

Early Interventions

Speech, Language and Communication

Support Materials

**Area of concern:**

Understanding – Receptive Language: 40 – 60 months

This will help the child to:

Understand humour

Activities:

- Nonsense rhymes and poetry – read together and discuss
- Jokes – talk about what makes them funny
- Read books such as 'Aliens Love Underpants' by Claire Freedman, etc.
- Silly stories – use a well-known simple story / nursery rhyme and ask the children to change parts of it to make it silly.

Adult Role:

- Provide lots of opportunities to experience humour in different contexts.

Look, Listen and Note:

Ways in which children use language in their pretend and imaginary play.

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This will help the child to:

Demonstrate understanding of 'how' and 'why' questions by giving explanations

Activities:

- Use stories from books to focus children's attention on predictions and explanations, for example, "Why did the boat tip over?"
- Use role play and toys to act out scenarios and talk about what happened and why.
- Commercially produced activities based on cause and effect and sequencing can be used to support children.

Adult Role:

- Role model how to answer questions with an explanation.
- Support and scaffold children's answers.
- Help children to identify patterns, for example, what generally happens to 'good' and 'wicked' characters at the end of stories; to draw conclusions, "The sky has gone dark. It must be going to rain"; to explain effect, "It sank because it was too heavy"; to predict, "It might not grow in there if it is too dark" and to speculate, "What if the bridge falls down?".

Look, Listen and Note:

- How children use talk to reflect upon, clarify, sequence and think about present and past experiences, ideas and feelings.
- How children link one thing to another to explain and anticipate things. For example, "We won't play out today because it's too windy... you might get blown away".

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This will help the child to:

Be able to follow a story without pictures or props

Activities:

- Read a book together and ask the children to draw a story map of the story. Initially let children see the illustrations in the story and once they are used to the idea of drawing story maps you can move on to not showing the illustrations.
- As you read a story ask the children to act it out together.

Adult Role:

- Children need to have had lots of experience with pictures and props before this stage to be able to use their imagination when no pictures or props are given.
- Provide for, initiate and join in imaginative play and role-play, encouraging children to talk about what is happening and to act out the scenarios in character.

Look, Listen and Note:

- Childrens' understanding of the elements of stories.
- Ways in which children use language in their pretend and imaginary play.

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This will help the child to:

Understand instructions containing sequencing words; first, after, last and more abstract concepts – long, short, tall, hard, soft, rough

Activities:

- Simon Says – play using more complex instructions
- Shopping game – ask the child to collect different items for you. Start with simple instructions and add more as appropriate.
- Treasure hunt – hide a treasure and give the child verbal instructions to find it.
- Practical activities such as cooking: talk about what needs to be done first, next and last and after the activity encourage the child to tell a peer or an adult what they did using words such as first, next and last to prompt them. .
- Barrier Games – create a simple model with Duplo bricks hidden from the child. Give instructions to the child to build the same model. Once finished, show the original model and compare.

Adult Role:

- Ensure the child is able to understand the words individually before using them altogether in an instruction.
- Use visual support such as pictures and signing to support understanding at first.
- Remember that the child's ability to remember an instruction will have an effect how well he/she follows instructions.

Look, Listen and Note:

- How the child follows an instruction.
- The words and complexity of the instruction understood by the child.