

Social Use of Language

What happened to you?

Play a game where you take turns to pull a face (happy, sad, angry, tired, excited, shocked) and the other person has to guess how you feel and say what might have happened to make you feel that way. *'What happened to you?'*

Your explanation can be as funny as you like.



Emotion charades

We show our feelings using our faces and our bodies.

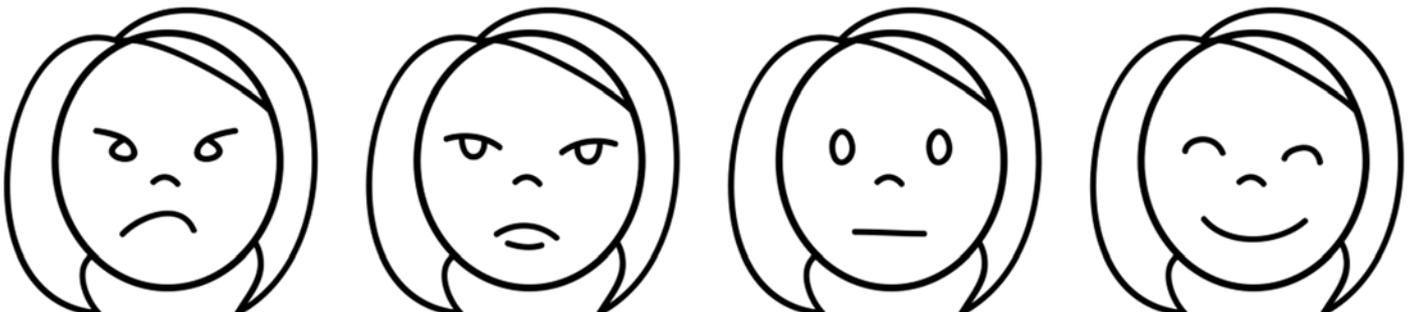
Running quickly away, with eyes wide open, can show fear.

If we stay and stand up straight, that probably shows that we are content. Slumping our shoulders can mean that we are tired or disappointed.

If we move our arms up to cover our face that can mean that we feel the need to defend ourselves.

Choose an emotion and act it out. How would you walk? What would your face look like? What would you do with your hands? Get your child to then guess what emotion you are portraying. Swap over and allow the child to show the emotion and you can guess.

You can also play many variations of this game. Draw a variety of facial expressions on separate post it notes. Stick one note to your head without looking at it. The child then acts out the emotion they can see on your head and you try to guess. Swap roles.



How would they feel?

1. Adult: *'Last week, Grace got a new puppy. Today the puppy is lost. How does Grace feel now?'*
2. Adult: *'Danny's Dad bought a ticket for a raffle. He won a new car. How do you think he feels?'*
3. Adult: *'Tomorrow is Billy's birthday. He is having a party at Adventure World. How does he feel?'*
4. Adult: *'Susan is late for school. When she gets there, she can't find her homework. How does she feel?'*
5. Adult: *'Troy is starting a new school tomorrow. He doesn't know anyone there. How does he feel?'*
6. Adult: *'This evening, Joe and Philip were playing football in the back garden. It was really good fun. Until Joey kicked the ball really high. It whizzed over the fence and crashed through the next door neighbour's living room window. Next thing they heard was a voice shouting, 'Who did that? I know where you are! Just you wait right there!' How did Joey and Philip feel? How did the neighbour feel?'*

Word Bank



See how many Emotions Words you and your child can add to this word bank. Your child could play against another child and there could be a reward for the player who says most Emotions Words. Your child will benefit from hearing the discussions and explanations of Emotions Words and in all these activities, and after listening to this new vocabulary, they will soon be using it themselves. Praise them when they use Emotions Words.

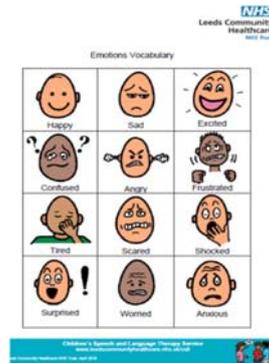
Snap happy

Using the Emotions Words from the word list you have both created, take turns to pose and have a photo taken of your face, demonstrating that you were feeling Angry, Happy, etc.

Ask another member of the family to look at the photo later and guess what feeling you were showing. Some feelings are easily seen in the facial expressions, while others are not so obvious.

A time I felt.....

This activity will help with identifying a range of emotions. Being able to label our own and others' emotions are important for communicating. You can download and print out a the vocabulary card below using the link.



