder?

Who will be a very bad mechanic if he doesn't work harder?

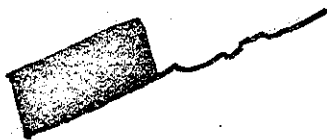
Wouldn't Joe be a better mechanic if he hadn't cheated at school?

CONDITIONAL (IMPOSSIBLE/OPEN)

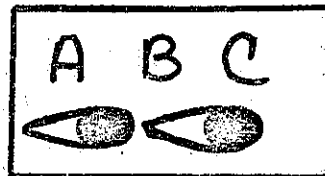
Bill



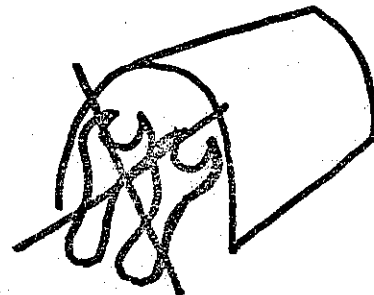
Joe



a very bad mechanic



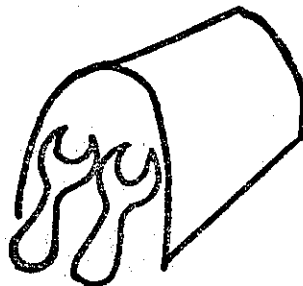
had cheated  
at school



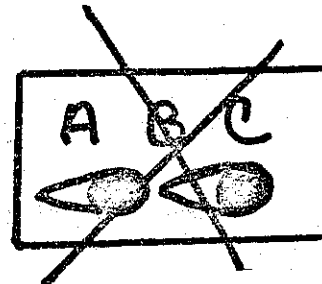
doesn't work harder  
at the hangar



a better mechanic



works harder  
at the hangar



hadn't cheated  
at school

IF

PLOT

None

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who won't stay home if it's sunny?

What will John do if it's sunny?

Under what condition will John play tennis?

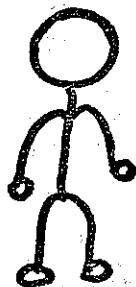
Under what condition will John stay home?

If it's rainy what will John do?

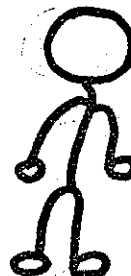
John won't play tennis if it's rainy, will he?

IF

John



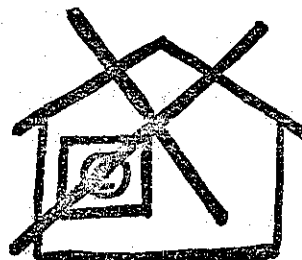
John



it's sunny



will play  
tennis if



won't stay  
home if



it's rainy



won't play  
tennis if



will stay  
home if

## UNLESS

### PLOT

None

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who will play tennis unless it rains?

What will John do unless it rains?

Unless it rains, will John play tennis?

Under what condition will John stay home?

Under what condition won't John stay home?

Under what condition won't John play tennis?

### Note

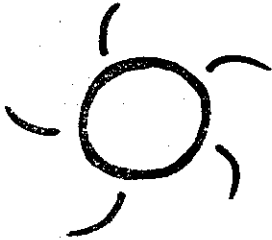
Boxes "if" and "unless" may be combine into one large box in order to compare their uses together.

UNLESS

John



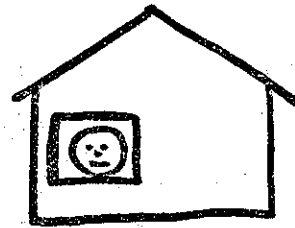
John



it's sunny



won't play  
tennis unless



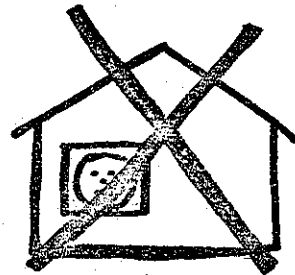
will stay  
home unless



it's rainy



will play  
tennis unless



won't stay  
home unless

BECAUSE/ALTHOUGH

PLOT

None

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Who played outside because it was sunny?

Why did John play outside?

How was the weather when John played outside?

