

# Understanding spoken language activities

## Out and about

When out for a walk with your child in the park, forest or beach, collect some items you find lying on the ground and put them in the plastic container. Look at them and talk about what they are and how they got there. Ensure all collected items are clean and safe to handle!

When you return home, tell your child two things about one of the items to your child. Ask your child to try to guess which object you were describing.

For example,

*"It comes from a tree. It is long and thin."* (a twig)

*"It is spiky. It grows on a tree."* (pinecone)

*"It floats through the air. It comes from a bird."* (a feather)

*"It feels smooth inside and rough on the outside. It was the home for a little creature."* (a shell)

Variation: You could do the same thing with a collection of small miscellaneous household items or toys.

**Items needed;** plastic container with lid.



## What's in the cupboard?



Gather some items from the kitchen cupboards with your child. Put the items on the floor or on the table. Sit with your child and talk with them about each item, naming the items and what the items are.

Next tell your child one or two facts about one of the things to see if they can correctly identify the item.

For example,

*"Once we were seeds in a pod. Now we are covered in sauce."* (can of beans)

Now encourage your child to tell you about an item!

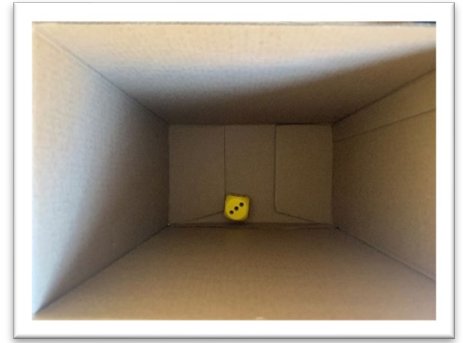
**Items needed;** tins or packets from your kitchen cupboard.

## What's in the box?

Hide an everyday object familiar to your child inside a small box.

Tell your child that you have an object in the box and they have to guess what the object is. Tell your child two or three facts about the object. Can your child guess what the object is?

**Items needed;** small box with lid, everyday objects of toys.



## Jewellery Box



Spread out some costume jewellery and let your child handle and talk about it. As you do so, use the names for different kinds of jewellery and the colours, metals and shapes you see.

Next, gather a few toys or dolls with your child.

Ask your child to listen and follow your instruction. Give your child a simple instruction as you name the jewellery item then the toy then the body part.

For example,

*"Put the bracelet on teddy's ankle."*

*"Put the gold ring on the monkey's tail."*

*"Hang the green necklace on the elephant's trunk."*

Now ask your child to give you an instruction.

**Items needed;** costume jewellery, dolls

## Who would say?

Talk to your child about a story that your child is familiar with.

Say something that a character in the story might say. Can your child tell who the character is?

For example: **'The Three Bears'**

*"I have the smallest slippers."*

*"Chopping all this wood from the forest makes me hungry."*

*"Why is my bed all crumpled and rumped?"*

Or **'The Gingerbread Man'**

*"What a delicious smell!"*

*"The water will make me soggy."*

*"I only want to help you."*



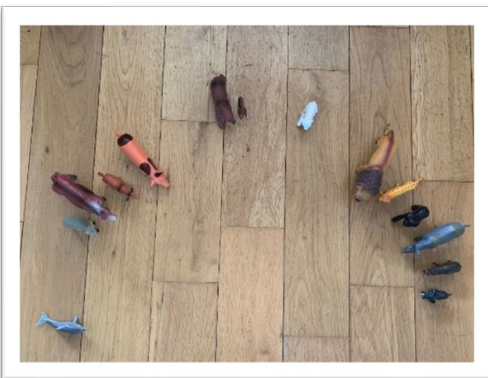
Or **'The Three Little Pigs'**

*"I'm out of breath!"*

*"Building a strong house is hard work."*

*"You boys are getting very big."*

## Animals



Gather toy animals with your child and as you set the animals out to play with, talk about and name each animal. Talk to your child about where the real creature would live, how the animal moves and what it eats, etc.

Next tell your child two pieces of information about an animal and see if your child can guess which animal you are talking about.

For example; *"I live where it is very cold and I eat fish."*, *"I live in the jungle and I can fly."*, etc.

**Items needed;** toy animals

## Hide and seek

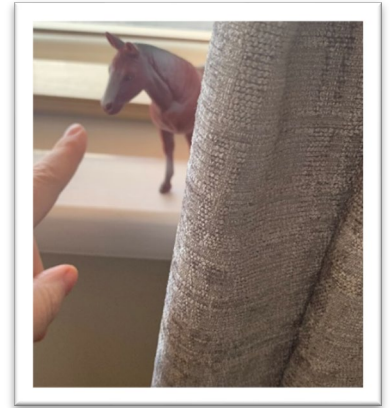
Hide an object in your house. Tell your child that they have to follow your instructions in order to find it.

