

# FLIP IT!®



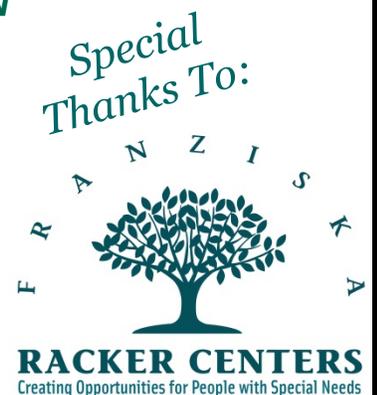
Four supportive steps to help young children learn about their feelings, gain self-control, and reduce challenging behavior.

# Devereux

CENTER FOR RESILIENT CHILDREN



Handout Sept 2013  
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Devereux recognized FLIP IT Train-the-Trainer participants





# FLIP IT Introduction

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## FLIP IT can be used for:

- targeted interventions for a child displaying specific behavioral concerns.  
OR
- every day minor challenges and conflicts with one child or with multiple children.



## FLIP IT is:

- Best practice made simple
- Strength-Based
- Commonsense
- Effective
- Portable
- Easy to remember
- Easy to share
- Applicable in a variety of situations
- Four simple steps



1. **FEEELINGS:** Gently talk with children about their feelings and what you are seeing and hearing as a result of their emotions. Help children identify the root feelings causing the behavior.



2. **LIMITS:** Remind children of the positive limits and expectations you have for their behavior. Loving and simple limits help surround children with a sense of consistency, safety and trust.



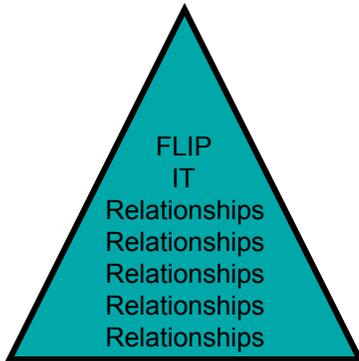
3. **INQUIRIES:** Encourage children to think about solutions to their challenges. Ask questions that promote problem-solving and healthy coping skills. Inquiries invite children to think, learn and gain self-control.



4. **PPROMPTS:** Provide creative cues, clues, and suggestions for children having difficulty problem-solving. Enthusiastic, bright ideas can lead the way to better problem-solving skills.



# FLIP IT Prerequisites



## Relationships

- Relationships are the foundation
- Every strategy is only as good as the relationship it is built on!
- We learn best from people who make us feel safe, valued and understood.
- For a child FLIP IT is the process of learning about feelings and healthy coping skills, and this learning must be facilitated by a safe adult.
- Strive every day to strengthen your relationship with a child through play, listening, respect and caring.
- FLIP IT can also help to strengthen the bond between you because the FEELINGS step conveys empathy.

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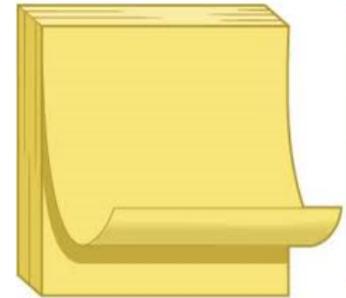
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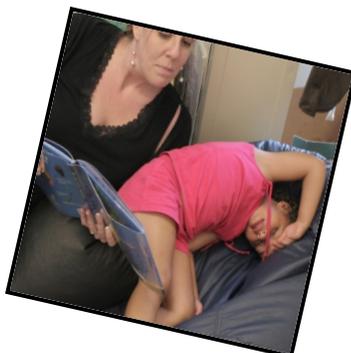


## Empathy

- Empathy is the ability to see and feel from another person's perspective.
- Showing empathy to a child is the first step in teaching a child to have empathy for others.
- Empathy is the ability to honor a child-size problem.

Adults need empathy too!

- Try to be gentle with yourself
- Take time to notice your own feelings
- AND, during times of personal stress...



**F**EELINGS - Notice what is happening inside you during times of stress before reacting. Ask yourself, "What am I really feeling?" Explore your feelings.

**L**IMITS - Decide what the appropriate boundaries or limits may be for the situation.

**I**NQUIRIES - Ask yourself, "What is the best way to handle this?"

**P**PROMPTS - Use creative thinking if you have difficulty finding a solution. Ask a friend, family member, or colleague for suggestions to help you think outside the box.



# A Child in Mind

Think of a child you are eager to FLIP.

List the child's strengths

- Reflect on the child, so that you can better empathize with his or her point of view during challenging times.
- Note - Doing regular observations of children can help you get a more complete perspective on a child.