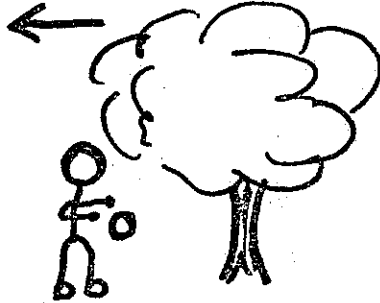
Although it was sunny, what did Henry do?

Who stayed home although it was sunny?

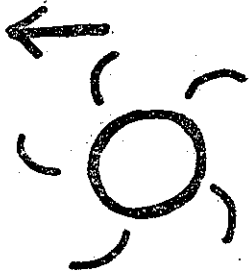
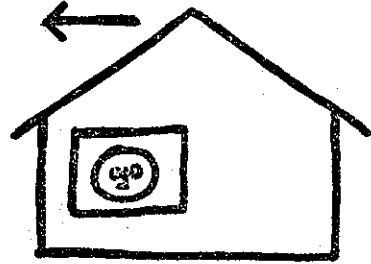
Why did Henry stay home?

# BECAUSE/ALTHOUGH

John played  
outside yesterday







Henry stayed  
home yesterday



it was sunny



it was rainy

 because	 although
 although	 because

IF/UNLESS/BECAUSE/ALTHOUGH

PLOT

None

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Under what condition will John play outside?

What will John do if the weather is bad?

What did John do when the weather was bad?

John didn't stay home because the weather was bad, did he?

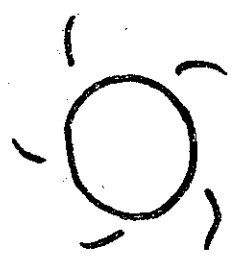
Although the weather was good yesterday, did John play outside?

Why didn't John stay home yesterday?

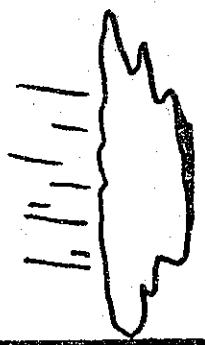
Note

More squares could be added to this box to include all negative and positive uses of because, although, if and unless. (Make sure you have a large board!)

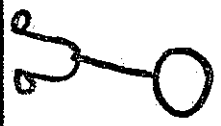
IF/UNLESS/BECAUSE/ALTHOUGH



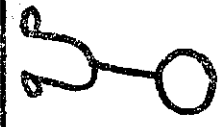
weather/good



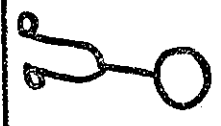
weather/bad



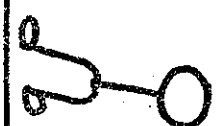
John



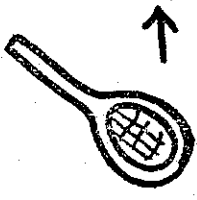
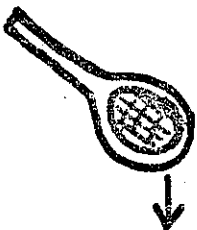
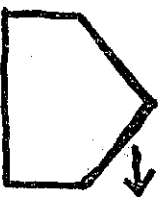
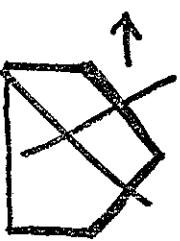
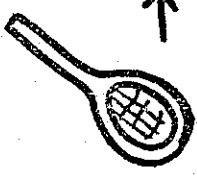
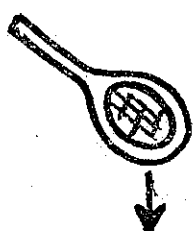
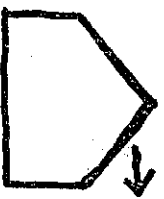
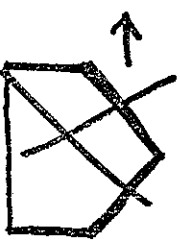
John



John



John

 will play outside if	 didn't play outside although	 will stay home unless	 didn't stay home because
 played outside although	 will play outside unless	 will stay home if	 didn't stay home although