What is the Picture Word Inductive Model?

Calhoun (1998) developed the Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM), which uses pictures containing familiar objects, actions and scenes to draw out words from children’s listening and speaking vocabularies. This model helps students add words to their sight reading vocabulary, as well as their writing vocabulary, and also discover phonetic and structural principles present in those words.

What is its purpose?

The purpose of using PWIM is to develop students’ vocabulary, concepts about words, and sentence and paragraph structures through our content subjects of reading, math, science, or social studies.

How do I do it?

Words are ‘shaken out’ or listed by the poster by the students. The words are categorized and read as a class over a series of days. Each class writes and reads sentences using the words. Then, depending on the grade level, the sentences are categorized and formed into paragraphs. The students then write paragraphs.

The strength of using this strategy from K to grade 6 is that it will help build students’ vocabulary and writing abilities. Kindergarten begins the foundation and all of the other grades add more content and skill development through grade 6.

Advantages of PWIM:
The following list of advantages of the PWIM is drawn from Calhoun (1999).

- The strategy emphasizes phonics, grammar, mechanics, and usage of Standard English.
- Pictures provide concrete referents for the learning of new words, phrases, and sentences.
- Because students are using pictures related to content material under study, they feel a part of the classroom community and can participate in class activities.
- The picture word chart serves as an immediate reference to enable students to add these words to their sight vocabulary. The teacher can choose to emphasize almost any sound and symbol relationship (introduced or taken to mastery).
- Students are assisted in seeing the patterns and relationships of the English language, enabling them to apply this learning to newly encountered words.
- Students hear and see words spelled correctly and participate in the correct spelling and writing.
- Learners benefit from the teacher modeling of the key words and concepts. With extensive practice, they can begin to learn how to create sentences and paragraphs related to the subject under study.

How can I adapt it?

The strategy can be used with a whole class, small groups, pairs, or individually to lead students into inquiring about words and adding them to their vocabularies, discovering phonetic and structural principles, and engaging in other reading and writing activities.
While some skills can be taught explicitly, PWIM is designed to capitalize on a student’s ability to think inductively.

**Teacher Resources**

- [Teaching Beginning Reading and Writing with the Picture Word Inductive Model](http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/pd/instr/strats/pwim/index.html) by Emily F. Calhoun - ASCD full text book about teaching beginning reading and writing using PWIM.
- [Development and Implementation Log for the Picture Word Inductive Model](http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/pd/instr/strats/pwim/index.html)