

Make Connect The Dots Pages in Word

By Lorrie Jackson

WHY A TECHTORIAL?

What will I learn today?

You will learn how to create connect-the-dots worksheets in Word.

What hardware and/or software does the techtorial apply to?

The techtorial applies to Microsoft Word and the Internet.

Which National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers does the techtorial address?

The techtorial will help teachers accomplish standard IIIa in particular.

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has developed a set of National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers. Standards or Performance Indicators are included for each techtorial to help teachers and administrators improve technology proficiency. For a complete description of the standards indicated, go to [NETS for Teachers](#).

CONNECT THE DOTS

A connect-the-dots worksheet is a great way to practice number and letter sequencing in early childhood classrooms. Although finding such worksheets is easy, finding one on a specific topic, or finding one that students can complete electronically, is not.

Believe it or not, Microsoft Word has all the tools you need to build connect-the-dots worksheets on any topic -- and it's as easy as 1, 2, 3. Let's get started!

FIND AN IMAGE

What will be the topic of your worksheet? Leprechauns? Rainbows? Bears? Consider the following when selecting an image:

- **Simplicity:** If you're practicing the numbers 1-20, for example, you'll want to be able to trace the image with just 20 dots. A complicated image will require more than 20 dots to outline every curve and spike.
- **Singularity:** Think one -- one duck, not three; a snowman, not a snowman in a yard by a house.
- **Shape:** Choose an image with a recognizable shape, but be aware that if it's too

common a shape -- a round baseball, for example -- you might need to draw in a few details. Otherwise, students will eagerly complete the worksheet, only to discover they've created a circle!

Where can you find these simple images? Try the following resources:

- Microsoft Word's Clip Art: Go to Insert>Picture>Clip Art and browse for a piece of art. The advantage of clip art is that, unlike photographs, it's usually already simplified. Remember, Microsoft provides many additional images online. (Look on the Clip Art window or pane for a link -- it sometimes looks like a globe).
- [Pic4Learning](#): These free images for educators offer more options for photos and clip art. Be aware, however, that some of these images are fairly small.
- [Discovery Schools' Clip Art Gallery](#): Also free to educators (up to 10 images in one file; see their use policy).
- See the Education World Sites to See article [Free Photos on the Web](#) for more sources of educator-friendly images.

INSERT THE IMAGE

How to insert an image into Word:

- Using Microsoft's Clip Art Gallery? Double-click the image -- or click the image once and then click Insert.
- Getting images from the Web? Right-click the image (CTRL click on a Mac) and select "Copy" or "Copy Image" (or something similar). Then open Word and click Edit > Paste. Mac users also can simply click and drag images from the Web to a Word document.

For this techtorial, we'll use a snowman from Microsoft's Clip Art Gallery. Simply:

