

Social Use of Language

Colouring Teams

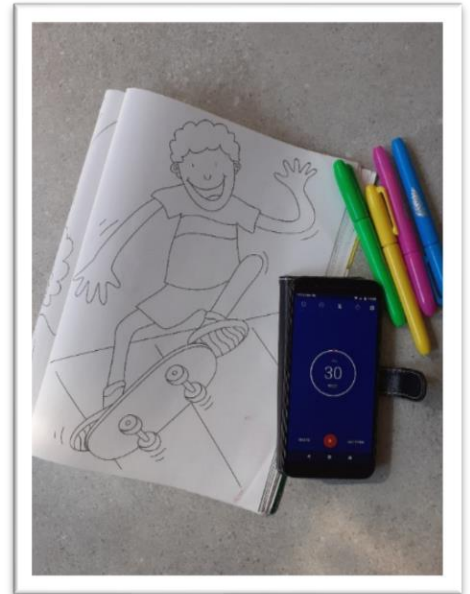
This activity encourages turn taking and gives your child the opportunity to practice waiting for their turn.

Let your child select a colouring page to use for the task. Tell them that you are going to work as a team to colour in the picture. Set a timer for 20 seconds and tell your child that every time the timer runs out it is the other persons turn to colour. Continue to take turns until the picture is completed.

Tips

As your child becomes more able to wait for the 20secs you can increase the time they are required to wait. If your child finds the 20secs too difficult you can reduce the time initially.

Initially use a simple picture that will not take long to complete. As your child develops their ability to focus you could try using a more complex picture.



Mirror Game



This activity encourages eye contact and looking in the direction of the person you are talking to.

Stand opposite your child so you are facing each other. One person is the 'leader' and the other is the 'mirror'. The 'leader' moves their body into different poses and positions and the 'mirror' has to copy the pose. Then swap roles. Remember to include facial expressions in the poses also.

Let's build a tower!

Your child will develop their ability to follow and give instructions.

Tell your child that they are going to build a tower from different colour building blocks.

Give your child simple instructions to follow while building their tower, one instruction at a time.

Let your child be the instructor and let them tell you how to build a tower, giving you instructions.



Emotion Action Song.

To encourage your child to recognise different emotions and how we express them.

The song is a variation on the classic “If You Are Happy, And You Know It.” When you sing this over exaggerate the faces you make. Encourage the child to make the faces along with the body language. So often we focus emotion lessons only on faces, but children’s bodies tell us how they are feeling too.

If you are happy, and you know it clap your hands

If you are happy, and you know it clap your hands

If you are happy, and you know it, then your face will surely show it

If you are happy, and you know it, clap your hands.

Now replace happy with different emotions:

Mad – cross your arms.

Frustrated – stomp your feet.

Excited – jump up and down.

Sad – make a frown

Scared – hide your face.



Simon Says



Your child will develop their ability to listen and follow rules.

The instruction is followed only when ‘Simon says’ is said before it. Your child follows the instructions and is then given the opportunity to lead the game.

Charades

To develop eye contact and looking in the direction of the speaker.

This can be completed using a wide range of pictures following different themes. Put a selection of pictures into a bag/box. One person chooses a picture without letting the others see it. They must then do an action or move in a way to imitate the chosen picture. The others must guess what is on the picture. Everyone gets a turn to choose a picture and do the actions.

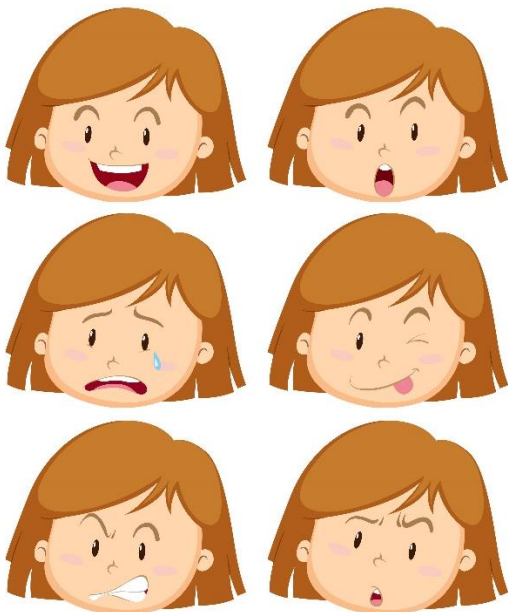


Themes for the pictures could include:

- Animals
- Emotions
- Occupations (builder/cook/teacher etc)
- Sports
- Action words (running/sleeping/crying etc)

N.B. Make sure that your child can identify the pictures before you start the game. The first time you do this you may need to talk about possible actions for the pictures before you start.

Name that Emotion!



Your child will develop their ability to identify different emotions.

From magazines and family photos gather a selection of pictures of people showing different emotions. Put them in a bag (you can use a pillowcase or gift bag) and take turns to choose a picture for the bag and try and name how the person is feeling. You may want to start with only happy and sad pictures and then add different emotions as your child becomes familiar with how each emotion is expressed.

You could also do this using the pictures in storybooks at home. As you read the story encourage your child to look at the expressions on characters faces and ask them how they think they are feeling.

Flashcards are available free to print online.

Role play



This gives your child the opportunity to practise social interaction in a variety of real-life situations.

Use objects around the house to make a pretend shop/restaurant/dentist/doctors etc Allocate different roles within the setting, E.G. the shop keeper and customer, and play out how you would behave and what you would say in each situation.

This activity can also give you the opportunity to talk about what you may need for each setting while you are preparing it. It may be a nice idea to take some time together to make signs and posters to use in the role-play. You can even create some homemade costumes!

Finish the sentence.

This helps develop turn taking, staying on topic and listening to others.

Use simple starters and take turns to complete them.
e.g. My favourite food is..., I like to play with.....

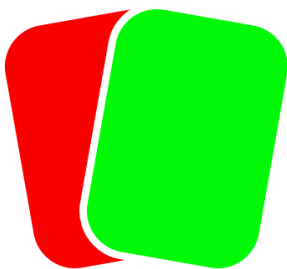
After each go repeat back what the other person gave as their answer.



e.g. Mum: *"My favourite food is chicken. What is my favourite food?"*

Child: *"Chicken."*

Silent Signals



This is a fun way to help encourage your child to look at the speaker.

The leader in the game hold one red card and one green card. The child must watch the leader and only carry out a named action only when the leader holds up the green card. The child must watch the leader and stop the action when the red card is held up. You may need to remind your child of the rules a few times before they can do this by themselves. Be positive and encourage their efforts.

Actions could include walking, jumping, crawling etc.

Then give your child the opportunity to be the leader and you follow their silent signals. Make some deliberate mistakes and see if your child notices.