

Concept Words

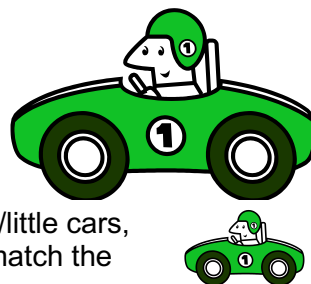


- It is important to remember when developing understanding of language (particularly concept development) that it is easier for all children to learn if the activities are **real and relevant** to them.
- If children do not relate to what you are talking about, then they are less likely to understand and remember what you have taught them.
- Pictures can be quite abstract and should be the 'last resort' as a method of teaching, whereas using the child themselves, **real objects or daily routines & activities are much more real and therefore more likely to result in change.**
- You can start immediately with the ideas given to develop understanding and then hopefully **be inspired with ideas of your own.**
- Keep your **language very simple.** If you use too many words the meaning and benefit of what you are saying can be lost completely.
- Try to teach **one concept at a time** e.g. 'Hot' and 'not hot'. Teaching pairs together may confuse the child as they are trying to learn two things at once.

Big (Large) and Small (Little)

Teach: Demonstrate a range of big and small objects. Spend time talking about the items and label them e.g. "Here's the big sock and this one is not big" etc. Use gestures to show the difference between big and little.

Show: You need 6 **big** objects and 6 **small** objects. E.g. big/little socks, big/little cars, big/little boxes, etc. Play sorting games, match the big items together and match the small items together.



Practice: See if the child can find the one you ask for e.g. "Where's the big book?" or "Where's the small car?" If the child gets it wrong, just say "that one's not big, here's the big book." If the child finds this difficult, go back to the steps above 'teach', then 'show'.

Prepositions: 'in'/'on'/'under' and 'in front'/'behind'/'next to'.

Teach: Demonstrate a range of positions. Spend time talking about the position of things in everyday activities e.g. 'food on the table', 'toys in the box', 'water in the bath'. Label the concepts and reinforce this visually using Makaton sign/ or gesture.

Show: Give the child a selection of toys. Show the child how to place the toy in a certain position e.g. 'teddy under chair'. Repeat the instruction and encourage the child to copy your actions.

At first children usually find it easier to learn prepositions if they actually try out the positions for themselves. So you could have an obstacle race with pieces of furniture (e.g. big box, table, chair).

Practice: Now the child should be encouraged to carry out actions on their own. Tell them where to hide teddy e.g. 'on the parachute', 'under the parachute'. Another activity idea is: use a teddy/play people/doll/Action Man and make them walk around an obstacle course and hide them in different places (e.g. behind the curtain, in the cupboard). Hide and seek is a very good game for learning prepositions. If the child finds this difficult, go back to the steps above 'teach', then 'show'.



Down / Up

Teach: Demonstrate what is 'up' and what is 'down' through everyday activities, label these as they happen e.g. when getting dressed: 'arms up' and 'legs down'.

Show: Give the child a selection of toys. Show the child how to place the toy in a certain position e.g. 'teddy up the ladder', 'teddy down the ladder'. Repeat the instruction and encourage the child to copy your actions. You can also show in everyday activities e.g. when an aeroplane is flying overhead, encourage them to look up at the sky to see the aeroplane or down at the floor to see what they have dropped. You could also talk about going up or down when you are going up & down steps / stairs or a slide.



Practice: See if the child can follow the instructions without you showing them how to do it e.g. 'fly aeroplane up and down'. Action songs are a fun way to listen to instructions e.g. Hokey Cokey 'put your arms up, put your arms down, up, down, up, down, shake them all around...'

Other concepts include:

By 2 Years old		By 3 Years old	By 4 Years old
• In/ Out • On/ Under • Up/ Down		• Big/ Small • Inside/ Outside • Empty/ Full • Same/ Different • Long/ Short • Hot/ Cold • Slow/ Fast • Wet/ Dry	• All/ Except • Closest/ Further • First/ Last • Either/ All • Before/ After • Top/ Bottom