

EARLY WORDS

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO EARLY WORDS

General Points

- Early words are learned through copying and repetition. (**Children need to hear a word many times and in many situations before they fully understand its meaning**)
- The words listed below are a few of the most commonly learned first words. You may choose one or two of the words to work on for a week, or month or as long as is necessary for your child. The words should be used in short simple sentences wherever possible, not on their own.
- Most of the words are best learnt through spontaneous use during everyday activities. Additional games and activities can be played to reinforce understanding of some of these words.
- The ideas below demonstrate how individual words can be used repetitively and in different ways.

Hints on Working with Early Words

- Choose a word to work on (your 'target' word).
- Choose one toy or activity that will encourage the use of the word
- Play with the toy several different ways, using simple sentences and much repetition of the same word. (**It is important for your child to hear the same word as many times as possible and in many different situations**).
- **Making games and activities as exciting and interesting as possible will encourage your child to use the word.**
- **Give your child time to talk. Copy or extend any words he attempts and praise all efforts.**

This resource has been provided as part of your child's Speech Therapy service plan. Please contact the therapist if you have any questions.

LIST OF EARLY WORDS



Familiar Names

Mommy
Daddy
Own Name
Man
Boy
Baby



Common Words

Car
Ball
Dog
Cat
Bird
Fish
Shoe
Bag



Social Words

Hello
Bye Bye
Please
Thank You
More
No
Again

Action Words

Go
Fall
Gone
Up
Stop
Walk
Push
Pull
Wash
Drink

Describing Words

Big
Small
Hot
Cold
Wet

Symbolic Words

Moo
Beep beep
Choo choo
Bang



Pronouns

Me
Mine
You
Yours



These are suggestions to help to get you started. Please speak with your SLP for more ideas.

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Familiar Names

MOMMY, DADDY AND OWN NAME

- Turn-taking games – throw ball to Mommy, Daddy and your child. Take turns to blow bubbles and share fruit snacks.
- Magazine pictures – find picture of Mommy, Daddy and a child, then sort them into different boxes.
- Photographs – take photographs of the family and close friends and stick them into a book, writing the names underneath. Look at the book frequently and say the names.
- Toy people and dolls. Match them to pictures or real people
- Glove or finger puppets – play with man, lady, boy and girl puppets or draw them on your fingers. Make a lift-the-flap house and draw people looking out of the windows.
- Laundry – sort the laundry naming items as Daddy's, Mommy's, child's name.

MAN

- Wooden “men” in a bus or car – give your child one “man” at a time, expecting an attempt at the word “man”.
- Play people – hide toy “men” in pots or containers, say, “What’s in here? – a man!”.
- Pop-up rocket – wait for your child to ask for the spaceman to put at the top of the rocket. Look for the man together after the rocket has “taken off”.
- Build a tower several times and put a “man” on top each time.
- Encourage your child to ask for the “man”.

Describing Words

HOT/COLD

- These activities all offer opportunities for using the words “hot” and “cold”; making Jell-O, tea, ice cubes and popsicles.



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WET

- Water play
- Washing doll's clothes
- Hanging out the washing
- Spilling a drink (not on purpose!)
- Wet diapers (make use of all situations for language learning!)

Common Objects**CAR**

- A Toy garage (you could make your own from a cardboard box)
- Sort cars into colours, size and shapes
- Make a car from lego blocks
- Cut out magazine pictures of cars
- Roll cars down a slope, expecting your child to attempt "car" before rolling it down

**BALL**

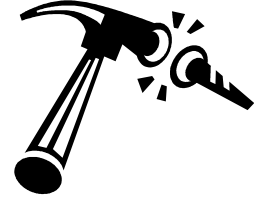
- Blow up a beach ball
- Play with bowling pins and a ball
- Make a plasticine or play dough ball
- Blow ping pong Balls
- Roll balls back and forth

**Pronouns****MINE/YOURS**

- Picture cards – share cards using appropriate vocabulary: "This is yours / mine"
- Lotto / matching games – match the cards and talk about who each card belongs to: "Is this yours? No, it's mine"
- Sharing toys or treats
- Tea Party with tea set – give out and match different color cups and saucers
- Threading beads – each person can choose a different color to make a necklace; "That's mine, it's a red one", "Here's a blue one, this is yours".

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Symbolic words



BANG

- Knock-a-block – bang blocks into holes. Use appropriate words whenever possible
- Hammer and pegs or hammer and nail set
- Bang two blocks together
- Bang a drum

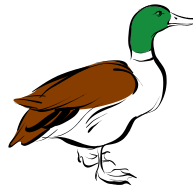
BEEP BEEP

- Push a car along the table or floor, saying “beep, beep”
- Make the car disappear into a hole in a box
- Hide the car under a container and push it along
- Make a paper road for cars
- Push the car along your child’s arm



QUACK QUACK

- Play with plastic ducks on the water saying “quack quack”
- Make a cardboard duck on a stick puppet and make it mop up from under a table
- Feed the ducks at a local park



Social Words

HELLO – BYE BYE

- Toy telephone – talk into the receiver & say "hello/Bye bye”
- Glove Puppets – imaginary play, make the puppets wave “Hello” and “Bye bye”
- Peek-a-boo games – hiding and re-appearing
- Mirror play – look in the mirror and say “Hello / Bye bye”
- Jack-in-the-box – say “Hello” as Jack-in-the-box comes up and “Bye bye” as he goes down.

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MORE

- Play dough, food and drink – give a little bit at a time so that your child is likely to ask for more
- Bubbles – encourage your child to say “more” before blowing bubbles again
- Blocks – give your child one block to build a tower and wait for an attempt at “more” before giving him the next one
- Beach ball or balloon – blow them up a bit at a time, stop and allow your child time to ask for more before continuing
- Piggy Bank – put toy money into the piggy bank and give your child one coin at a time.

NO

- Shape sorter – pretend to get it wrong (put the wrong colours or shapes in the hole) Encourage your child to say “no”
- Inset puzzles – try the same activity again
- Hiding games – hide a small object in one hand. Your child should guess which hand it is in by pointing. Say: “Which hand is it in – this one or that one?” “No, it’s not in there”
- Is it Spot the dog?” No, it’s the lion

AGAIN

Carry out an activity one and wait for your child to say, “again” before repeating. Try some of these activities:

- Pop-up toy or Wind-up toy
- Building and knocking down towers
- Tickling games
- Letting air burst out of a balloon
- Bubbles

**Action Words****STOP**

- Make use of opportunities to do this when the movements or music of the following toys stop: wind it only a bit so there are many opportunities for “stop”
 - Toy recorder player / tape recorder
 - Wind-up musical toy
 - Cars and trucks



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(ALL) GONE

- Putting toys into a box with a hole in the top
- Hiding games – cover objects with a scarf or under a pot
- Finger puppets – hid them behind your back
- Roll a ball across the table and into a can or box

UP

- Toy slide or ladder and a man – make the man move up every time your child says “up”
- Pop-up rocket – encourage an attempt at “up” before your child presses the button
- Lift your child up – wait for your child to attempt to say “up” before you lift him up
- Copying games – up and down: standing up / sitting down, arms up / arms down

