



The importance of Communication and Language



Communication and Language is a prime area in the Early Years Foundation Stage, it underpins everything we do, including interacting with others, listening and attention and exploring language children see and hear. If you came along to our forum earlier in the year, you would have had the opportunity to listen to the importance of Communication and Language and how we can embed it in everyday play, activities and daily routines.

Parents can support their children's communication and language development by engaging in back-and-forth conversations, using a rich vocabulary, and providing opportunities for reading and storytelling. Here are some key strategies:

- Engage in conversations: use conversations as an opportunity to use a variety of vocabulary and asking open ended questions to encourage a response.
- Read frequently: Reading to children regularly exposes them to a range of words which is crucial for their language development.
- Interactive reading: you can read a story and answer questions throughout or point out to different pictures in the book, how the characters may feel, colours you can see, counting different things.
- Use puppets and nursery rhymes: Including puppets and nursery rhymes into storytelling can make learning more engaging and help children understand more words in context.

These strategies not only benefit children's language development but also helps them build confidence and a love for learning.

Below are some links you can access to see how you can support your child at home from Speech and Language UK. There are also more Toolkits you can access through the website too. If there is a specific area you would like more information on, please let us know.

- [Add words to what your child says - Speech and Language UK: Changing young lives](#)
- [Children learning more than one language - Speech and Language UK: Changing young lives](#)
- [Help your child play with you - Speech and Language UK: Changing young lives](#)

Below are further links with information about books and storytelling from the Book Trust website, there is further information and recommendations you can look at, finding books around your child's interests, age and stage of development.

- [The benefits of reading | BookTrust](#)
- [5 fantastic farmyard books | BookTrust](#)
- [Books based on nursery rhymes | BookTrust](#)



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Old MacDonald had a Farm



Enclosed you will find a set of puppets to go along with the song 'Old MacDonald had a Farm' and below we will go through the different ways these can be used to extend on children's learning and development.



Singing

- Sing the song with your child, introducing different animals as you go through the song.
- As you are singing stop at different parts to give your child the opportunity to finish it off. For instance "Old Macdonald had a.....," let them decide
- Lay the different animals out and let your child choose which animal is next "On that farm he had a..."



Counting

- Using the puppets, count how many animals there are
- Encourage your child to use their fingers to represent how many animals live on the farm.



Colours and shapes

- Talk about the different colours they can see on the animals.
- Ask questions such as "which animal is pink?" "Which animal is black and white?"
- Talk about the shapes they can see on an animal such as noses, beak, ears and the shapes on a barn. A pig has a round nose, a duck a triangle beak



Understanding the World

- Talk to the children where the animals live on the farm. For instance a horse lives in the barn, a pig in a sty and chickens may live in a coop.
- Take your child for a walk and see if you can spot any of the animals in the nature or even a trip to the farm, especially when it is spring time and the new babies are born.



Just a reminder that the activity is all about fun and getting the children communicating in as many forms as possible! It's not necessary for everything to be 'perfect' or to follow a set expectation. We can let the children invent their own words, tunes, or even adapt the stories and rhymes. For instance, Old MacDonald could become someone new, and the animals might head off to school, one at a time! The goal is to talk, sing and use our imaginations while having fun. Your child will guide you on how to play, just follow their lead!



We hope you enjoy the pack.



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