

Naming – Developing First Words

An important part of developing nouns is to start naming everyday objects. Children need to hear words many times before they begin to use them.

Everyday items/ photos/ favourite toys are the words that children will be most familiar with and therefore the ones they will be motivated to use first. Expanding vocabulary is useful for your child's language learning.

What to do?

- Use a bag (pillowcase, PE bag) and put a selection of everyday objects (about 10) inside.



Brush, cup, shoe, book, teddy, etc.

- Let the child feel inside the bag and pull something out.
- As this happens, pause to see if he/ she spontaneously names the item.
- If this doesn't happen, offer a choice (e.g., '*is it a brush or a car?*').
- If this doesn't prompt the name, *you* name the item. Use lots of repetition to give the child the opportunity to listen to the word.
- Demonstrate what the item is for as you say the word (e.g. *pretend to drink as you say 'cup'*).
- When the bag is empty, reverse the activity so the child is picking up an object, naming it as it goes back into the bag.



For further ideas check out the video below.



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How?

Choose one or two words to focus on for a week or as long as is necessary for your child.

They may be words that your child is already trying to say.

Putting it into practise

- Use familiar objects and things of high interest.
- Use photos of familiar people.
- Keep your language simple; use one or two words only so that it is easier to focus on the names of things.
- Use gestures/ signs alongside the word.
- There is less pressure if you take it in turns to take something out of the bag.
- Use a small number of items and repeat several times during the day.
- Start the child off by saying 'it's a ...'

Moving forward...

When you feel you are confident with this strategy, next, try **introducing verbs (action words)**. Use opportunities as they arise – going for a walk, playing with toys or at meal times. **Walk, jump, clap, wave** and **drink** are great everyday examples.