



Cars/Trucks/Trains

What you'll need and ideas for play:

Toy cars, trains, trucks, etc. Vehicles of varying sizes are good. Optional: a car garage, mat, or track.
Ideas for play: 1) Take turns rolling the car back and forth to each other. 2) Set up a little town for the child to drive their cars and trucks around. 3) Drive cars/trucks up and down a ramp.

SUGGESTED TARGET WORDS:

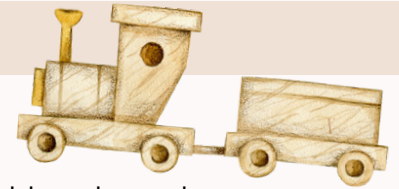
Nouns (names of things): car, truck, wheel, door, seat, ramp, town, etc.

Verbs (action words): drive, push, walk, etc.

Concepts: on, off, fast, slow, etc.

Symbolic sounds and Exclamatory words (play sounds and words): vehicle sounds, zoom, oo, ahh, hi, bye

Core Words: help, more, see, want, yes, no, again, stop, go, etc.



IDEAS/STRATEGIES:

-Naming/Commenting:

Name the different vehicles, and different parts of the vehicle, as the child explores them.

Comment on what is happening during play, using simple words and phrases. Ex: "driving" "beep beep" "uh oh, car crashed" etc.

Use symbolic sounds (vehicles noises, etc.) to accompany the commenting during play. Ex: If the child is pushing the car, you could say "vroom," or "beep beep." The child may attempt to copy these fun sounds before they begin to copy your words.

-Pausing:

Before pushing the car to the child, rock it back and forth a little and wait (show child you're waiting for them to say something by having an excited look on your face). The child is likely to communicate in some way that they want you to push the car to them; they may use eye contact, a sound, a gesture, a sign, or word. Once they have shown that they want you to push the car to them, you can say or sign the words that the child needs, such as "push; go; car" etc.

Before pushing the car you could say "ready, set go!"; you can pause before saying "go" to see if they will say it.

You could "drive" cars to the child and say "beep beep", keep pushing the car to child, but pause to see if they will say "beep beep" or "go" etc.

-Say it Again and Again: While naming/commenting, be sure to say the words again and again, so the child hears multiple repetitions of the words during play. Ex: "car", "car stopping", "stop, car!", "uh oh, car crashed", etc.

-Copy and Add: Repeat what the child has said and add another word so they hear how to make their attempts at talking longer. Ex: Child: "push" Adult: "push car"

-Use Gestures: Use gestures to accompany comments; Ex: if child is pushing the car, you could do a 'push' hand gesture, or a 'driving' gesture/sign when the car is moving. Say the words as you make the gesture, and respond to any gestures that the child uses.



Balls

What you'll need and ideas for play:

Any balls suitable for the age/stage of the child (ex: soft, foam, cloth, silicone balls or sensory balls with textures, bells, lights)

Ideas for play: 1) Play a simple turn-taking game rolling or throwing the balls back and forth. 2) Roll the balls down a ramp or through a tunnel. 3) Put all the balls inside a box/container for them to explore freely.

SUGGESTED TARGET WORDS:

Nouns (names of things): ball Core Words: help, more, see, want, yes, no, again, my turn, your turn, etc.

Verbs (action words): roll, bounce, throw, kick, push, etc.

Symbolic sounds and Exclamatory words (play sounds and words): oo, ahh, wow, yay, zoom, uh oh, etc.

IDEAS/STRATEGIES:

-Commenting: Comment on what is happening during play, using simple words and phrases. Ex: "roll ball, kick ball, you throw ball," etc.

-Copy and Add: Repeat what the child has said during play and add another word so they hear how to make their sentences longer. Ex: Child: "ball" Adult: "push (the) ball." If the child is using two words, you repeat them and add a third, etc.

-Say it Again and Again: While naming/commenting, be sure to say the words again and again, so the child hears multiple repetitions of the words during play. Ex: "ball; Johnny's ball; big ball" etc.

-Pausing:

oBefore rolling/bouncing/kicking the ball, rock it back and forth a little and wait (show the child you're waiting for them to say something by having an excited look on your face). The child is likely to communicate in some way that they want you to roll/bounce/kick the ball; they may use eye contact, a sound, a gesture, or a word. Once they have shown you that they want you to roll/bounce/kick the ball to them, you can say the words or do the sign that the child needs, such as "roll; go; ball" etc. Then roll/bounce/kick it back to them.

oBefore rolling the ball you could say "ready, set go!"; you can pause before you say "go" to see if the child will say it.

-Following their Lead: Watch what the child is doing in play with the ball, then copy their actions/sounds/words. Ex: if they are kicking the ball, you could play near them kicking your own ball, or you could encourage them to kick their ball to you and begin a turn-taking game. Be sure to comment on their actions during play too.

Verbal Routines: Use a simple, repetitive phrase while you play. Ex: Say "ready... set... go" each time before you roll or kick the ball. Instead of "go" you could say the verb to match with what you're doing. Ex: "ready, set, roll!"





