

Move Your Furniture on the Overhead Projector

by Mark Seng

A variety of prepositions and lexical items may be taught with this delightful transparency (originally devised by Adele Camus). With the addition of other objects, directions may be given for students to follow (a version of total physical response methodology). Here are a few of the concepts which may be presented:

Prepositions

A great variety of prepositions can be introduced and practiced in a nearly limitless number of ways: *beside, between, under, underneath, below, above, in front of, in back of, behind, on the left of, on the right of, in the middle, far from, inside, outside, at, near, along, in the corner of, down from, on, in, into, next to,*

Examples:

*Where is the cat?
She is under the table.*

*Where is the lamp?
It is on the table.*

*What color is the cat on the left of the table?
It is black.*

Coordinates

Likewise, a number of coordinate pairs can be presented and practiced using the furniture and other objects in the projected room:

*either-neither either-or neither-or
one-other this-that these-those*

Examples:

*Is either cat brown?
No, neither cat is brown.*

*Where are the cats sitting?
One cat is sitting on the chair. The other cat is sitting on the sofa.*

*Which cat is naughty?
This cat is naughty. That one is good.*

Possessives

Possessive constructions also lend themselves to presentation and practice using this transparency:

John's cat the cat of John

The boys' cats the cats of the boys

Examples:

Whose cat is sitting on the rug? John's cat is sitting on the rug.

Whose cats are they? They are the boys' cats.

Construction

This transparency device can be made without machines. Clear sheets of plastic (like page protectors) will provide a transparency base with the perspective lines drawn using a straight edge and a permanent marking pen or india ink (see figure 1). If the lines are drawn on the underside of the transparency they will not rub off. Because one may use any kind of clear plastic, this base transparency can be made larger than ordinary transparencies, which are only eight and one-half inches (the projector stage is ten and one-half inches square). This additional space can prove useful for this application.

The furniture and other parts of the room (see figures 2 and 3) can be made on a thermal transparency or again simply traced on clear