Try to think your instructions through before telling and if you need to repeat them say the same words again exactly.

Ensure that the order of your instructions matches the sequence in which your child must look.

For example;

- *“Go to the bathroom. Look on the shelf beside the toothbrushes.”*
- *“Go to your brother’s bedroom and look on the windowsill beside his Lego model.”*
- *“Open the cupboard in the hall and look under the red box.”*



Extension: If you don’t mind a bit of extra work you could lay a trail of clues like a treasure hunt. Read the clues for your child when they find them unless they are competent readers.

Items needed; object to hide

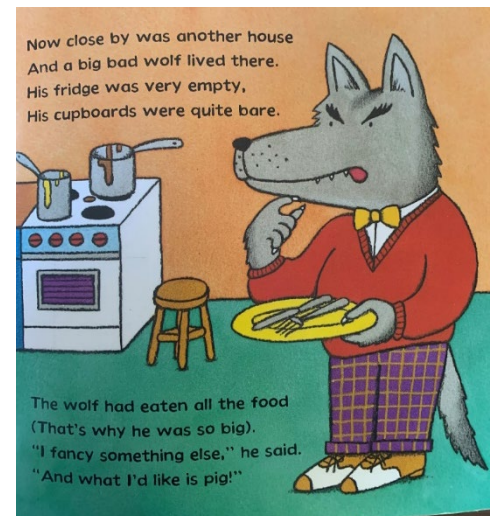
## Fix the mistakes

Talk to your child about a favourite story book. Tell your child a statement about the story or about a picture in the book.

Deliberately put an incorrect word into your statement and see if your child can correct the statement.

For example;

- *“The wolf is wearing a blue jumper.”*
- *“The wolf is wearing a red jumper.”*
- *“The goats crossed the bridge to eat the green apples.”*
- *“The goats crossed the bridge to eat the green grass.”*
- *“At the top of the stairs there was a castle.”*
- *“At the top of the beanstalk there was a castle.”*



(Picture taken from 'The Three Little Pigs' by Nick Sharratt and Stephen Tucker - Macmillan Press)

Items needed; picture book

## Find the Book

Tell your child that you are going to ask them questions about their books. Your child has to listen to a question and find the book that relates to the question.

Ask your child question starting with who. Ask your child to find the book that shows the character.

For example;

- *“Who baked something nice to eat?”* (Old Woman in The Gingerbread Man) .
- *“Who lives in a treetop house?”* (Owl in The Gruffalo).

On another occasion ask what questions. For example;

- *“What did the bears have for their breakfast?”* (Show porridge in The Three Bears).

On a different occasion ask where questions. For example;

- *“Where was the little egg?”* (Leaf in The Hungry Caterpillar) .
- *“Where did the mouse go for a walk?”* (Forest in The Gruffalo).

**Items needed;** familiar story books



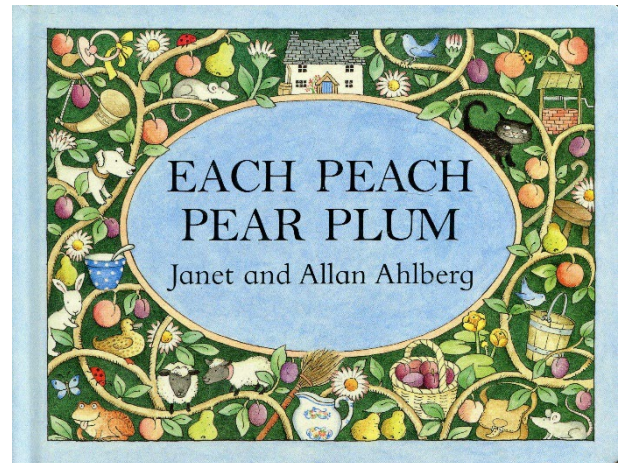
## Look in the book

Choose a picture book your child enjoys and sit together with your child.

Choose a suitable picture in the book and ask who, what or where questions.

For example, in the book ‘Each peach pear plum’;

- *“Who was floating down the river?”*
- *“Who peeped through the window?”*
- *“What pet does Mother Hubbard have?”*
- *“What did Tom Thumb eat?”*
- *“Where did Robin Hood sit?”*
- *“Where was the plum pie?”*



It would be best to stick to one specific question word during each session.

**Items needed;** Familiar picture books