Books

What you'll need and ideas for play:

Any children's books, suitable for the age and stage of the child. Simple picture books, lift-the-flap books, and those with repetitive phrases work well for this type of activity.

Ideas for play: Sit with the child and read books together. Allow them to choose the books.

SUGGESTED TARGET WORDS:

Nouns (names of things): book, picture, page, etc. Any of the main words from the story.

Verbs (action words): read, look, open, turn, etc.

Symbolic sounds and Exclamatory words (play sounds and words): sounds to accompany the story, wow, oo, etc.

Core Words: help, more, see, want, yes, no, again, open, etc.



IDEAS/STRATEGIES:

- Naming: Talk about the pictures in the book; name the pictures as you/the child points at them
- Commenting: Make a simple comment while reading the book and looking at the pictures. Ex:
 - If the child points at a dog, you could say "little doggy" or "happy dog"
 - As you turn the page, you could say "turn" or "turn the page"
 - When the child gives you the book to read you could say "book; let's read; open"
- Choices: Offer the child a choice of two books and let the child choose the book that they want to read/look at. The child may make a choice by pointing, taking, vocalizing, signing, or using words. Repeat their choice back clearly, so they hear the words needed.
- Say it Again and Again: Repeat the main words/names of the pictures over and over again. If the child is still engaged (paying attention/concentrating), you could read the same story again. Be sure to repeat the same simple phrases to help the child understand and use words.
- Copy and Add: If the child makes an attempt to name something from the book, repeat what they have said and add another word so they hear how to make their sentences longer. Ex: Child: "dog" Adult: "dog's sleeping." If the child uses two words, you repeat them and add a third, etc.
- Pausing: If the child is familiar with the story, pause at the exciting/predictable parts, to see if they can fill in the gap, if they don't respond, you can just continue reading as normal.
- Following their Lead: Name/talk about the things that the child is looking/pointing at in the book. If they are turning more than one page at a time, this is fine as you can still comment on these actions (Ex: "turning the pages"). Similarly, if they are no longer interested in the story, this is fine too, there is no need to make them stay.

*Tips for Choosing Books:

- For younger infants, choose soft cloth books with different textures and contrasting colors
- For older infants and toddlers, choose sturdy board books that can withstand being bent/chewed
- Choose books with a variety of topics that are motivating to the child, such as vehicles, animals, people, etc. You could also have books that relate to seasons and holidays.

Bubbles

What you'll need and ideas for play:

A bottle of bubbles with a wand and paper towels/dry cloth so you can dry hands/surfaces

Ideas for play: 1) Free play - allow child to blow bubbles, or you blow bubbles for them to pop. 2) Blow bubbles to certain things, Ex: onto body parts or to different toys, or in different directions (up, down, etc.)

SUGGESTED TARGET WORDS:

Nouns (names of things): bubbles Core Words: help, more, see, want, yes, no, again, go, gone, etc.

Verbs (action words): open, blow, dip (in), etc.

Symbolic sounds and Exclamatory words (play sounds and words): oo, ahh, wow, yay, yuck, pop, etc.

IDEAS/STRATEGIES:

-Naming/Commenting: Comment on what is happening during play, using simple words and phrases.

Show the child the bottle of bubbles, say/sign "open" and/or "bubbles."

When you dip the wand in, say "dip" or "dip in"

Say "ready, set, go!" or "blow" when you blow the bubbles.

Once you've blown the bubbles say "wow, bubbles," and "pop" as you pop the bubbles together.

When the bubbles have gone you can say "gone!" or "all gone!" or "you popped!"

If you have wet hands (from the bubble solution) you could show the child your hands and say "wet" or "sticky"

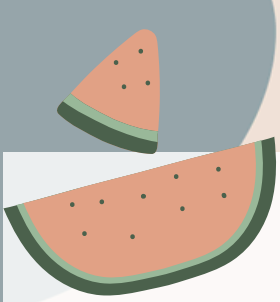
When the child shows that they want you to blow the bubbles again, you can say "more bubbles" or just "bubbles"

If you tried to blow bubbles and none came out, you could say "uh oh" or "try again"

-Communication Temptations: Bubbles are hard for young children to open and blow themselves, so they are an ideal communication temptation and can encourage the child to make a request. After you have blown the bubbles, screw the lid on tight, give them back to the child and wait. The child may attempt to open the bottle themselves, if they are unsuccessful they may hand the bubbles back to you for help; if so, they have just made a request. You can then say or sign the words that the child needs, such as "open" or "bubbles"

-Pausing: Before blowing the bubbles, hold the wand up to your mouth and wait. The child is likely to communicate in some way that they want you to blow the bubbles. They may use eye contact, a sound, a gesture, or a word. Once they have shown that they want you to blow the bubbles, you can say or sign the words that the child needs, such as "blow; go; bubbles" etc. If you have said "ready, set, go!" you can pause before you say "go" to see if the child will say it.

-Say it Again and Again: While naming/commenting, be sure to say the words again and again, so the child hears multiple repetitions of the words during play. Ex: "pop, pop, pop," or "pop the bubbles"



Toy Food

What you'll need and ideas for play:

Play foods, such as apple, banana, toast, milk, juice, cookies, etc.
Cup, plate, spoon, etc.