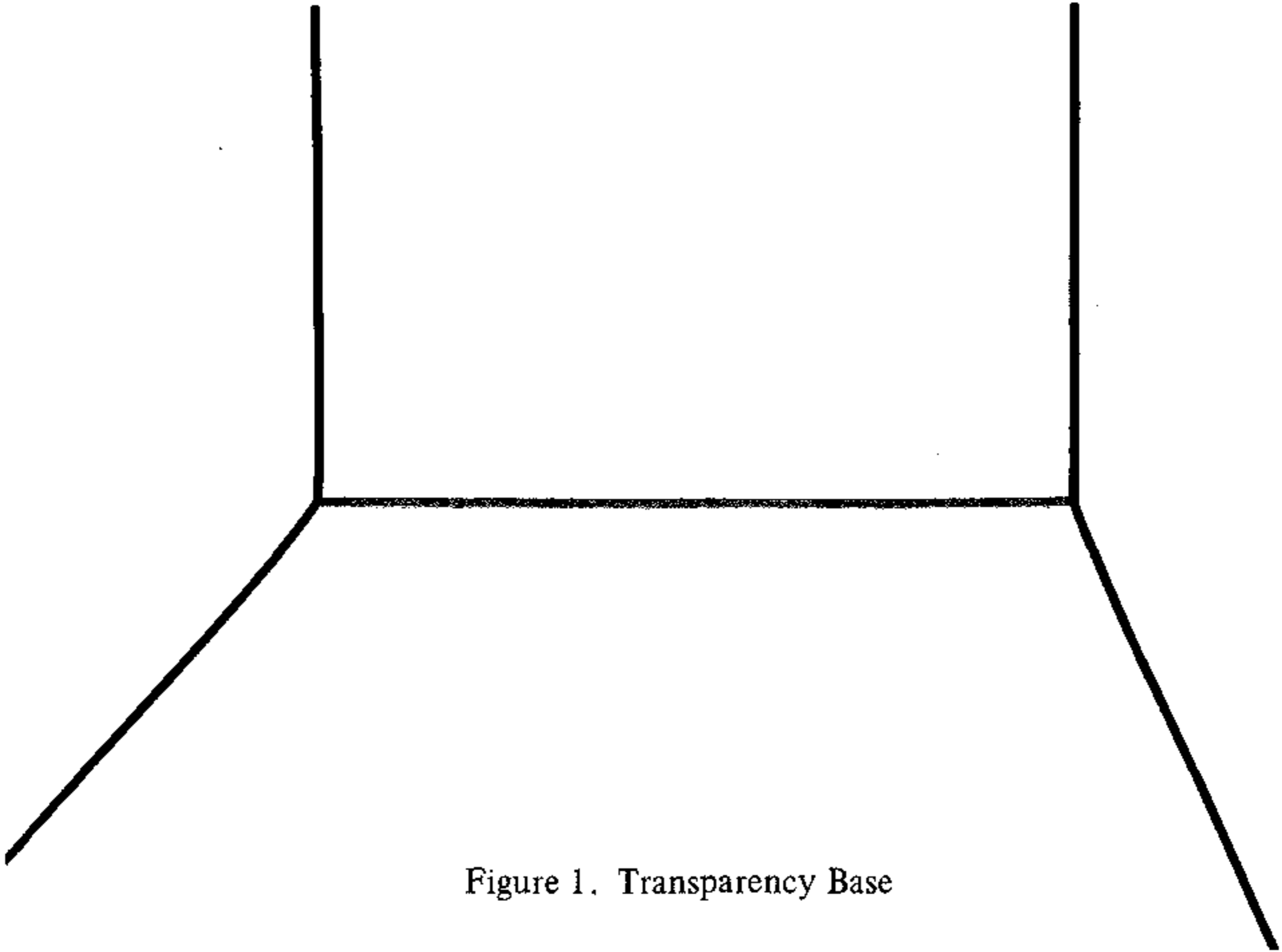


Figure 1. Transparency Base

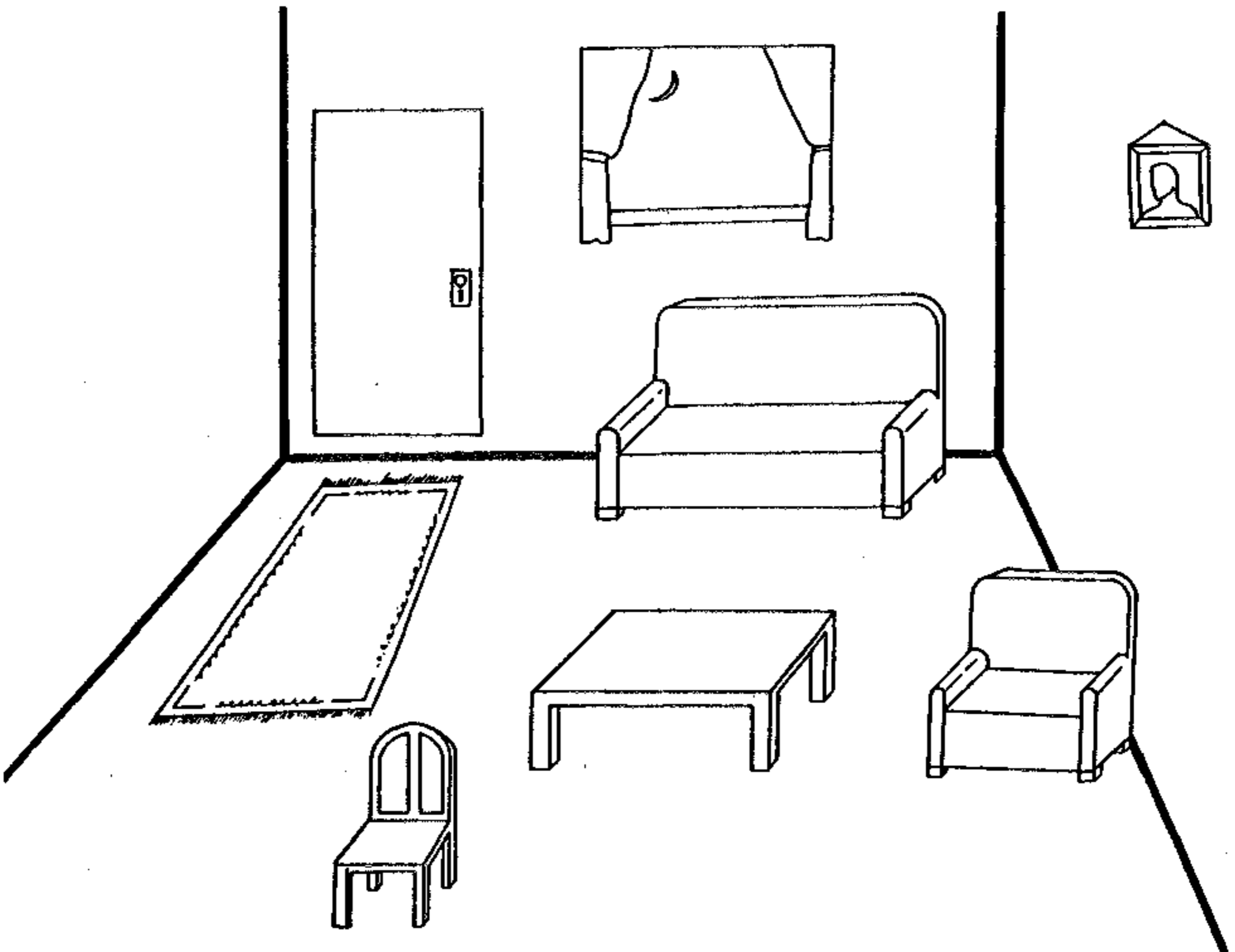


Figure 2. A Sample Room with Objects in Place

plastic with a pen. A heavier weight plastic will facilitate the manipulation of smaller items on the projector stage. To facilitate holding small items, the plastic may be cut a bit larger than the picture itself with one side folded up to serve as a handle. If cut from paper or cardboard, the silhouette of one cat (or other animal or object) will project black ("Blackie"). The other cat, cut from clear plastic outlined in black, could be named "Whitie."

Using colored page protectors for the transparency adds attractive colors which aid in object identification and the teaching of color names. Pictures drawn on lighter colors like yellow will remain legible even when some objects are placed on top of others. If clear plastic is used, some items may be colored with marking pens on the back side, or pressure sensitive colored film (available in sheets at office supply stores) may be applied.

A custom-made transparency frame can be fabricated from cardboard. And for storing the various, loose items, a ziplock plastic bag or ordinary envelope will do nicely. A transparent plastic bag offers the advantage of keeping all materials visible and readily accessible.

Use

After placing the base transparency on the overhead projector, each item of furniture may be placed on the stage and named—possibly with the class repeating the name. Prepositional relationships become readily apparent as objects are arranged in the transparency "room".

