

SEN Early Years Inclusion Service

A-Z of language activities



A-Z of language activities

This booklet contains lots of practical ideas to help your child's language development during everyday activities and play.



Different activities to help with attention and listening skills,
receptive skills (understanding spoken language)
and expressive skills (putting words together in a sentence)
as well as speech sounds,
social skills and communication.

A ... animals



- Name the animals.
- Make animal sounds.
- Sort animals
 - farm, pets, jungle, zoo.
- Sing songs
 - Old McDonald
 - Little Bo Peep
 - 5 little ducks
 - Sleeping Bunnies & more
- Move like animals.
- Pretend play
 - feed the hens
 - drive the tractor
 - milk the cows.

These activities help develop language, play skills, early numeracy, gross motor skills and social skills.

B ... balls & bubbles



- Take turns blowing bubbles
- Catch the bubbles, follow them, pop them
- Roll, throw, catch, bounce
 - to each other
 - through chair legs
 - at a target
 - to knock down skittles
- Talk about size
 - big, small
- Ready, steady, go
 - ... develop waiting skills

These activities help develop language, play skills, early numeracy, gross motor skills and social skills.

C ... cardboard boxes



- Talk about where your child is
 - in, on, under, behind
- Let's crawl through
- Let's get into
 - a boat, a bus, a car, an aeroplane
- Let's visit
 - a castle
 - a den
 - a fort
- Let's make
 - a washing machine, a cooker
 - a TV, a puppet theatre
 - a little house, petrol station, train station



These activities help develop language, play skills, early numeracy, gross motor skills and social skills.

D ... dolls, dinosaurs & dressing up



- Talk about what you are doing and what is happening
 - feeding or washing the baby
 - Follow your child's lead
 - Model new vocabulary
 - Extend or add new words
 - Remember to
 - Keep
It
Short &
Simple
- Don't ask too many questions!

These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, early numeracy, gross motor skills and social skills.



E ... environmental walk



- What do you hear?
- Listen to the birds
- Feel the heat, cold, rain
- Notice the smells
- Talk about what you see
- Look for things
- Play 'I Spy...'
- Feel the pine cones / leaves
- Splash through the puddles
- Notice the colours

These activities help develop language, play skills, early numeracy, motor skills, social skills and safety awareness.

F ... fun & laughter



- Have fun!
- Be silly! Enjoy!
- Communication isn't all about words
 - gestures and expressions are important too
- Children learn expression through exaggeration
- Make a funny face, a silly voice, a silly gesture
- Children learn better when it's fun!

These activities help develop language, play skills, early numeracy, gross motor skills and social skills.

G ... games



- Peekaboo
- Let's pretend
- Indoor games
 - Moving statues
 - Musical chairs
 - Bumps
 - Hide & seek
- Outdoor games
 - Ring-a-ring-a-rosies
 - Hokey Cokey
- Games you buy
- Turn – taking games

These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, early numeracy, gross motor skills and social skills.

H ... house play



- Let's pretend
 - Join in playing house with mummies/ daddies/ carers/ babies
- Tea set
 - Manners – please & thank you
 - Match the colours
 - It's too hot (add milk)
 - Pour liquids
 - Sing along
- Real play in house
 - Help with cooking, baking, cleaning
 - Sort household objects, clothing
 - Play with real items, empty containers



These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, early numeracy, gross motor skills, self-help and social skills.

I ... I spy



I spy with my little eye ...

- Use colours
 - something that is red
- Use shapes
 - something that is round
- Starts with a sound
 - something that starts with mmm
- Belongs to
 - something that belongs to baby
- You wear
 - something you wear on your feet
- You eat
 - something that you eat with



These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, early numeracy, self-help and social skills.

J ... jigsaws & puzzles



- Talk about shapes and colours
- Match colours together
- Talk about the pictures you make
- Name the things your child doesn't know
- Don't forget to praise your child's efforts and encourage your child to finish the activity
 - Trying is as important as finishing



Jigsaws and puzzles develop pre-number and pre-reading skills. They help with spatial awareness, hand-to-eye co-ordination, fine motor skills and problem solving.

K ... keys



- Talk
 - I wonder ...
 - This is the key to ...
 - Hurrah! It fits!
- Match keys and locks
- Talk about size and shapes
- Let's pretend ...
 - Our magic key will open ...
 - Imagine ...
- Links to the real world

These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, early numeracy, fine motor skills, self-help and social skills.

