




CLOSING THE WORD GAP

“Model new words every day as you talk read and play”.



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharing a book: Tell the child to “Listen for a special word” The child listens for the name of a character in a story and makes a sound e.g. “Meow” for a cat, “Grr” for a wolf or “Quack for a duck” .When they hear the word they make the sound.• Instruments: Stop and go game: The adult beats a drum, the child takes steps towards the adult every time they hear a beat.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ One bang = one step○ Two bangs = two steps○ Three bangs = three steps• Copy my sound game: Children have to listen to the speed and volume made by the adult and copy using their own instrument e.g. fast / slow or loud / quiet.• Listen to the rhythm; Children could move fast or slow as the adult plays fast or slow beats on a drum, tambourine or other instrument.• Stepping stones game : The adult claps and child jump the number of claps , you could use cut out stepping stones or carpet tiles | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playing together :Introducing new words• Carpet play: Child is playing with toy vehicles on the play mat. The adult comments on what is happening, makes the sounds of the vehicles or name the vehicles, providing a running commentary.• Role play in the kitchen “Make a cup of tea for mummy” or “ Let’s make a cake for Nanny” The adult models the words during the play.• Role play with teddy : Tell the child to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ “Wash teddy’s face ” (arm, leg, tummy)○ “Make teddy jump” (hop, dance, sleep, fly)○ “Find teddy’s nose” (eyes, ears, mouth,)○ “ Brush teddy’s fur”• Fishing game: Gather several everyday familiar objects, the adult names the objects with the child and puts them in the bowl/basket. The child has to find the object named by the adult. Introduce new or unfamiliar objects to increase the child’s vocabulary.• Skittles game: Make skittles from plastic bottles with photos/pictures of animals or everyday objects on .The adult names an animal/object and the child tries to knock that skittle down. Introduce new animals and objects to increase the child’s vocabulary. Repeat, revisit and rehearse. |
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|  Everyday ideas | Example | Why | Why not look at these? |
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| <p>I need to know you are talking to me, please get my attention first.</p> | <p>“George...”</p> <p>Say your child’s name, tap your child on the shoulder, bend down to your child’s level and give them your eye contact.</p> | <p>Young children find it difficult to listen and carry on with an activity at the same time. Saying their name first or gently touching their shoulder encourages them to stop and listen. Bending down allows them to connect with your face and gentle tapping them on the shoulder helps them to be aware that you are ready to communicate.</p> | <p>Through the eyes of a child - 2-3 years - Bing video</p> |
| <p>Use your body language, tone of voice, facial expression and taking turns to communicate with me.</p> | <p>“George, shall we read (holding the book) The Very (emphasising very) Hungry Caterpillar?”</p> <p>Pausing to talk about the story and the pictures to your child as you read the story</p> | <p>You will be giving more clues about what your words mean, which can be very useful if the child is struggling to understand language. You will also be using really important non-verbal communication and modelling this.</p> | <p>Making faces - BBC Tiny Happy People</p> |
| <p>Remember I am only two, use language and words I will understand.</p> | <p>Your child says -</p> <p>“The pider ran on my does”</p> <p>You say “The spider ran on your toes – tickly spider”</p> <p>Or</p> <p>“The tat was there”</p> <p>“I saw the cat , it was there”</p> | <p>It takes a while to perfect language but modelling the correct words and sounds is a great way to ensure your child hears them and doesn’t feel criticised when practising.</p> | <p>Communication Trust Platform 3: Two Year Old Talk - Bing video</p> |

