

## Linking Words to Make Phrases

Once your child is able to use a range of object and action words as single words, the next step is for them to begin to combine these words to make simple phrases containing 2-3 words. This might include e.g. 'mummy reading', 'cat sitting', 'kicking ball' etc.

Try looking in books, magazines or online to find pictures of actions taking place.

E.g. stories of characters cooking, watching TV, playing outside. These are great opportunities to model a variety of action words with your child.

See below pictures of action words. You might find the below activities useful to use with these pictures for working on using action words in phrases.



### Ideas for using action words pictures:

#### Posting:

- ⇒ Make a simple post box out of a cardboard box. Put the pictures face down on the table. Turn one over at a time and name the action for your child to listen to. Help them to post the picture in the box.
- ⇒ As your child becomes familiar with some of the words, you can ask them 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 them and move on.
- ⇒ If your child uses 1 word to describe what is happening in the picture (e.g. "juice"), add a second word and model the 2 word phrase back to them (e.g. "yes, drinking juice" or "boy drinking")

#### 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 them to tell you the words as they begin to learn them, encourage them to use 2 word phrases.



### 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 ask them to tell you what the action is, as above if they use one word, add a second!

Once your child is frequently using 2 word phrases to communicate you can move onto 3 word phrases:

Subjects, Verbs (action words) and Objects are used in simple sentences. For example:

"The boy is brushing his hair"

Subject: The boy

Verb: is brushing

Object: his hair

### STEP 1: Explanation

Explain the pictures on the page, e.g., "the boy is brushing his hair." "The boy is brushing his teeth."

### STEP 2: The child copies your model

For example; "the boy is brushing his hair, can you say that?"

If they make an error, e.g. "boy teeth", say "yes the boy is brushing his teeth"

### STEP 3: The child uses VO (e.g. brush teeth)

To begin with your child may need support with the sentence e.g. start the sentences for them, "the boy is...."

As they master this, you can reduce the amount of support you give them.



#### **STEP 4: SVO**

You can give them an example and then ask:

“What about this one?” They may reply, “boy brushing teeth”

These steps can be worked through as quickly or as slowly as your child needs. Any of the pictures can be used but it is advisable to start with the verbs (action words) that your child already knows.

See our ‘action pictures’ handout to use alongside this advice.

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