List the child's interests

List the child's challenges




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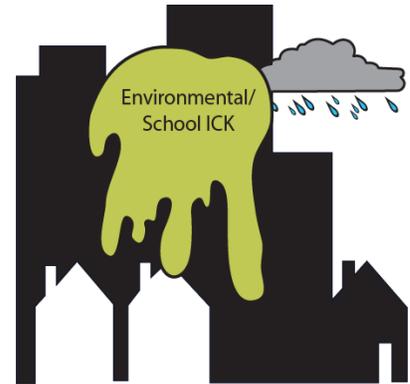


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# FLIP IT Prerequisites

## Understanding ICK

- Children are challenging when they are weighted down by something called ICK!
- ICK refers to the negativity or risk factors in an individual's life. ICK includes factors within ourselves, our families, and our environment that make us feel bad and less able to handle challenges.



Share some examples of ICK in each category.

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When children react to the ICK in their lives, they often FLIP IN or FLIP OUT.



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- FLIP INs happen when feelings stay inside and are not expressed.
- FLIP OUTs happen when the negative factors children feel on the inside comes out in unhealthy or destructive ways.

## **ICKNESS does not = SICKNESS**

# FLIP IT & Resilience

- Resilience is the ability to bounce back from difficulty, misfortune or change (ICK).
- The FLIP IT strategy helps children become resilient by teaching them how to cope in times of challenge.



Three critical protective factors important to the development of resilience in young children are:



- **Attachment/Relationships** - The child's ability to promote and maintain mutual, positive connections with other children and significant adults



- **Initiative** - The child's ability to use independent thought and action to meet his or her needs.



- **Self-Regulation** - The child's ability to respond to many different emotions using words and actions that are appropriate for the different situations he/she encounters.

To be resilient and successful in school and life, children need to develop all three of these healthy protective factors. FLIP IT can be a powerful tool for supporting that process.

- FLIP IT can be used as a stand alone technique
- OR
- as a strategy to enhance the implementation of The Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) Program (second edition), an assessment and planning system that measures and promotes protective factors in young children.



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# Adult Reflection

FLIPPING IN or OUT can become a habit. FLIP IT helps adults instill in children healthy coping strategies that can last a lifetime. We all strive for healthy habits, but just like children, we are always a work in progress, and self-reflection is important. Reflect a moment on your own ICK.



Your  
Environmental ICK

Your  
Family ICK

Your With-in  
Yourself ICK

How do you respond to your ICK?

Do you FLIP IN and hold it all inside (describe)?

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Do you FLIP OUT and act in unhealthy ways (describe)?

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How does your ICK impact children?

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Healthy coping habits mean that when times are full of ICK, we choose to stay calm and FLIP IT, rather than FLIP OUT or FLIP IN! When we FLIP IT with children, they learn to stay calm, understand their emotions, set limits and use healthy coping skills to solve problems. Teaching them to do this early in life will develop healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

# Step 1 - Feelings



Begin the FLIP IT process with **Step 1 – FEELINGS**. Gently talk with children about their feelings and what you are seeing and hearing as a result of their emotions. Help children identify the root feelings causing the behavior.

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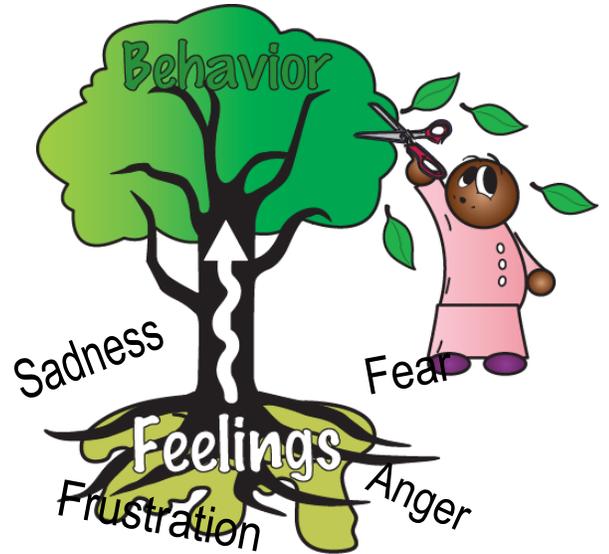
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Sometimes we FLOP...



When adults try to get to the root of the behavior by asking the child "WHY?"



When we respond to the first thing we see - the child's BEHAVIORS - instead of the FEELINGS.





