

Putting words together

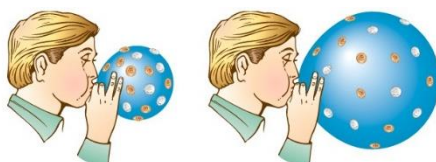


When your child can say many single words, you can encourage them to start making phrases. Children need to know around 50 words before they will be ready to start building short phrases.

General strategies to support a child to use phrases:

- Focus on encouraging lots of **action words** (verbs) e.g. 'drinking' and 'washing' as well as objects words (nouns) e.g. 'apple' and 'ball'.
- **Repeat back and expand.** This acknowledges what the child says as well as giving a model of the correct grammar and speech sounds e.g.

Child says: 'balloon'
Adult says: '...blow balloon'
Child spontaneously copies: 'Blow balloon!'



- **Emphasise key words** using your tone of voice. This draws attention to the important words in a phrase e.g. 'It's a big ELEPHANT' vs. 'It's a BIG elephant'.
- **Avoid asking closed questions** that stop conversations e.g. 'What's that?' or 'Do you want a drink?' or which answer themselves 'You want a drink don't you?' Child: 'Yes'.



Instead **ask open questions**: This is where you ask an open-ended question to elicit as much information as possible e.g. Adult: 'What is happening in the playground?' Child: 'Boy climbing'.

- **Model what the child should say** using accurate grammar, this will help the child to learn how it should be said.

Child: 'horse eat'
Adult: 'Yes the horse is eating'

Activity ideas to encourage phrases:

Action picture lotto

Place a number of pictures in a bag, take them out one by one and label these, matching them to the lotto board.



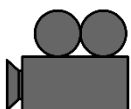
Books

Comment on the story; leave pauses and gaps for the child to comment on what they can see. Try a few open ended sentences 'And then the egg



Posting

Make a simple post box out of a cardboard box. Put some pictures face down on a table. Turn one over at a time and name the action for your child to listen to. Help him/her to post the picture in the box.



Video

Video the child doing different actions inside and outside; when you play the video back, label the action. Ask the child to label the actions too.

Small world play

By modelling language through play, you can model the verbs such as: sleeping, sitting, jumping and cooking, the possibilities are endless.



Simon Says

Following some adult modelling, the child can take turns at being the instructor e.g. 'Simon says.. smile'. Adults can provide extra language models while the child plays e.g. 'You are smiling'.



Action songs

Add more verses of your own. When you are singing it with the child, do lots of actions and gestures and encourage them to copy you e.g. 'When you're angry and you know it stamp your feet!'

Running commentary Whenever you are playing with the child or they are watching you do things, make sure you give a running commentary and provide plenty of opportunity to emphasise action words e.g. 'Daddy brushing, brush brush brush'.



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