The versatility of this ingenious device becomes more evident as it is used. For example, one can cut out a "spot" from a piece of paper and place it on the rug, sofa, or chair. That piece of furniture now has a spot. By using one of the inexpensive new bulletin board pens which dry to a powder, one can demonstrate and practice such expressions as *removing the spot*. (One draws the spot or writes the words which then can be erased with a dry cloth

or one's finger.) *The spot is being removed. The spot is now removed.*

The addition of a few other furnishings will facilitate practice of the passive. A television set can be added with some other valuable items like a necklace or stereo. Then a "burglar" can steal the items. Hence: *The thief stole the television. The television was stolen.*

By creating a slightly different base diagram or by using new articles in order to create a different room, different skills may be developed using a physical response technique. Short messages with directions for students to follow may be written in advance on the chalkboard or on a chart on the wall or on the back of the door. Simple, short messages such as, *Susie, please open the door.* or *Walter, will you close the door, please?*, may be written and erased by both you and your students. Students enjoy preparing their own directions and then naming others to carry out the instructions on the transparency.

Students may be interested in finding other items which can be used with this transparency. Small plastic toys work well. For example, a little plastic airplane could be made to fly in and out of the window. An actual, small nail may be placed on the wall, from which the picture can be hung. A BB could roll under the rug, into the corner, even under the door—most effective if the door is cut from a manila folder so that it is opaque. One student might ask another to rearrange the furniture following directions given. *Place the chair under the window. Put the sofa along the wall. Hang the picture on the door.* etc.

