



Chatting Together

Support your child's learning of new words and ideas at home by finding out what topics or songs they are learning at nursery. Chat with your child about their day asking open questions, for example 'what did you enjoy best today?' Follow your child's lead in conversations and chat about what they are interested in. Talk about your child's feelings and that it's ok to ask for help.

Expand Sentences

If your child is frequently using sentences, expand your child's language by repeating back what they say and adding a word or idea to make a slightly longer sentence, for example if your child says 'the bus is coming', you could repeat back 'the big bus is coming' or if your child says 'the playdough is squishy', you could repeat back 'the playdough is squishy and stretchy'.

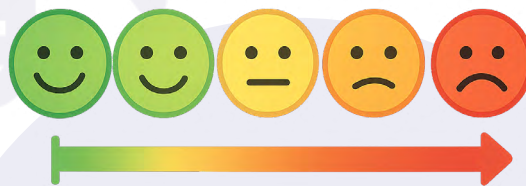
Use Open Questions and Comments that inspire creativity and problem solving, such as 'why?', 'how' and 'I wonder what will happen if...'

Support Understanding

Children may need time to think before responding to questions and instructions. Give your child time without answering for them. Support understanding by breaking longer instructions down. Support spoken instructions with visual information such as pointing and gestures.

Talking about feelings

- Label feelings in your child and other frequently.
- Check in with your child on how they are feeling and why.
- Draw pictures of different emotions and talk about how it feels in your body.
- Talk about what makes your child feel happy, sad, angry, scared, calm etc and how you can help them or they can help themselves express big feelings in safe ways and what helps them to feel calm and safe.



Top Tips for Later Sentence Users

Children using sentences of 5-8 words

Having interactions that are loving, enjoyable, back & forth and language rich give your child the best start.

Get face to face

and on your child's level when interacting and try to minimise distractions such as screens.

Observe Wait & Listen

to see what has caught your child's interest and what they are trying to communicate.

Follow Your Child's Lead

Enjoy fun activities together including your child's interests. Whatever your child enjoys doing can be used as an opportunity to build language and communication. Join in the play your child's way. Comment on what your child is doing using short, simple sentences. When your child uses language, repeat their words and expand by adding a word.





Share Stories

Look at books together and talk about the pictures, following your child's lead. Let your child choose the book and give her time to show you things in the pictures. Ask your child questions such as who, where and what happened? Encourage your child to retell their story in their own words and make up their own stories.



Share Songs and Rhymes

Share songs and rhymes with your child – repetitive songs are a great way to help children learn language. Songs with actions or signs help children link meaning to the words. Teaching your child about rhyme increases her awareness of how words are made up of sounds. You could pause to let your child fill in the words and talk about which words sound similar at the end – words that rhyme.



Support Phonological Awareness

Listening out for rhythms, sounds and rhymes is a great way to get your child ready for literacy.

Why not try:

'Tower sentences' word boundary activity

Use any building blocks/lego. Make up sentences with your child (e.g. 'I love you', 'playing together is fun' or silly sentences about whatever they like). Build a tower or make a line of blocks with one block for each word. Talk about how many words and say the sentence pointing at each block.

Syllable Clapping activity

Say your child's full name slowly and clap for every syllable, do this for family and friends' names too and talk about how many syllables are in each name. This teaches children about the sounds that make up words.

Rhyming Bag activity

Put some household objects in a bag (e.g. spoon, sock, key, pen, hat). Take turns to feel an item in the bag, guess what it is and take it out. Say the object name then think of a word that rhymes with it. Making up your own silly rhyming words also works if you can't think of a real word!



Sound Hunt activity

Look around the house, outside or in a shop for things that start with the same sound. You could collect objects that start with the same sound or take a photo of them so you can talk about the sound again later. You could start off with the same sound as your child's name then move onto other family members' name sounds. Try looking out for this sound when looking at books too.

For more ideas of fun activities to try to build speech, language and communication see BBC Tiny Happy People website:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people>

