

Activities to Develop Speech and Language Skills

Below are some suggested activities to help speech and language development. You do not need to do them every day. Go at your child's pace but try to do at least two activities each week. You can do any activity at any time on any day. Short bursts work best.

To randomly select an activity, you can print them and cut them out, or write each activity on a piece of paper, put them into a bag and whenever you have time, your child can pick out an activity from the bag.

Two different levels have been included. Start at level one. Work on that until your child is ready for level two. It is important to go at their pace.

When working with your child in these activities, you should use the language that you are most confident in.

Look at a book together.

1 Talk about the main character. What is their name? How do we know they are the main character What do we know about them?

Say that you will be thinking about how the main character is feeling. Stop during the reading and ask "How is ----- feeling?" "How do we know that?"

2. See the attached handout attached for more information on enjoying books together. Alternatively, do not read the words. Look at the pictures and make up a story. Use varied vocabulary. Let your child re-tell the story and see how many details they can include. If they like to see themselves on screen, you can record them telling you the story.

Make an obstacle course either in the home or outside. You will be looking at vocabulary, prepositions and the number of instructions that can be remembered at one time. Take turns to give instructions to each other.

1. Start with a preposition (in, on, under). Choose one e.g. "Go in the box", "Go in the kitchen". Then move on to on, "Jump on the step", "sit on the chair", then move on to under. You can then mix them up, e.g. "put the ball on the chair", "put the ball under the table".

2. Make the instructions harder by linking two together e.g. "Go on the table then under the chair". "Go under the table then jump three times".

You can move on to other prepositions e.g. above, below, behind, in front, between.

1. Encourage your child to help you prepare a meal. Give simple instructions.

Discuss any new vocabulary.

2. When you repeat the activity, see whether your child can tell you what you need and what to do next at each stage.

Do some tidying up together. Discuss where and why you are putting things there. "I am putting the book under the straws because it is heavy and I don't want to squash the straws".

"I am putting the ball in the box so it does not roll away".

2. Expand this by your child taking a turn to explain. If they make an error, you should repeat back what they said in the correct way but do not comment on it being incorrect.

Watch a TV programme together. 1. Comment on what the characters are doing.

2. Talk about why they are doing things.

If you have a smart phone, make a simple video of your child telling a familiar story or singing a song.

Gather several random or themed objects. Lay them out and talk about them. Cover them with a cloth. See who can remember the most objects.

1. Start with three objects and build to five.

2. Gather some objects together and put them in a bag. Take turns to pick an object from the bag and describe it for the other person to guess what it is without saying the name of the object. If they struggle, discuss together what could have been said to

help you guess e.g. what is it for? What colour is it? Etc.

Play I went to the supermarket and I bought..... Each person must remember all the items that have been said before and then add a new one.

1. Have pictures or objects which you can use as memory prompts. You could put them into a bag so they are only used if necessary.

2. Play without prompts. You could target vocabulary by visiting different types of shops e.g. I went to the baker and I bought etc.

Clap the number of syllables in words. Start with names and the names of objects around you. Think of longer words and see who can think of the longest one.

Tyrannosaurus Rex has 6 claps!!!



Book reading checklist for parents

Parents play a key role in building literacy skill such as *oral language*, **vocabulary** and **story comprehension**.

When you spend time sharing books you are helping children to build these skills.

How you share the book also makes a difference:

- **What we know** - children who are read to frequently become better readers
- **What we know** - reading the same book many times gives children opportunities to think more deeply about the story and to remember and use new words. Plus children love repetition.
- **What we know** - when you pause during the book reading, to talk about the story and what interests your child, you provide lots of opportunities for them to think and talk about the story and to hear new words.
- **What we know** - talking about the important parts of a story (for example, the characters setting, problems, actions and resolution) makes it easier for your child to make sense of the story, and it prepares them for understanding the stories they will read later on.
- **What we know** - to fully understand a book your child needs to use their problem-solving and reasoning skills to find meaning beyond what's written on the page or found in the illustrations. You can encourage this by connecting the story to your child's knowledge and experience and by asking your child what they would do in the same situation as the main character.

