

Developing Early Language

At this age children are actively learning language often through asking you lots and lots of questions. We can help them by encouraging language through play.



For example, children learn new words by listening to you so turn everyday activities into games by talking about what you're doing e.g. 'Pour the cereal into the bowl, let's get the milk out of the fridge. Ooh it's cold. I wonder what else is cold...'



Storybooks often have some wonderful vocabulary that can be further explored.



Make going for a walk into a game – the changing seasons offer different opportunities for language/vocabulary development, e.g. in Autumn see how many different coloured leaves you can find, or talk about the different seeds on the trees, e.g. conkers, acorns or sycamore seeds (helicopters). Consider collecting several different sized/shaped leaves and doing some leaf printing. This can be as simple as placing a piece of paper over a leaf (with the most textured side facing up) and rubbing over the leaf with a coloured pencil or crayon to make a pattern on your paper. Discuss the size and shape of each leaf at the same time and the patterns created. What do the leaves feel like, e.g. smooth/rough?


In the Spring and Summer time you could see how many different coloured flowers you can both spot. If there are any fallen petals, consider collecting them and pressing them at home between the pages of a heavy book, or inside a book with heavy items placed on top. After 2-3 weeks remove the petals and use them to make pictures or greetings cards. Remember to only collect petals which have already fallen, and not pick flowers while they are still in bloom!

Play category games, e.g. 'spot things that have wheels' or 'how many different

animals can you spot?’



When shopping give children their own list made of pictures cut from magazines, ask them what they need and let them get the items and put them in the basket

 Play with words by singing nursery rhymes or rhyming songs, and performing the actions. Play with words by singing nursery rhymes or rhyming songs, and performing the actions.



Story time - share a story either from a book or make up a story. Your child could make up their own stories and you could join in. Story strings are ideal tools for creating imaginary stories. To create your own, place a selection of everyday objects in a cloth bag or box and take turns with your child to remove one item at a time and attach it with a peg to a piece of string tied between two chairs. Each time an object is added to the string, the story is extended to include that object, e.g. “one day **dolly** went for a walk”. “First, dolly went to the shop and bought a **bag of sweets/raisins**”. These activities are also ideal for introducing ‘time’ concepts and sequencing, e.g. ‘first’, ‘next’, ‘last’, ‘the end’. This activity could also be carried out using pictures.



Take part in ‘pretend play’ – pretend to be somebody else e.g. a doctor, big bad wolf. Encourage child to join in.



Small toys (e.g. playmobil figures) or teddies, dolls or puppets can be used to act out everyday events. Children love making teddy/doll ‘talk’



Play games involving taking turns as turn taking is important when talking together and development of social skills. It is important when your child gets to school and has to take turns in games and activities as well as in conversations.