



# LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

## ACTIVITY IDEAS



### Babies



#### **Read a book every day:**

Point to the pictures as you read and engaging with them by changing your voice for different characters. You may also allow your little one to turn the pictures. Reading aloud helps your baby's vocabulary grow as they have many chances to hear new words in different story books.

#### **Shake the bottle:**

Find an empty water bottle and fill it halfway with rice/beans or sago. Make sure the lid is on tight. Get your baby to shake the bottle while singing their favourite songs.

#### **Play copy 'cat' (or copy baby):**

Copying your baby and watching them can be lots of fun and rather funny. Watch your little one for a few seconds and then copy the sounds your baby makes. Once they have had a turn you go and make a few funny sounds try and encourage them to now copy you.

#### **Play peek-a-boo with your baby:**

This simple game is such good practice for how to have a conversation later when they are older. Try hiding behind a book, a pillow or a scarf. You can also play peek-a-boo by holding your baby in front of a mirror and then moving away from your reflection. Move back in front of the mirror and say, "peek-a-boo!"

#### **Baby animal sounds:**

Find 3 pieces of paper and draw 3 different types of animals. Allow your baby to paint their animal pictures. Once your pictures are dry you can teach your baby the sounds each animal makes, if you feel super adventurous you can even make up a story using your animal pictures.



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### Toddlers



#### Make a tin telephone:

Use 2 tins and a length of string. Punch a hole in the bottom of each tin, thread the string from the bottom of the hole and tie a knot on the inside of each tin. Viola, you have a telephone. 'Phone' your toddler and have a chat! Teach them how to say things like 'hello', 'who there' and 'bye'. Doing this activity regularly can help your toddler improve their speaking skills. Let your toddler 'personalise' their phone.

#### Make an instrument from your recycling:

Once your instrument is made you can sing songs and rhymes and dance around the room together.

#### Make a photo album:

Allow your toddler to help you glue photos of themselves and the important people in their life. See if your toddler can name the people. They will love seeing pictures of the people they love and hearing you talk about them. (Use magazines if you don't have a printer.)

#### Create a story basket:

Ask your toddler to find their favourite teddy, a snack, piece of clothing or any random objects you may have around the house. Put all your objects into a wash basket or box, then make up a story with the objects your toddler has collected. Your story should have a beginning, middle and end, Be creative.

#### Treasure hunt:

Find a bucket or a toy box and allow your toddler to throw a bunch of toys in it. Close your eyes and go on a "treasure hunt." If you have a sandbox, bury the toys in the sand and then allow your toddler to find them. As you and your child pull the toys out of the box, name them and say something about them. For example, if you pull out a doll...say "doll, I found the little doll!"



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### Big kids



**Nanny 'n me**  
growing together

#### Make a Letter collage:

Choose a 'letter of the day'. Give your child a magazine or newspaper and ask them to look for the letter and circle it with a khoki. Let your child cut out the letters on the khoki lines (tear out the page to make cutting easier) and create a collage. Be sure to sound out the letters often. For writers, make a list of all the words they can think of that starts with that letter. (Do this with word ending sounds as well) For pre-writers, let them hunt for items/toys around the house that start with that letter. (Top tip: Clap the syllables of the words you come up with.)

#### Make story stones:

Collect stones in your garden. Draw elements of a familiar story and stick them onto the stones. (Stories with repeated phrases work really well for this. E.G Goldilocks or the three little pigs) When your stones are complete, place them in a basket and let your child use them to retell the story. Encourage your child to make more stones and make up their own story. You can also make up a story as a family. Allow each person to pick up one stone at a time and add one sentence to the story until all the stones are finished. Try create a 'complete' story with a beginning, middle and end.

#### Play 'broken telephone' and Simon Says:

Both these simple games encourage attention, active listening, thinking, speaking clearly and response. (These are all language skills your child should be developing around this age.)

#### 'Tell back':

Read a short story, or part of a story (not more than 3min). Explain you will read the story only once and your child must then 'tell back', in their own words, what was read. This will encourage active listening, attention, thinking, sequencing, etc. Do not repeat the story and choose a different story each time.