

An explanation of how play and activities are used to support speech, language an...

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- An explanation of how play and activities are used to support speech, language and communication Play situation can be set up to teach particular vocabulary or language concepts. Play can be structured to reinforce or over learn this language, and then later the children will, hopefully, incorporate the same language in their own play. Play can give the opportunity to relate language to something concrete; something that can be directly experienced. This ensures that language is used meaningfully, which is especially important for children. Play can lead to the exploration and development of particular manipulative skills, organisational skills, imagination and reading and writing skills.

For instance, dressing and undressing dolls helps the children develop their own dressing skills, while role-play can develop a depth of understanding in topic work and allows for reading and writing with a purpose. Play dough with circular cutters- the children will have the opportunity to manipulate the play dough, press the shapes and have the satisfaction of seeing the result of their action. This activity relates to the circle theme and encourages the use of language-e. g: 'round', 'circular' and so on. Nursery rhymes, songs and using musical instrument can help children to listen and take turns, but also to sing and communicate.

Some nursery rhymes can help children to practice particular speech sounds. Books can help to increase vocabulary and help children to learn the meanings of words. Some books can help children to participate, for example a book that makes musical sounds when a picture is pressed. Books can also be made specifically to meet a child's interests and so encourage the child to point or vocalise. When children interact with puppets and make them talk

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and interact with one another, they are also involved in dramatic play. This type of play is excellent for developing language and for expressing feelings.

Fantasy play strengthens memory for both narrative information and lists of objects. Language is embedded in play of all kinds and especially in sociodramatic play. Children have opportunities to hear others use speech correctly and to increase their vocabulary. In negotiating roles and disputes, children develop linguistic and conversational skills. Children continue to form and modify concepts through play.

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