



DEVELOPING VOCABULARY

It is important to help your child to begin to learn the meanings of simple naming words. It is only when they can understand these words that they will begin to use them.

When talking to your child, use short simple sentences so that they can hear the important words:

eg *'look - bus'* instead of *'look there's a red bus going down the road'*.

Highlighting the language you use can help children to understand and use new words. The following strategies can be useful:

SAY LESS

STRESS (important words)

GO **SLOW**

SHOW (show the objects that the words correspond with)

As well as the four Ss, a vital way to highlight your language is **REPETITION, REPETITION, REPETITION** of simple words in different situations.

The following activities will help your child to develop an understanding of simple key naming words, as well as some action words (verbs). You can use these ideas with the topics below.



Feely bag

Place objects or pictures in a bag and encourage your child to take an object out and name it. Reinforce the target vocabulary by repeating the word, using a sign and exploring what function that item has (eg what do we do with an apple?). When they are all out ask your child to find you the objects eg find car, find ball, find book.





Posting game

Place pictures of the targeted vocabulary face down on the floor. Encourage your child to choose a picture, name it and then post it in the box. You can also play this as a listening game by placing the pictures face up and asking your child to find and post the picture that you name.

Skittles with pictures underneath

As a listening game, place three pictures on the floor with a skittle on top of each one, and ask your child to use the ball to knock down the skittle on the picture that you select. As a naming game, you could place one picture on the floor with a skittle on top and ask your child to knock the skittle down and then name the picture.



Feeding teddy

Put about five-six items of real or toy food out along with a teddy or another soft toy. Ask your child to find an item of food (eg 'get the apple') and then give it to teddy. You could also ask them to tell you which piece of food to feed teddy. Encourage them to build their phrases eg 'apple to teddy', 'dolly eat orange'.

Washing line

Using some real clothes, look at each item and name them together. Then make a washing line from string and pegs. Ask your child to find an item of clothing that you say and hang it on the washing line.

Cooking game

Begin a game with a toy cooker, some basic food items, a frying pan and spatula. Give simple instructions eg cook the potato etc, and then encourage your child to say what they cooked and take it to mummy to eat. Ask questions eg does mummy like potato? Do you have potato at home?



Bathing teddy/dolly

Give your child a teddy/dolly, pretend bath, sponge/flannel, brush. Ask them to follow a simple instruction with regard to washing/brushing a body part eg wash teddy's foot, brush teddy's hair.



Farm game

Put out a number of toy animals and a field. Ask your child to find an animal (eg 'where's the pig?'). Have fun making the animal sounds and putting the animals in the field.

Shopping game with puppet

Set out a 'shop' on a table with food items and use a puppet to tell each child what to go and buy from the shop eg Monkey wants an apple. You could use a toy shopping basket and then encourage your child to bring the item back in the basket, give it to the puppet and tell the puppet what they bought from the shop.



Action rhymes and songs

Use simple actions or gestures when you say the words to help your child learn what the words mean. For example, Heads, shoulders, knees and toes. If you're happy and you know it ... clap your hands, stamp your feet, etc.

Books

Your child can have their own library card and borrow books for free. There are lots of different types of books for children of different ages and interests.

Puzzles

Find or borrow puzzles with different pictures on them. A toy library may have some of these.