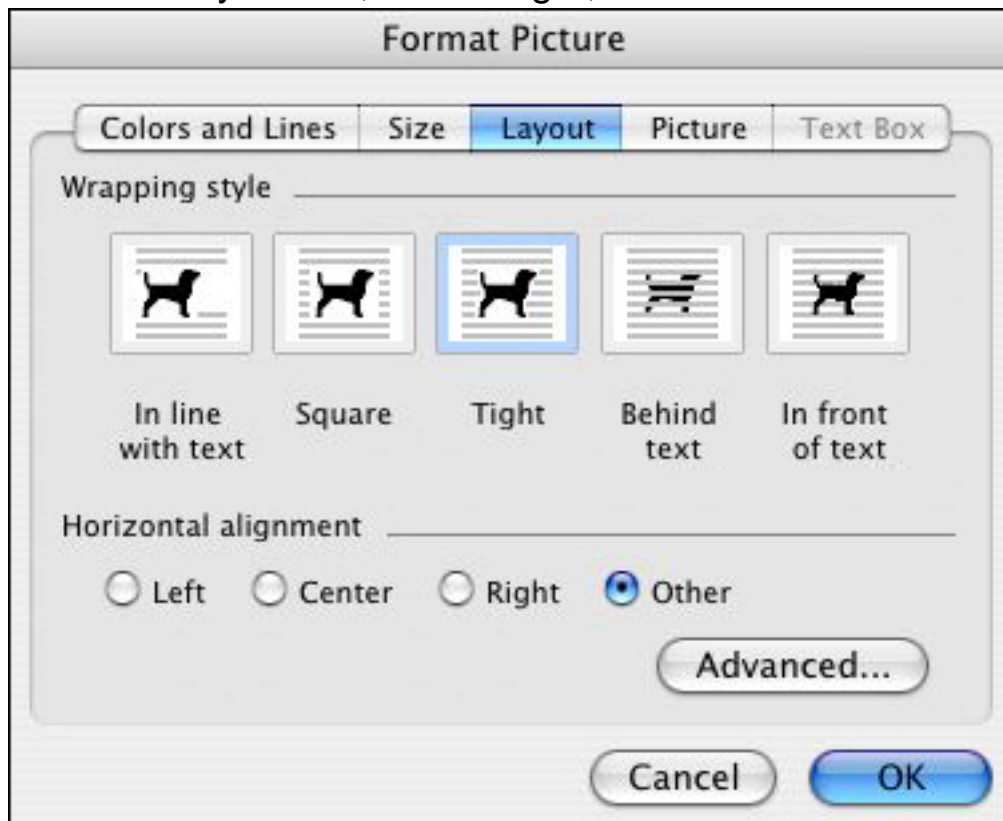
- Open Word.
- Click Insert > Picture > Clip Art. (Note: Clip art does vary from version to version of Office. The snowman used in this techtorial was found in Office 2003 for Mac under Weather. If you don't have that image available, select another.)
- Double-click the selected image, or click it once and then click Insert.

FORMAT THE IMAGE

- The image now should be in your document. Double click the image to open the

Format Picture window (called a pane in Mac).

- Click the Layout tab, select Tight, and then click OK.



Now, you can freely move your image on the page.

- Click View > Zoom and change to 80 percent. (You want to be able to see the whole page.)
- Click the image, hold down the mouse key, and drag a corner of the image to enlarge it, so it covers most of the page. You also might want to move down the image a bit, leaving room at the top of the page for a title and the student's name.
- Your page should look like this:



- Save your work. (Perhaps as "snowmanconnectthedots").

DOTS RIGHT!

Time to add the dots!

- Decide whether you will use numbers or letters to label the dots, and how many dots you want to use. For example, if you're using letters (A-Z), you'll want 26 dots. If using numbers, 20 is a good number to begin with.
- Before drawing the dots, decide where they will go. You'll want them fairly even, so look at your image -- in this case, the snowman -- and visualize half the dots on its right side and half on its left.
- Click View > Zoom and choose 125 percent. (You want to be close up for the dots!)
- Click View > Toolbars > Drawing.
- On the Drawing toolbar, click Basic Shapes, and select the Oval tool. (It looks like a circle.)
- Click and drag a small circle to anywhere on the page. Adjust the circle to an appropriate size.
- Click the circle you've created. On the Drawing toolbar, click the down arrow next to the paint can, and then click black to fill in your circle.
- Click the circle once to select it, and then press CTRL-D (or Apple-D on a Mac) to make a duplicate of the circle. Keep duplicating the circle until you have the number of dots you need. (Don't worry about where the dots are. In the illustration below, for example, the dots are on the ground in front of the snowman.)

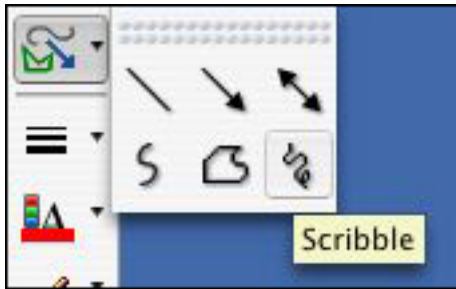


- Next, move each dot onto the outline of the snowman. Remember, the dots should be on the perimeter of the snowman, not on the waist or jaw line, and they should be evenly spaced. You might want to place one dot at the tip of the left hand, and another on the tip of the right hand, and keep alternating side-to-side to ensure even coverage. Be sure to put a dot in any crevice (between his head and shoulder or between his fingers and hip, for example).
- Here's what the snowman might look like when finished. (The dots in the sample are red for illustration purposes only.)