L ... library



- Join the library. Members can ...
 - access books and audio books
 - access e-books & magazines
- Cuddle up with a book
 - Look & point
 - Tell the story
 - Talk about the pictures
- Enjoy all types
 - Lift the flap
 - Feely books
 - Board books
 - Picture books
- Take part in Rhythm & Rhyme sessions



Remember children are very welcome in every Public Library and you don't have to worry about trying to keep your child quiet!

M ... making & modelling

Playdough Recipe

- 1 cup of plain flour
- ½ cup of salt
- 1 cup of water
- 2 dessert spoons of cooking oil
- 2 dessert spoons of cream of tartar
- A few drops of food colouring

Put the ingredients in a saucepan and mix to a smooth consistency. Cook over a medium heat, stirring all the time to prevent sticking. Remove from heat when mixture comes away from the sides of the saucepan. Knead and store in an airtight container.

- Talk as you play & encourage your child to talk to you
- You can make anything!
- Make props for story telling
- Let your imagination tell stories
- You could add glitter or scents
- You could hide small objects and encourage your child to dig them out
- Counting
- Rolling, twisting, patting, pressing

These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, early numeracy, gross motor skills, self-help and social skills.



N ... nursery rhymes & number rhymes



- Encourage children to join in with words and actions
- Use props if you can
- Children love to learn with
 - Rhyme
 - Rhythm
 - Repetition



These activities help develop imagination, speech sounds, language, play skills, early numeracy, motor skills, self-help and social skills.

O ... out & about



- Look at wildlife in the garden
- Go for a walk and discover
- Visit new places
- Listen
- Take photos and later encourage your child to tell someone else what they did and what they saw, using the photos as a reminder.

These activities help develop imagination, language, motor skills and social skills.

P ... physical play



- Encourage movement indoors and outdoors
- Run, skip, hop
- Splash in puddles
- Dig in sand, soil, mud
- Play with a ball
- Make an obstacle course
- Jump on the trampoline

These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, motor skills and social skills.

Q ... quiet time



- Have quiet and calm times
- Reduce distractions
- Turn off gadgets
- Relax
- Enjoy
 - Calming music
 - Looking at books
 - Deep breathes
 - Shoulder squeezes
 - Massage
 - Gentle stretches
 - Lying down
 - Cuddling in
 - Cozy blankets

These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, motor skills and regulation skills.

R ... rhythm



- Sing
- Chant
- March
- Clap
- Dance
- Make noise with musical instruments
- Choose a story book with rhythm and rhyme



These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, early numeracy, gross motor skills, self-help and social skills.

S ... straws



- Blow bubbles in a cup
- Blow painting
- Blow football (balls of paper)
- Talk about the colours
- Make pictures / models
- Suck a thick milkshake to strengthen muscles in the mouth

These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, early numeracy, motor skills, self-help and social skills.

T ... talking



- Get down to your child's level
- Keep it Short and Simple
- Give your child time
- Model new words
- Don't ask too many questions



These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, early numeracy, motor skills, self-help and social skills.

U ... up, under



- Talk to your child about where things are
- Take turns to tell each other where to put toys
- Hide toys and give your child clues
- Play hide and seek
- Use of simple obstacle course where you talk through each step.

These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, early numeracy, motor skills, self-help and social skills.

V ... vehicles



- Colours
- Size
- Types (train, tractor, car, lorry)
- Matching, sorting
- Pretend play
 - get fuel
 - wash the car
 - tow the trailer
- Story books and songs
- Look at magazines

These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, early numeracy, motor skills, self-help and social skills.

W ... washing



- Sort
- Peg
- Match socks
- Say words
 - Pour
 - Splash
 - Scrub
 - fork, spoon, knife
 - clean, dirty
 - wet, dry
 - float, sink



These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, early numeracy, motor skills, self-help and social skills.

X ... xylophone & musical instruments



- Use everyday objects to make sounds and music
- Play 'stop, go' games
- Sing
- Dance
- Enjoy
- Join Rhythm & Rhyme at your local library

These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, early numeracy, motor skills, self-help and social skills.

Y ... you



YOU

are the most
important resource!



Every interaction and
activity with **you** helps your
child's development.



Z ... 'Dear Zoo'

(interactions using books)



- Tell the story
- Talk about the pictures
- Lift the flap books
- Texture books
- Noisy books
- Use props
- Match pictures and objects
- Encourage repetition of key words
- Add sound effects
- Enjoy together



These activities help develop imagination, language, play skills, early numeracy, motor skills, self-help and social skills.