# Feelings - FAQs

For answers to frequently asked questions check out [www.MoreFLIPIT.org](http://www.MoreFLIPIT.org) or the FLIP IT book at [www.kaplanco.com](http://www.kaplanco.com)

1. What if there is immediate physical danger?

6. What if the child is nonverbal or developmentally delayed?

2. What if the FEELINGS step sparks a discussion?

7. What if I sound fake when I try to talk about feelings?

3. What if I don't know what the child is feeling?

8. Can you use the FLIP IT steps with a room of children or more than one child at a time?

4. Should I start the FLIP IT process with a child who is out of control or having a tantrum?

9. What if I come upon a situation where I do not know what has happened between two children? I have learned it is important to get the facts, so do I try to get the facts before I address FEELINGS?

5. How do I get a child's attention in order to begin the FLIP IT process?

10. What if the child says, "No! That is is not what I'm feeling?" or begins to mock me a pushes me away?

# Step 2 - Limits



Once you have talked with a child about what she is feeling, proceed when necessary to **Step 2 – LIMITS**. Remind children of the positive limits and expectations you have for their behavior. Loving and simple limits help surround children with a sense of consistency, safety and trust.

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Sometimes we FLOP...



When we tell children what they can't do, rather than helping them understand what they can or should do instead.



If we do not regularly discuss, review and remind children of the limits we have set.



# Limits Reflections

## Where do YOU stand?

### FOOT DOWN

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### BETTER OFF IGNORED

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Remember, most situations can and should be FLIPPED so that the child can better understand her feelings and learn healthy coping. Consistency is important; therefore discuss these lists with other adults in the child's life so that children hear a consistent limit and know expectations for their behavior.



**CAN**

**VS.**

**CAN'T**

CAN'T LIMIT: "Stop running inside!"

CAN LIMIT: \_\_\_\_\_

CAN'T LIMIT: "Stop whining."

CAN LIMIT: \_\_\_\_\_

CAN'T LIMIT: "Stop wrestling around."

CAN LIMIT: \_\_\_\_\_

CAN'T LIMIT: "No more fighting"

CAN LIMIT: \_\_\_\_\_

CAN'T LIMIT: "Do NOT touch that"

CAN LIMIT: \_\_\_\_\_

CAN'T LIMIT: "Stop throwing the ball"

CAN LIMIT: \_\_\_\_\_



# Limits - FAQs

For answers to frequently asked questions check out [www.MoreFLIPIT.org](http://www.MoreFLIPIT.org) or the FLIP IT book at [www.kaplanco.com](http://www.kaplanco.com)

1. My natural instinct is to tell a child no. How can I unlearn this habit?

5. What if different adults have different rules?

2. Is there ever a time when I can do FEELINGS, INQUIRIES, and PROMPTS (FIP) because a LIMIT is not necessary?

6. What do I do if I end up having different limits for different children based on their abilities, needs, and ICK?

3. The sample responses in the guide do not use the word "but" when delivering a LIMITS message. Why?

7. What if the child gets really angry when I give a limit?

4. What if the child is nonverbal or developmentally delayed?

# Step 3 - Inquiries



Once you have talked with a child about feelings and limits, move on to **Step 3 – INQUIRIES**. Encourage children to think about solutions to their challenges. Ask questions that promote problem-solving and healthy coping skills. Inquiries invite children to think, learn and gain self-control.

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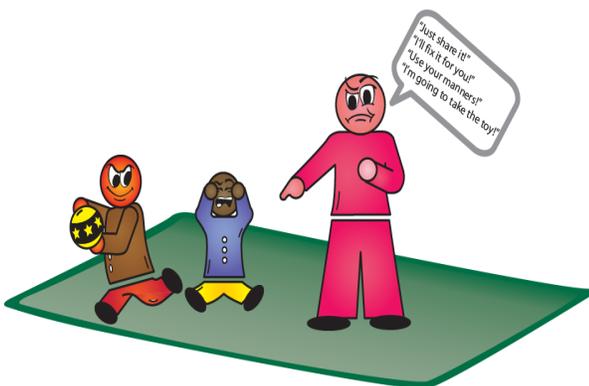
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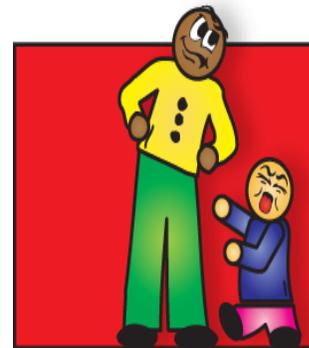
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Sometimes we FLOP...



When we are too quick to solve their problem for them.



When we ask a question, but our tone is intimidating, demanding or unsupportive (e.g., "What are you going to do next?" – while tapping your toe or looking angry).