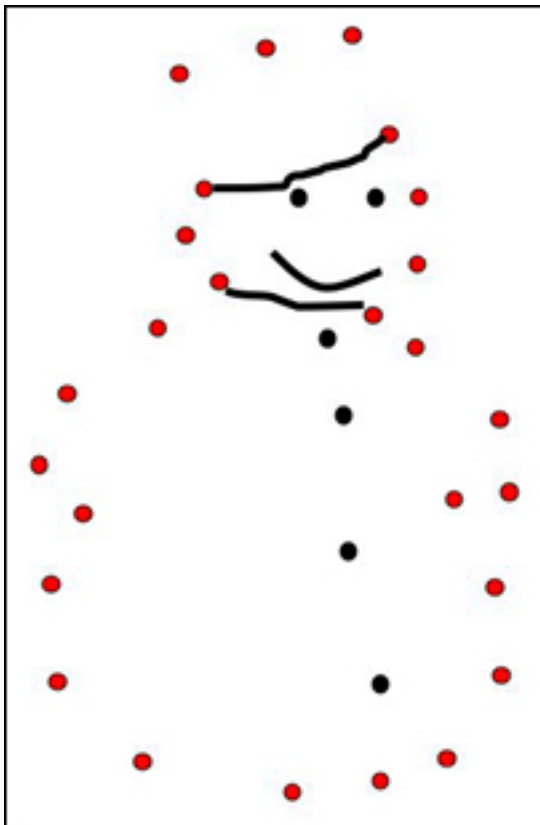
- Notice that some features -- buttons, eyes, nose, mouth, broom -- aren't part of the

dotted drawing. If you like, you can use the scribble tool or another drawing tool to add those features and others.



Hint: If you tend to worry about making a mistake as you learn, stop and save your work now, before following the next step and deleting the snowman: Click File>Save As and save the file as "revised snowman" or something similar. Now you have two files, including an original file containing the snowman image. That is particularly helpful if you want to add or change details.

- Now, we'll delete the snowman image to see what we have left. Click the tip of the broom (or on another spot on the snowman without dots). When the white boxes appear around the image, click Delete/Backspace. Voila! A connect-the-dot snowman!



Note that in this version, the broom is gone and the mouth is one line instead of several circles. Those are choices the author made as she added details with the scribble tool. You can choose to add more or less details to your snowman too.

- Save your work!

