

Activities to Encourage Listening to Sounds

Exploratory play

Collect items like empty tins, spoons, shiny paper, pans, bricks etc. Use them to make interesting noises and encourage your child to listen. E.g. crumpling paper, banging on a pan with a spoon, tapping sticks together etc.

Sounds around the house/school

Encourage awareness of sound by pointing out noises around the house/school e.g. doors banging, telephone ringing, doorbell, school bell, water running in the bath, cars in the street, children in playground.

Making musical instruments

You can make shakers from squash bottles filled with rice or pasta and drums from tins or pans with wooden spoons for beaters. Encourage your child to make noises with the toys. You may need to demonstrate first.



Making music

Encourage your child to copy what you do, e.g. bang a pan with a wooden spoon, shake a bell, rattle the keys.

Animal noises

Using toy animals make the noises appropriate to each animal and encourage your child to make the noises too.

“What’s that noise?”

Make a recording of familiar noises around the house e.g. baby crying, vacuum cleaner, door bell, telephone, toilet flushing etc. Listen to the recording and talk about what the noises are. You could find an appropriate picture for each sound. Play the tape and when your child hears the noise encourage him to find the matching picture.

“Where’s that noise?”

Use something which makes a noise e.g. a ticking clock, or musical box. Hide the object in the room and encourage your child to listen for the noise and find the object.

Listening walk

Go for a ‘listening walk’. Draw your child’s attention to sounds you hear e.g. lorries, aeroplanes, workmen’s machines, dog’s barking, birds singing.

“Who makes that noise?”

Put a set of toy animals or animal pictures in front of your child. Talk about the animals and what noises each of them make. Ask your child “which one goes moo?” etc See if they can show you the right animal. If they are not sure, show them yourself.



Musical statues

Play some music and get your child to dance around the room. When the music stops your child must stand still. When it starts again they can dance.

Linking Actions to Sounds

The adult plays one instrument (e.g. a shaker) and the child has to jump, then you play a different instrument (e.g. drum) and the child has to pretend to be asleep.

Eye spy

Play I spy with initial sounds:
e.g. “I spy with my little eye, something beginning with ‘b’”

Play I spy with rhyming words:
e.g. “I spy something that rhymes with bear” (chair)

Spot the mistake game

Read a well known story to your child, making deliberate mistakes, e.g. a change of name or place. Encourage the child to identify the mistakes you’ve made.