<https://www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/seecmsfile/?id=3203>

Place the emotion picture cards into a bowl.

At first, limit the game to using the basic emotion cards such as happy, sad, scared and tired.

When the child is confident with the basic emotions, add additional emotion cards.

The child chooses a piece of paper from the bowl, e.g. Scared

Adult: *'I felt scared when I had the operation'.*

The child then describes a time when they felt that way.

The game ends when all the emotion cards have been chosen.

Guess the expression

This activity will help with understanding non-verbal communication such as: facial expressions, gestures and body language. It is important that children are able to understand non-verbal cues, as 95% of what a person communicates, are through non-verbal communication.

For this game you will need to cut out the pictures of different expressions. The same ones used in the last activity will suit perfectly.

Looking at the pictures and encourage your child to discuss how the characters/people in the picture feel.

Adult: *'How is the character/person feeling'?*

Child: *'Angry'*

Adult: *'How do you know?'*

Child: *'Because their hand is in a fist and their mouth is not smiling'.*

You may need to direct your child to indicators in the picture, such as facial expressions (a scowl) and body position (folded arms), that indicate how the person is feeling. Drawing inferences like this, is like being a detective.

Inference

Your child will have fun being a detective and using inference skills to use clues in what they hear in order to guess a little bit more about what is happening in the story. You might not say what the weather is like, but if someone in the story has a wet umbrella and a wet coat when they come in from outside, it is a good guess that it is raining outside!

Give your child some information but not the whole picture and then ask them to look for clues and become a detective.

Adult: *"The boy is kicking leaves that are on the ground.*

What season do you think it is it?"

Adult: *"The football team run up the pitch to hug the striker.*

What might the striker have just done?"

Adult: *"There is a big bang. The man gets out of his car. He is very angry.*

What might have just happened?"

Adult: *"The girl helps to drag the heavy, green tree into the house and Mum puts in in a big pot in the living room.*

What time of the year might it be?"

You can make this trickier by offering bits of information where there could be several possible outcomes.

Adult: *'Then the car stopped. Why?'*

Child: *'This could be because it has come to a red traffic light, or his car has a flat tyre, or maybe they have reached where they were going!'*

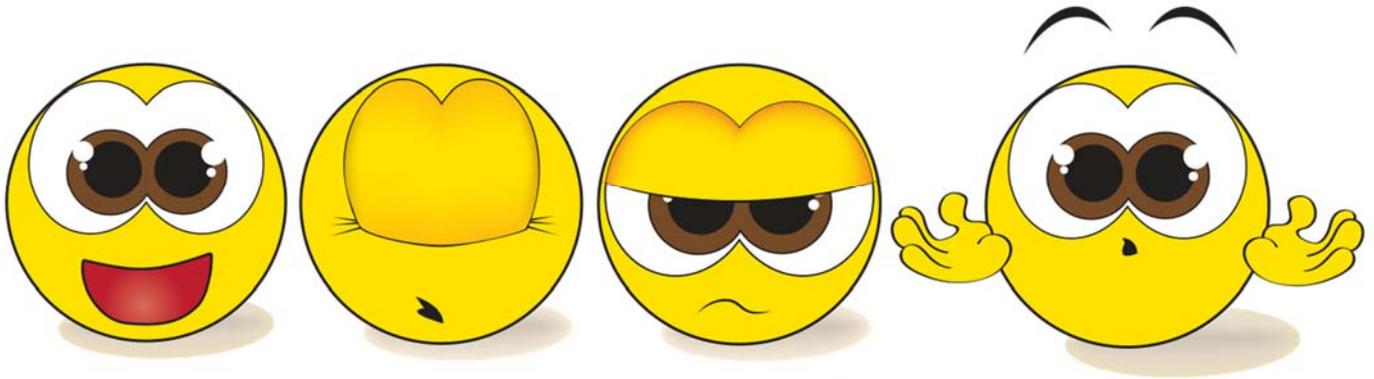
Adult: *'Let's talk about **why** you think that. What clues were hidden in what you heard?'*

Remind your child to do this with people and what they say as well. They are looking for clues and using these to make up the full picture.

Emotions

You can read this to your child and ask the questions.

Adult: 'We can often tell how a person is feeling by how their face looks (their expression), as much as by what they are saying. Look at the faces below. Can you describe how they are feeling and talk about why they may feel that way? What would make you feel like that?'



Ask your child to say;

'That's ok then!' with a happy expression. Does that feel right?