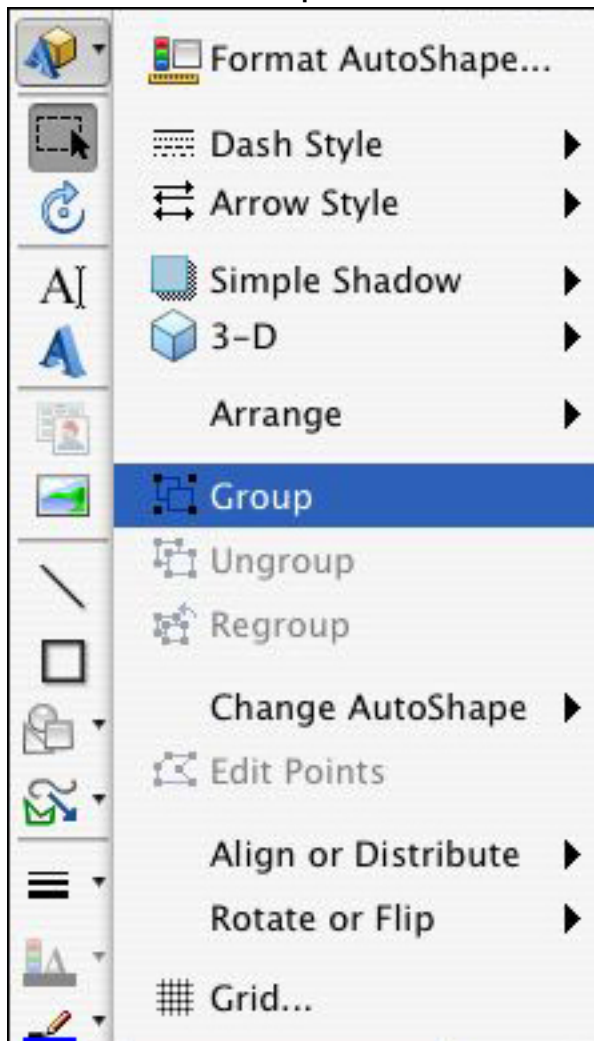
GROUP THE DOTS

First, you're going to "group" the dots. This is very important! We want Word to see the dots as one big picture, not lots of little dots. If, as you edit, you accidentally move grouped dots, they'll move en masse and be easy to fix. If you move lots of little dots...not so easy to fix! So...

- Click the Select Objects tool.



- Use that tool to draw a rectangle around the snowman, selecting all the dots.
- Click the first icon on the Drawing toolbar (either a blue A or the word Draw) and then select Group.



Now, instead of white boxes around each dot, you have white boxes around the entire picture.

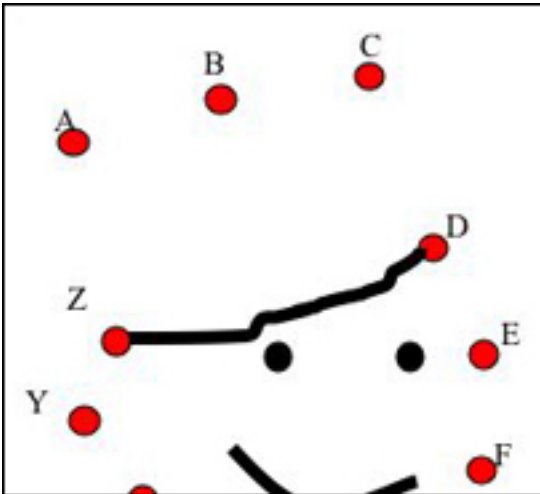
LABEL THE DOTS

Now, all that's left is to label the letters:

- Click the Text Box tool.

A

- Click near a dot (below, beside or above, depending on the dot's placement in the picture) and draw a small text box.
- Click and drag to adjust the size of the text box -- it should be just big enough to type a single letter in it.
- Click the next-to-last icon on the Drawing toolbar (or click Format > Text Box at the top of the window) and choose "No line color" to change the line color of the text boxes from black to no line at all.
- Click the paint can (or Format > Text Box) and choose "No fill color" to ensure that white paint doesn't obscure the dots.
- Click the text box and then click CNTRL-D (or Apple-D). Repeat until you have 26 text boxes. Then drag a text box next to each dot.
- Type a different letter of the alphabet in each box. (Make sure the letters appear in a logical order or lines will cross and the image won't resemble a snowman!)
- This is what a final version might look like: (Red dots are for illustration.)



- Save your work.

You now can print the finished worksheet and have students complete it by hand (Add a title and a blank for the student's name prior to printing) or you can have students connect the dots on the computer. If students will be working on the computer,

- Repeat the steps for grouping described on a previous slide. Group all letters as well as the picture, so students can't move anything but the whole picture.
- Show students how to find and use the scribble tool. Let them practice their mouse

skills as they use the scribble tool to connect the dots!

That's it -- easy, fun and practical! Who needs fancy software when all you need is Office to make great worksheets for your K-12 classroom?

TELL ME MORE!

Where can I find more information about Office tools?

See the [Techtorials Table of Contents](#) for more exciting and easy-to-make projects with Office.