Ideas for play: 1) Set up a picnic (optional: with teddy bears and dolls). 2) Pretend to play restaurant. 3) Feed teddy bears and/or dolls. 4) Put the food in a large container of water and wash it.

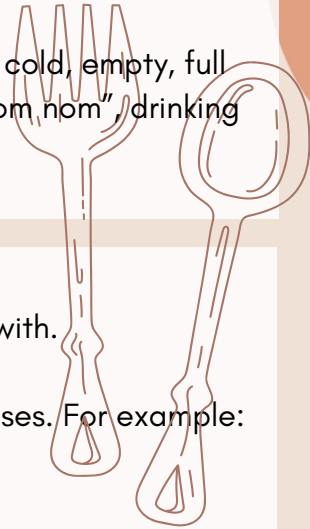
SUGGESTED TARGET WORDS:

Nouns (names of things): names of the foods, cup, plate, spoon, etc.

Verbs (action words): eat, drink, cook, stir, mix, give, etc. Concepts: in, out, on, off, hot, cold, empty, full

Symbolic sounds and Exclamatory words (play sounds and words): eating sounds, ex: "nom nom", drinking sounds, ex: "slurp", "ahh", yum, mmm, blowing sound for hot food, etc.

Core Words: help, more, want, yes, no, like, etc.



IDEAS/STRATEGIES:

-Naming: Name the items/food the child gives you or that they are playing with.

-Commenting: Comment on what is happening during play, using simple words and phrases. For example:

When child is making a drink: "pour the milk", "stir, stir, stir"

When child gives you some food, you could say "mmm, yummy apple"

-Following their Lead: Watch the child's actions/play with the food. Comment on, and copy, their actions/play. Ex: If child is cooking food, you can pretend that it's hot. If child is cutting the food, you could cut some too, etc.

-Say it Again and Again: While naming/commenting, be sure to say the words again and again, so the child hears multiple repetitions of the words during play. Ex: "stir", "stir the tea", "stir, stir, stir"

-Copy and Add: Repeat what the child has said and add another word so they hear how to make their attempts at talking longer. Ex: Child: "tea" Adult: "hot tea". Show the child how to expand their play too.

Ex: putting toy food on a plate and serving it to a teddy bear/doll.

-Choices: You can take turns making food for each other. When making food for child, you can offer them a choice, ex: "apple or banana?" Show them the two choices as you say them. The child may make a choice by pointing, taking, vocalizing, signing, or using words. Repeat their choice back clearly, so they hear the words needed.

-Reduce Questions: Rather than asking the child "What have you made?", you can name the food/drink items that they have given you. Try to re-phrase any questions into a comment. Ex: Instead of "Have you made me a coffee?", you can say "yum, coffee."

-Linguistic Mapping: Use words that support the child's non-verbal actions. Ex: If the child is waving their hand by their mouth, you could say "it's hot!". If the child rubs their tummy after pretending to take a bite of food, you could say "mmm, yummy!" or "nice cookie", etc.

Language Strategies

Naming:

Do lots of naming of target words during play so that the child hears the names often. While children are learning language it is better to give them the names of words (vs. asking "What's that?"), as they may not have the language needed to respond.

Commenting:

Talking about what you and/or the child are doing, looking at, playing with, touching, eating, etc. Use short phrases and repeat key words. There is no expectation that the child will respond or copy you; the focus is for them to hear lots of language to accompany their play/actions.

Choices:

Offering choices gives your child a reason and opportunity to interact and communicate to get their needs and wants met. Offer them a choices of two things, make the choices visual where possible. They may point, reach, vocalize, sign or use words to make their choice. Repeat their choice back to them.

Pausing:

Pause in anticipation to give the child time to listen, understand what was asked, and to respond. Show them you are waiting by looking expectantly for a reply. If they do not respond, you can say the words you wanted them to say.

Following their Lead:

Talk and play with the things the child is playing with/looking at. Respond to their interactions and interests. Model/copy their actions, words, or sounds. This can support the child's attention and their interaction and language skills.

Copy and Add:

Repeat back what the child has said and add another word so that they hear how to make their attempts at talking longer.

Use Gestures:

Use gestures naturally while talking; this can help the child understand what you are saying. They may begin using the gesture before they begin using spoken words. Be sure to use the gesture and word at the same time.

Say it Again and Again:

Children learn best with repetition; repeat key words over and over again during play, so they learn to associate that word with the object/action.

Reducing Questions:

As adults we use questions to see what children know, but this is difficult for children who are learning to talk. It is better to add a comment to explain what is happening, so they have the opportunity to hear and learn new words.

Communication Temptations:

Sometimes children need a reason/opportunity to communicate. By putting desired items out of reach or in a 'hard to open' box, you've created an opportunity for them to communicate with you and ask for help.

Verbal Routines:

Verbal routines are words and phrases that become predictable because you say them the same way every time you do the same activity.

Ex: "1, 2, 3; ready, set go"

"Interpreting":

This strategy is where you say what the child would, if they could.