'That's ok then!' with an angry expression. Does that feel right?

'That's ok then!' with a sad expression. Does that feel right?

Tell your child, 'Did you notice, the words didn't change, but the emotions did! And that changed how you felt and how I felt listening to you! Let's take turns in this fun game.'

You can change your emotions, pretending to be angry, confused, happy, sad, exhausted, excited, etc.'

The aim of the game is for me to guess what emotion you are showing through the words and you guess what emotions I am showing through my words. Let's ACT!

'Ok, I'll do it now!'

'I knew it was you!'

'Oh, thanks a lot!'

Taking turns

Taking turns, is an important skill in language and communication. In a conversation, we have to wait while somebody is talking and, in turn, they will wait to allow us to talk. When instructions are being given, we have to wait our turn, listening to and then following instructions. There are many ways that you can work on this at home. Turn taking is a very important part of most games involving two or more players.



Using Lego

Give instructions to build a simple construction using Lego (or any other construction material). You will need to be very specific, talk about the colour and size of the brick and exactly where it has to go.

Use words such as: *'below, beside, on top of, between, next to'*, etc.

Your child has to listen to the instruction and process that information before completing the instruction. Remember they may need quite a long time to think before they fully understand and can follow the instruction. Do not rush them. Be patient while they process your instructions.



Encourage them to ask questions if they are unsure or have forgotten a step. Swapping roles in this activity will encourage your child to be clear in their own use of language too.

This can be modified to be used in a variety of ways. For example, you could give them step-by-step instructions/directions to 'treasure' in your house or garden, or you could follow a simple recipe together when baking. You read the recipe step-by-step and your child completes each step.

Taking turns in conversations

Taking turns in conversations helps to encourage fluency.

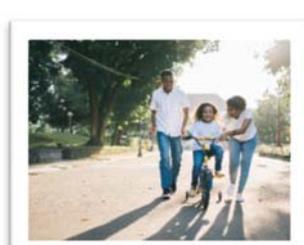
Take turns telling short stories or giving short pieces of information to each other.

As an aid to memory use photos from your child's life or pictures from their favourite show. Order them as conversation would flow a beginning, a middle and an end. Help your child to observe when a person's voice lowers and slows, they are probably ready for you to take your turn in the conversation.

Try actively listening and noticing when it is your time to talk. The conversations can be on any topic, including:

- an actual event that happened in my life, e.g. a birthday
- a time I was very happy
- a time I was very frustrated
- if I could change one thing

Place the pictures in order on the table or floor. Begin by saying to your child



Adult: *'Today you have chosen to chat about your birthday party last year.'*

Show the pictures

Adult: *'Can you tell me all about your party?'*

Child: *'Well, I remember it was great fun. All my friends were there...'*

Encourage as much detail about the event as possible. If your child needs to be prompted to give more information about the party, you can point to the photos and ask gently,

Adult: *'Which friends came? I can see Paul in the photo. Who else do you remember having fun with you?'*

The game is over when a natural lull in the conversation is reached.

Changing volume to suit the audience

This activity helps your child with understand how to appropriately use their voice. It explains and shows voice volume. Talk about **LOUD** (outdoor voice) and *quiet* (indoor voice). Draw a scale from 1 to 5 to indicate loud and quiet and the sound levels in between.

Explain why we use volume and tone and role play with your child to show how they are used in everyday situations.



Show them the exceptions to the rule and how to use your voice in a time of emergency or danger.

Make a megaphone from some card. Let's see if you can help your child identify LOUD or soft sounds. Does it make a loud or a soft sound?

Adult: *'A rocket makes a loud or a soft sound?'*

Adult: *'A snail makes a loud or a soft sound?'*

Adult: *'A car horn makes a loud or a soft sound?'*

Adult: *'A whisper makes a loud or a soft sound?'*

Adult: *'A cry makes a loud or a soft sound?'*

Have a discussion conversation how we use different volume in our voices in different settings.

Adult: *'What is an appropriate volume of voice in the playground?'*

Adult: *'What is an appropriate volume of voice near a new-born baby?'*

Adult: *'What is an appropriate volume of voice in a hospital?'*

Adult: *'What is an appropriate volume of voice in the classroom?'*

Discuss why they are different!

Changing language to suit the audience

It is important that we know what sort of language and ways of speaking are appropriate for different audiences. Role playing and pretending is a great way to work on this. You can begin by just talking about what you might say to the Queen, or a King if they came to visit.

