



# UNDERSTANDING LANGUAGE

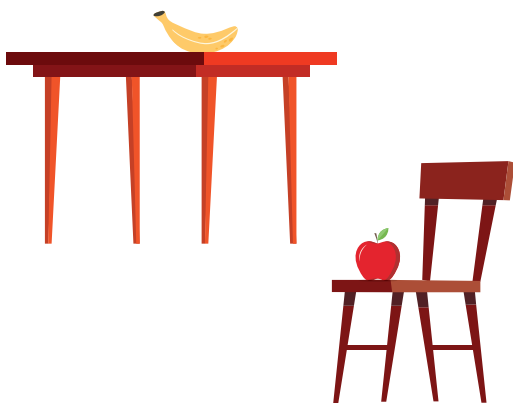
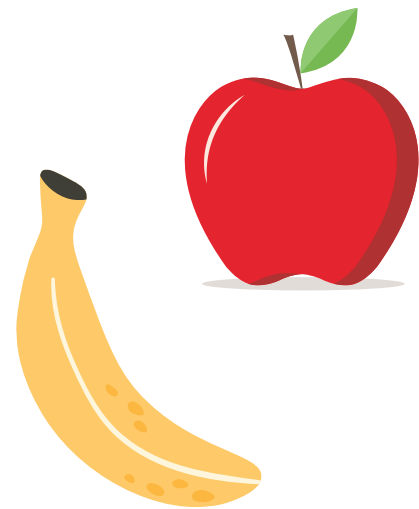
# KEY WORDS

## One-two Key Words

- 🚩 Key words are the words in a sentence that a child has to understand to be able to follow an instruction.
- 🚩 As they get older, children gradually understand more keywords within a sentence.
- 🚩 To show they understand a word, children must be able to find the toy or object that goes with that word.
- 🚩 We only know they understand a word if they choose the correct object that goes with that word out of two or three choices.

For example: If we ask them to find **apple** but there is only an **apple** there, they don't have to understand any words. This is because there is no other alternative.

If they find **apple** when there is **apple** and **banana** we know that they have understood the word apple.



- 🚩 To understand a sentence with two key words they need to have alternatives for both of those key words.

For example to understand

*'put the **banana** on the **table**'*

you need to have: banana, apple, table, chair.

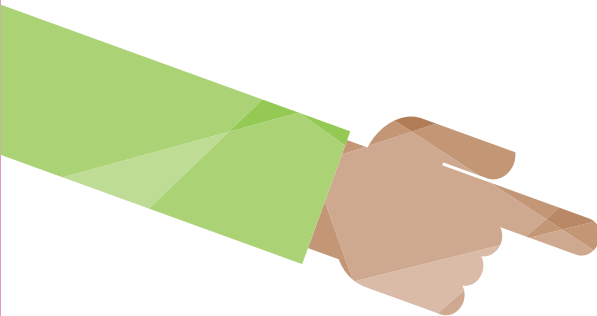
- 🚩 If they get it right we know they have made the right choice for each word.
- 🚩 Other examples of two key word sentences:
  - // Wash **teddy's feet** (when the child has been given the sponge, so can only wash, but has the choice of teddy or dolly and all their body parts)
  - // Find **chair** and **spoon** (there would need to be chair and spoon and a variety of other choices eg cup, plate, knife, fork)
  - // Make **robot jump** (options are robot and dinosaur and jump and sleep)



## Two-three Key Words

- 🚩 When children can consistently understand two key words in a sentence, in both your games and everyday situations, we begin to work on three key words within a sentence.
- 🚩 This quite often involves position words like 'in', 'on' and 'under' and some size words, such as 'big' and 'little'. This means even more objects.
- 🚩 Examples of three key word sentences:
  - // Find **big apple** for **teddy** - objects you need are big apple, little apple, big banana, little banana, teddy and dolly.
  - // Put the **spoon under** the **cup** - objects needed: spoon, knife, cup, plate, and times when you say 'under' and times when you say 'on'.
  - // Put **teddy in** the **box** - you will need teddy, dinosaur, box and saucepan (make sure the alternative for box is something else that the object can go in) and times when you say 'in' and times when you say 'on' or 'under'.



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- 🚩 When helping children to develop their understanding it is important to think about other cues that children may use to help them understand the instruction rather than using the words. These might include:
    - // Pointing at the object we want them to use.
    - // Eye pointing eg looking at what you have asked the child to find.
    - // Gesture.
    - // Facial expression.
    - // Context eg what normally happens in a similar situation or that has happened recently.