# Inquiries Reflections

Practice turning the leading questions below into open-ended inquiries.

## Leading

## vs

## Open-ended

Leading question – “Do you want to come sit on my lap to feel safe?”

Open-ended inquiry –

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Leading question – “Do you think you should ask nicely?”

Open-ended inquiry –

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Leading question - “Can you ask him to take turns?”

Open-ended inquiry –

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Leading question – “Can you roll the car on the floor instead?”

Open-ended inquiry -

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Sometimes it is helpful to remember why the INQUIRIES step is so important. Answer the following questions to reinforce the value of helping children solve their own problems NOW, so the skill will last FOREVER.

1. Do I want children to feel confident they can handle most conflicts? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Do I want children to be good problem-solvers? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do I want children to ask questions that invite thinking from others? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do I want children to be able to think quickly and clearly in a crisis? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do I want children to have healthy coping strategies when they feel ICK? \_\_\_\_\_



Inquiries will strengthen the qualities reflected in these five questions.



# Inquiries - FAQs

For answers to frequently asked questions check out [www.MoreFLIPIT.org](http://www.MoreFLIPIT.org) or the FLIP IT book at [www.kaplanco.com](http://www.kaplanco.com)

1. What if I make an INQUIRY and the child does not respond?

5. How can I problem solve with a child who has limited or no language?

2. How long should I wait for a child to think?

6. Should my INQUIRY be a question that leads to better coping skills around the feeling or the situation?

3. Can I use the INQUIRIES technique at other times?

7. What if I make an INQUIRY and the child's response is negative or hostile?

4. What if I make an INQUIRY and the child's idea is not appropriate?

# Step 4 - Prompts



If the child is having difficulty problem-solving after you have talked with her about feelings and limits and have made an inquiry, move on to **Step 4 – PROMPTS**. Provide creative cues, clues, and suggestions for children having difficulty problem-solving. Enthusiastic, bright ideas can lead the way to better problem-solving skills.

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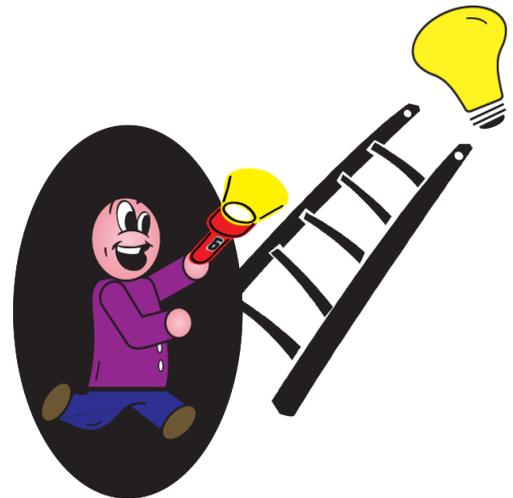
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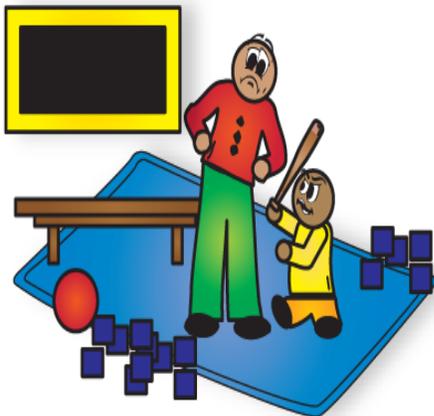
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Sometimes we FLOP...



When we give up on finding a solution. Offering prompts can be tiring because the solution often involves extra work on our part.



When we do not offer prompts with positivity or enthusiasm.



# Prompts Reflections

Prompts can be offered in a variety of ways.

1. Use personal example
2. Offer suggestions
3. Ask leading questions
4. Offer positive choices where both options are desirable
5. Use the child's strengths and interests to spark his creativity



Once you have done the F, L and I steps, how would you prompt him toward a solution?

A child is crying because of his broken shoelace.

A child is hiding because she is scared of the hammering sound.

A child is jumping on the furniture and getting very excited.

A child is angry because she can't find her toy.



Prompts can help people find creative ways to cope. Practice coming up with creative solutions to common problems that you and your fellow adults face.

I am so tired, but I have to keep working. What is a creative (safe) option to help me cope?

I am stuck in traffic and honking my horn isn't helping. What is a creative option to help me cope?

I take every precaution, but I am still nervous about my children getting the flu. What is a creative option to help me cope?