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| <p>I will get distracted if there is noise or activity around me that diverts my attention. Sometimes I need a quiet time just with you. You are my world so please help me with this.</p> | <p>Turn the television off and if it is still a really busy environment - try to find a quiet space, take your child to one side and get down to their level. Check you have their attention.</p> | <p>Children and parents can be distracted and miss real essential communication. Televisions, toys, mobile phones and even other people can distract you and your child from talking. It is easier for them if they can see your face and see your reactions.</p> | <p>Eye Contact - BBC Tiny Happy People</p> |
| <p>I like and need to hear things again and again.</p> | <p>Sing the same action songs and rhymes over and over again with your child, use hand and /or body movements as you sing and play together. Read your child’s favourite stories over and over again.</p> | <p>From a very young age repetitive language supports a child in understanding. As your child grows saying things more than once helps children to join in, pick up and learn new words. Familiar songs and rhymes also work in this way, it can become a great game letting your child fill in any gaps.</p> | <p>Nursery rhymes and songs - BBC Tiny Happy People Action songs - BBC Tiny Happy People</p> |
| <p>Try commenting on what I am doing more than questioning me.</p> | <p>Tell your child what is happening around them “The ducks look hungry, let’s give them some bread, you are feeding the ducks , they look happy now” “Shall we give them some more bread? “ “That tower is tall, you are building it carefully, you are trying so hard, well done “</p> | <p>Questions can sometimes overwhelm a child and make conversations difficult. A simple tip is to consider using four comments to each question you ask. “Comment, comment, comment, comment question”.</p> | <p>Ripping up paper - BBC Tiny Happy People</p> |

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| <p>Communicate and listen to me - I am amazing and have so much to share</p> | <p>Play games with your child to help them listen and communicate. (See ideas for games on first page).</p> | <p>Our children are learning every day. Whether they are talking, singing, cuddling, smiling, or showing you things, acknowledge what they are showing you. If you name what they are saying/showing you and make learning fun, then they will show you their wonderful world and will feel valued and heard.</p> | <p>Shopping game - BBC Tiny Happy People</p> |
| <p>Come and join in with my play but follow my lead.</p> | <p>Play alongside your child and go down to their level, show interest in what they doing. If they are playing with toy cars, choose a car and join in with them. Role play characters from everyday life.</p> | <p>Play is a part of everyday life and is essential in your child's learning and for making sense of their world. Play is essential in developing your child's confidence and sense of wellbeing.</p> | <p>Pairing socks - BBC Tiny Happy People</p> |
| <p>Give me time to talk and respond (10 seconds or longer).</p> | <p>Pause and give children thinking time to gather their thoughts. "What did you see when we went to the park?" Pause for 10 plus seconds , wait and prompt as required- "Ducks on the water " or "We saw the ducks" or "We fed the ducks"</p> | <p>Children often need time to think before answering, so give them more time than you would an adult. Don't forget to maintain eye contact whilst you wait for them to talk.</p> | <p>Talking and taking turns - BBC Tiny Happy People</p> |
| <p>Give me a choice of two.</p> | <p>"Your dinosaur coat or your green coat?" "Your wellies or your shoes?" "Shall we read Bear Hunt or The Very Hungry Caterpillar?" "Do you want milk or water?"</p> | <p>Children can sometimes find choice incredibly hard as they are trying to process emotions, meaning and want all at the same time. In giving them a <i>choice of two</i> you simplify the options and support them in making confident decisions.</p> | <p>What's in the washing? - BBC Tiny Happy People</p> |

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| <p>I love to hear you telling me about where we are, what we are seeing and what is happening in the moment – talk to me about everyday activities but use short sentences so I don't get lost in the words.</p> | <p>Consider going for a walk at your child's pace – you might only get to the end of the road as they stop to investigate the amazing world they live in. "Stamping in the puddles " " Watch the big lorry " Share everyday things with them: " Listen to the birds singing" "I'm washing up the cup" "Daddy is hoovering" "Mummy is singing again" " We are going to meet Nanny" " Nanny is on the bus"</p> | <p>Sharing activities through words is key to developing your child's understanding the world we live in. Describing what is happening allows your child to make sense of the word and link actions or objects to that word. But don't stop there, even saying- " Mummy likes reading George stories" or "Daddy is happy when he plays football with you" or "I am sad, I lost my earring " – supports your child in naming emotions.</p> | <p>Let's get ready - BBC Tiny Happy People</p> |
| <p>Repeat what I say and add a word.</p> | <p>Your child says "Look, car", you say "Look, shiny car". Your child says "Lorry", you say "Big lorry". Your child says " Teddy", you say " Cuddly , soft teddy"</p> | <p>Talking very clearly, add one or two more words to your child's sentence. By doing this you will be showing that you have heard, what they have said and modelling language development.</p> | <p>Tools for Talking 2-3 years: Building sentences - BBC Tiny Happy People</p> |