**Understanding single (one) and two key words**

The child is currently developing their understanding of **single words**. They still rely heavily on non-verbal cues from the speaker e.g. pointing.

When modelling language it is important to:

* Use **short, simple**sentences containing only 1-2 words (e.g. ball, catch ball, sit down etc).
* **Emphasise**the key word and repeat it as often as possible – a child needs to hear words lots of times to understand their meaning.
* Leave **pauses**to give them a chance to respond. It is important to observe, wait and then listen rather than talking continuously.
* Use **non-verbal cues** (such as pointing, reaching and looking) to help the child understand in everyday situations.
* Respond to the child’s non-verbal communication (e.g. reaching). For example, if they reach for a toy say "want train" and if they push it away say "finished…. no more train". Use simple words that you feel that they would use if they could.
* Engage in lots of **shared play** to support the child’s understanding daily.
* Incorporate key early words such as **hello/bye, go, more, gone, stop, familiar names** (e.g. mummy, daddy), **common objects** (e.g. car, ball, bubbles).
* Incorporate **symbolic sounds** into play, e.g. brum brum, animal noises, eating noises.

The following advice and activities are aimed at helping the child **progress** from understanding **one information carrying word to understanding two information carrying words**.

Children often try to copy language they hear. They may start to imitate and use one word or put two words together in a simple phrase.

**General Advice**

* **Gain the child’s full attention** before giving an instruction.
* Use words the child already knows when moving from one word level to two word level activities.
* Activities should be completed **little and often**.
* Start by using **real objects or people**, then move onto using pictures or photos.
* Gather together objects that will be useful for working on **prepositions** eg. small box, bag, toy animals, action figures, pretend food, toy furniture.
* Use objects that are **motivating** for the child e.g. their favourite toys/interests
* Use **choices** to help the child use prepositions initially e.g. Do you want Emma’s coat or John’s jumper?” This provides a good model for the child to copy.
* Make the activities **fun** and use them during the **daily**
* The child should be able to complete all activities at this level before they are ready to progress to the next level.
* Remember to **give the child a turn** to give instructions to practice their expressive skills.

Working at 2KWL means there are two words in a sentence that must be understood for the child to follow the instruction accurately.

To test that they have understood properly, **there must be a choice for each key word**, for example teddy **or** dolly, chair **or** table.

* ‘Put teddy on the chair’ when there is a choice of teddy *or* dolly and chair *or* table
* ‘Wash teddy’s ears’ when there is a choice of teddy or dolly, and different body parts
* ‘Brush/wash teddy’ when there is a choice of different actions and different toys
* ‘Give the apple to teddy’ when there is a choice of different objects and different toys

There are lots of different ways that two words can go together. Try activities from each of the sections to support learning about two key words.

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| Possession | **Using a dolly, a teddy and a sponge, ask the child to wash different parts of the toys:**e.g. ‘Wash teddy’s feet’, ‘Wash dolly’s face’ **Collect a few items of clothes from member of the household, e.g. Dad’s sock, Brother’s jumper, Mum’s shoe, Auntie’s coat. Put these items in a pile. Take turn at finding a specified item of clothing and returning it to the owner:**e.g. “Find Mummy’s shoe”, “Find Iqra’s jumper” **Using a range of toy vehicles, ask the child to point to different parts of these.**e.g. ‘Show me the train’s wheels’, ‘Where are the bus’ windows’? **Using two soft toys, e.g. bear/cat/dog and some plain white stickers. Tell the child that the toys have been playing outside and hurt themselves and they need plasters putting on the bits they have hurt.**e.g. “On bear’s hand”, “On cat’s leg”, “On cat’s face” |
|  **Person and Action** |  **Using a dolly, a teddy and objects such as a cup, bed, chair, toy food, ball etc.**e.g. Make dolly drink’, ‘Make teddy kick’ ‘Make dolly sleep’ **Using pictures of people doing different actions. Put out four pictures and take it in turns to find a particular picture.**e.g. “Find Mummy eating”, “Find baby crying” |
|  **Absence / Disappearance** |  **You need objects with a very obvious part missing e.g. one car with no wheels, one normal car.**e.g. ‘Which one has no wheels?’, ‘Which one has no mouth?’ |
|  **Action to a Place** |  **Using a teddy and a chair, table, bed.**e.g. ‘Make teddy dance on the chair’, ‘Make teddy sit on the bed’, ‘Make teddy stand on the table’ **Playing activity games**e.g. ‘Jump in the hoop’, ‘Crawl to the chair’, ‘Walk to the table’ **Make up stories using small world toys such as a toy farm with sheep**e.g. ‘Make sheep walk to the tractor’, ‘Make sheep jump to the pond’ |
|  **Object and Person** |  **Using a teddy and a dolly and a selection of foods, give instructions such as;**e.g. ‘Give the apple to teddy’, ‘Give the banana to dolly’ **You will need two boxes with different animal faces drawn / stuck on to them. Cut out the mouths so that the child can post pictures through. You will need pictures of food. Give instructions to the child to feed the animals:**e.g. ‘Give the milk to cat’, ‘Give the apple to the dog’ **Ask the child to help give things out in class and in small group activities.**e.g. ‘Give Emma a pencil’, ‘Give James a book’. |
|  **Object and Place** |  **You will need a variety of everyday objects (e.g. ball, spoon and key) and a range of containers e.g. box, bucket and pan.**e.g. ‘Put the ball in the box’, ‘Put the spoon in the bag’ **Put a table and chair in front of the child and place a teddy and dolly near them.**e.g. ‘Put the teddy on the chair’, ‘Put dolly on the table’ **Ask the child to help you to tidy up.**e.g. ’Put the pencil on the desk’, ‘Put the book on the table’ |
|  **Action on Object** |  **You need a ball, plastic bottle, beanbag, etc.**e.g. ‘Throw the ball’, ‘Kick the bottle’, ‘Throw the beanbag’ **You need a sponge, a tea towel and a cup, plate, knife, fork.**e.g. ‘Wash the cup’, ‘Dry the knife’, ‘Wash the knife’ **You need a teddy, a dolly and two objects that you can perform actions with, e.g. a brush and a sponge.**e.g.     ‘Brush teddy’, ‘Wash dolly’, ‘Wash teddy’ |

Understanding builds up step by step, so if your child can comfortably understand one key word at a time, we would try to develop their understanding to two key words, and so on. It is also important to reinforce understanding by adding more words at the level that your child can already understand.