Would we say - *'How's 'bout' ya'*? No, we would say: *'How do you do?'*, etc.

Move on to someone role playing being the King or Queen and having a conversation. As your child gains more confidence try role playing lots of different types of people. This could easily link into topic work from school.



Rehearsing scripts

It can be frightening to have to chat to someone new, when you have not thought of the words to use. To help your child, before the conversation takes place, help them with a script....an idea of what they should say. It is best if you and your child make up the scripts together and if you patiently practise them, like an actor learning their lines. Here are some examples.

FAMILY

You could say, *'Good morning. How are you today?'*

If he asks you about your own family, you could say, *'Oh, thank you. We are all really well!'*

WEATHER

If he asks you about the weather, you could say, *'Oh, we are all enjoying the sunny weather today. Do you like the warm weather?'*

SCHOOL

If he asks you about school, you could say, *'Well, I do enjoy school. I am in Mrs Thompson's class. She makes it fun to learn.'*

Similar short scripts are often enough to give your child the confidence and the vocabulary to begin a fluent conversation.



Guess what happens next

Prediction is an important skill and it means that we can think of what is likely to happen next in any situation.

Tell a story and stop throughout. Ask what your child,

Adult: *'What do you think might happen next?'*

Discuss why that would be a sensible thing to happen.

Adult: *'What would be a very surprising thing to happen next?'*

If your child is finding this difficult, you can offer them a choice between something that is likely and something that is very unlikely.

The pirates brought the prisoners on board...

Likely - They made them walk the plank. Then they immediately left the port and went in search of treasure

Unlikely - The captain started ballet dancing in a tutu. Then the pirates gave the prisoners all a present

The teacher came into class, she wrote on the board and turned around to face the class...

Likely - She spoke to the class. She gave out some books and gave the class work to do

Very Unlikely - She started to breathe fire. She grew wings and jumped out the window

Choices and opinions

It is important to help your child to express their opinions and make choices. This will help them become confident when they chat and hang out with friends.

You can print and cut out the cards on the next page, write the numbers 1-6 on the back. Then, turn them facedown, numbers up. Throw the dice. Pick a card with the same number. The adult will read the question for the child and share each other's preferences and ideas.

Encourage your child to make up their own questions - the possibilities are endless!

Which do you like better – bath or shower?

What's your favourite kind of sandwich?

Which do you like better – slide or swing?

What kind of day out would you prefer: beach or picnic in the country?

What do you like best, chocolate or jellybeans?

Which do you prefer summer or winter?

Which do you like better reading or drawing?

Which do you like better, dogs or cats?

Which do you like better, chips or mash?

Which do you like better: bike or scooter?

What is your favourite zoo animal?

What is your favourite dinner?

What is your favourite boy's name?

What is your favourite colour?

What football team do you like?

What a day!

It can be hard for some children to understand the meaning behind some phrases that we use in our everyday language. Some children may need these phrases explained very clearly.

You can read some of these phrases to your child and discuss what it might mean.

Below are some cards which you can print and cut out. Turn them face down in the centre of the table. Each person must take it in turns to turn over one card. That person should say the phrase using any expression they think might be appropriate and explain what they think it might mean.

'Oh, I'm sorry!'	'My goodness!'
'Excuse me.'	'Oops!'
'Thank you.'	'You're kidding!'
'I beg your pardon.'	'Calm down.'
'What a day!'	'I blew a fuse.'
'That takes the biscuit!'	'She's a scream!'

Compliments and insults

Sometimes children might need some support to understand the impact of their words.

Explain the difference between a compliment and an insult and then look at the speech bubbles below. Can your child sort these comments? Can they think of some of their own compliments?

A compliment is something nice that you say to someone which makes them feel good.

An insult is something you say which can be hurtful or thoughtless and makes the person feel bad.



The Praise Game

This activity encourages the giving and receiving of verbal compliments. We can smile and give high fives, but it is very special when a well-chosen word is offered as a compliment.

All you need is an empty jar for each person, some paper, lots of compliments and this will result in your very happy faces.

Adult: 'My favourite game of all, must be this Praise Game. The whole family can join in, and later you can play this game with your friends at school. All we do is think of lovely things to say about each other. I'm the adult, so I will write each compliment on a piece of paper and you can put your compliment in your jar. I will put my compliment in my jar.'

I will begin. I think you are amazing, and beautiful, and careful and determined'.

Discuss the meaning of each compliment and help your child's vocabulary to grow, so they have the words they need to give you lots of compliments too.