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# Prompts - FAQs

For answers to frequently asked questions check out [www.MoreFLIPIT.org](http://www.MoreFLIPIT.org) or the FLIP IT book at [www.kaplanco.com](http://www.kaplanco.com)

1. What if we get stuck trying to be creative?

4. Can I use props to prompt?

2. What is the difference between an INQUIRY and a leading-question PROMPT?

5. How can I problem solve and suggest prompts with a child who has limited or not language?

3. What if I don't think I can do this step?

6. What if the child does not respond to any of my prompts?

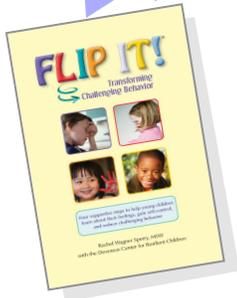
# www.MoreFLIPIT.org

Resources

Workshops

FAQ's

Testimonials



## The Book!

This informative and award winning book by Rachel Sperry, MSW, with the Devereux Center for Resilient Children, is designed to support all adults who interact with young children. This guide explains FLIP IT's four simple steps to transform challenging behavior in young children. Teachers and parents can help children learn



about their feelings and gain self-control by using the mnemonic: F - Feelings, L - Limits, I - Inquiries, P - Prompts Learn to FLIP IT with the practice pictures, reflection activities and real life stories inside. For pricing and availability, visit the website of our publisher at [www.kaplanco.com](http://www.kaplanco.com)

## FLIP IT Online Course!

This course will teach participants the four supportive steps of FLIP IT in an on-line learning format. This on-line learning course has a running time of 2.5 hours. Upon completion of the course, 0.5 CEUs are offered (5 hours), factoring in time for the interactive pieces, reflection, application of the skill, and learning assessment. The cost of the course is \$35, and if CEU documentation is needed, they can be obtained through Western Kentucky University for a cost of \$25. The course can be completed over time and not in just one sitting. For more information or to take this course go to: <https://www.mylearningpointe.com/FLIPIT>



## 1-Day FLIP IT Training!

This live one day training, teaches participants the four supportive steps of FLIP IT that are designed to help young children (ages 3-8) learn about their feelings, gain self-control and reduce challenging behavior. The four steps are embodied in the FLIP IT mnemonic which stands for F - Feelings, L - Limits, I - Inquiries, P - Prompts. This strategy is nothing new, but transforms best practice into something that is easy to remember, applicable in a variety of challenging situations and portable. This training is designed for teachers and parents who are looking for best practices on reducing challenging behavior in young children. Earn .65 Continuing Education Units for Early Childhood Educators. To schedule this training in your community, contact Debi Mahler, Professional Development Coordinator, at [dmahler@devereux.org](mailto:dmahler@devereux.org) or 1-866-TRAIN US.

## 2-Day FLIP IT Train-the-Trainer Session!

This live two day train-the-trainer session with the author offers time to experience the 1-Day FLIP IT Training and become competent in teaching FLIP IT to others. Participants will leave this train-the-trainer session with the 1 day FLIP IT® training powerpoint and binder with detailed trainer notes, a variety of resources to help support the use of FLIP IT in the classroom and by families, the FLIP IT book, and the confidence to provide workshops and technical assistance on the information. Earn 1.3 Continuing Education Units for Early Childhood Educators. To find out when and where this training takes place, contact Debi Mahler, Professional Development Coordinator, at [dmahler@devereux.org](mailto:dmahler@devereux.org) or 1-866-TRAIN US.

## NYS FLIP IT Training

For FLIP IT training in New York State contact the Franziska Racker Center  
3226 Wilkins Road, Ithaca, New York 14850 607-272-5891 [info@rackercenters.org](mailto:info@rackercenters.org)

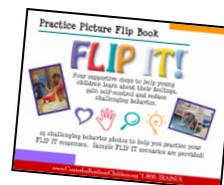


## Reminder Resources!

FLIP IT reminder resources provide visual cues that help FLIP IT users practice the four steps of FLIP IT. The FLIP IT reminder resources include:



Posters



Practice Picture Books



Bracelets



Magnets



Pocket Cards



# Practice Pictures



A child is breaking crayons into pieces.

F. \_\_\_\_\_  
L. \_\_\_\_\_  
I. \_\_\_\_\_  
P. \_\_\_\_\_



A child is crawling under the table during transition time.

F. \_\_\_\_\_  
L. \_\_\_\_\_  
I. \_\_\_\_\_  
P. \_\_\_\_\_



Children are fighting over the paint brush.

F. \_\_\_\_\_  
L. \_\_\_\_\_  
I. \_\_\_\_\_  
P. \_\_\_\_\_