

## Action Words (Verbs)

Children learn to understand action words by watching and listening to adults saying them while the actions are happening.

Children learn new words more easily if they are said clearly one at a time and not in a long sentence.

Before a child can understand a new word they need to have heard it said for them many times.

### Activities to help your child to understand action words:



1. Say action words for your child to listen to as they occur during the day e.g. "eat", "drink" during meal times, "jump", "walk" whilst walking to the shops or nursery. You may want to choose a small number of words to concentrate on at once and say them at the same time each day.
2. Play an 'actions game'. Ask your child to perform one action at a time. Give the instructions as a single word e.g. "jump", "sit" etc. It may help to include a brother, sister or friend in the game so that they can demonstrate the correct action if your child is still learning the meaning of some of the words.
3. Play the above game with a teddy or favourite figure and make them perform the action if your child is reluctant to do it themselves.
4. Spend time watching people in the park, town or on the TV. Help your child to point to someone who is doing a particular action e.g. walking, eating, crying, talking and so on.
5. Use pictures of people doing certain actions. You could cut these out of magazines or ask your Speech and Language Therapist if she can provide you with some. The next page explains some ideas for activities to do with the pictures.

## Activities to help your child say action words:

Use the activities above and take it in turns to tell each other the action word. It is important not to put your child under pressure to say the words if they are not able to. If your child is unable to say the word, say it for them and move on.

It is a good idea to choose 2 or 3 action words that happen frequently in your child's day to concentrate on first.



## Ideas for using action words pictures:

**Posting** - make a simple post box out of a cardboard box. Put some of the pictures face down on the 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.

As your child becomes familiar with some of the words, you can ask him/her to find one of the pictures to post in the box. E.g. "which one is painting?"

Take it in turns to choose a picture and name the action word before posting it in the box. If your child is unsure of the word, name it for him/her and move on.

**Build towers** - Lay a selection of the action pictures on the table face up. Ask your child to put a brick on the picture that you say. Keep going until you have built towers on each picture. As your child begins to learn the words take it in turns to ask each other to put a brick on a picture.

**Lotto/picture matching** - use two sets of the pictures and play a lotto game with them. Name the action words for your child to listen to and encourage him/her to tell you the words as he/she begins to learn them.

**Act the actions** - put the action pictures face down on the table or in a bag. Take it in turns to pick up a card and act out the picture for the other person to watch. See if they can guess what you are doing.

**Hide and seek** - Hide some of the action word pictures around the room. Ask your child to find one at a time. As your child finds a picture, name the action word for him/her to listen to. As your child becomes familiar you could ask him/her to tell you what the action is.

Next, try asking your child to go and find you a specific picture e.g. "find someone eating.."

Remember to make the games fun. If you are enjoying it your child probably is too!