

Language Development

Use of words

Handy

Hints

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Building these activities into daily life will help all young children to develop language, and may be particularly useful for children who are slower to talk than others.

Ask open questions instead of closed ones, such as "What's that?", "Who's that?", "Do you want orange or milk?", "Is that man drinking or sleeping?", "Is that a dog or a cow?".

Have a box with five or six everyday objects, such as a cup, brush, socks. Each day show the child one item at a time and help him or her to use it. Say the word that is most likely to have a meaning for the child, such as "Brush your hair; look, Mummy's brushing her hair, brush, brush, brush".

Play games emphasising prepositions such as: under, on, in front of, behind, next to, in between. Use just one or two to start with.

Tell short stories, then move on to longer rhymes and encourage the child to join.

Play games that involve pronouns - his, hers etc, and games that involve names of parts of the body.

Use occasions such as getting dressed to help the child to practice what he or she is learning to understand. For example, ask the child to fetch clothes. Ask for one item at a time until the child fully understands. Use clear simple pictures when introducing new words and stories.

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