This transparency device can keep on teaching outside the classroom. A thermal spirit ("ditto") master, made from the transparency original, can be used to make almost-free copies of the room and its furnishings for students who wish to continue to practice "moving their furniture" at home.

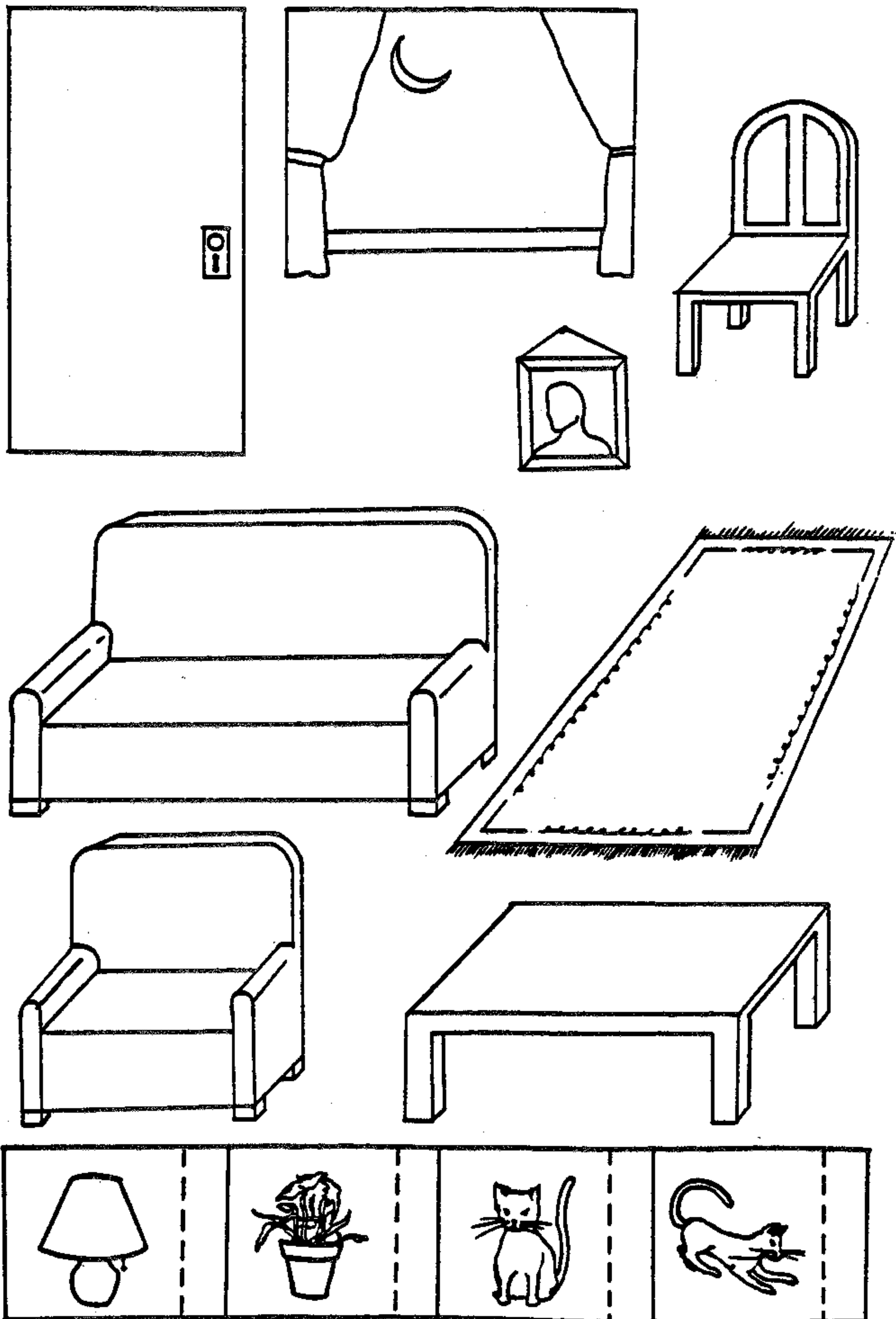


Figure 3. Room Furnishings and Other Objects to Manipulate