Learning to Combine Words
As children learn more words, they begin to combine words to describe what they see, hear, taste, touch, and smell.

What to do and say
♦ play with toys that involve actions
  • talk about what your child does

♦ use props (objects used in the story) and describe actions in storybooks

♦ continue talking about actions you and your child do

♦ take your child places
  • store
  • park
  • grandparents
  • zoo

♦ help your child gather items
  Say: We need a bowl.
  We need milk
  Where’s the cereal?

♦ expand your child’s sentences
  • add size, color, and number words (big, red, two)

♦ use open-ended questions
  • Tell me about it.
  • What did you see?
  • Where will we go?

♦ use positive words often
  • You are such a good helper
  • Oh, how nice you look.
  • Good morning, sunshine
Early Verbal

Language Activity #15

Talk During Dressing

Help your child understand and use new words while dressing or taking a bath.

What to do and say

♦ allow your child to choose what he or she wants to wear
  • limit to 2 choices
  • describe choices by color, style
  • ask your child to get his/her blue shorts, shirt, shoes, etc.

♦ talk about actions
  • Ready to zip.
  • Put your arm in.
  • Now we button.
  • Now we tie.

♦ give two directions to follow
  • Find your blue socks and red shoes.
  • Bring your shirt and coat.

♦ sing nursery rhymes or make up rhymes about dressing
  • One, two, buckle my shoe.
  • Where oh where is my red shoe?
  • This is the way (we put on our shirt).
Early Verbal

**Language Activity #16**

**Talk During Play**

Children begin to combine actions in play and begin to talk about those actions. Help your child learn new ways to talk about his or her play.

**Toy selection**
- choose toys that represent everyday actions
  - cooking
  - cleaning
  - driving
  - building
  - climbing
- give your child old household items or discarded items for play
  - brooms and dusters
  - pots and pans
  - boards (sanded smooth)
  - large cardboard boxes

**What to say**
- play beside your child to model actions and words
  - I'm climbing high
  - I'm making cookies.
- talk about your child’s actions
  - You’re cooking
  - Look at you clean.
  - You’re building a house.
  - You’re crawling in the cave.
- ask a variety of questions
  - What are you doing?
  - Will you drive or walk?
  - What now?
Early Verbal

Language Activity #17

Talk During Reading
Children learn about printed words by hearing and talking about stories everyday

Book Selection
♦ choose books that show everyday events or familiar objects, animals, etc.
  • eating
  • playing
  • reading
  • bathing
  • animals
  • cars
  • buildings (barns, houses, stores)
♦ help your child choose books at the library or store
♦ let your child choose the book he or she wants to hear

Book Use
♦ read the same book every day
♦ have a regular reading time
♦ talk about the pictures before, during, and after reading
♦ let your child tell you what he or she likes, sees, or knows
♦ use objects to act out parts of the story
  Example:
  • Use toy cars to roll across the page
  • Use combs or brushes to comb the hair of characters in the story
Early Verbal

Language Activity #18

Talk During Eating

Mealtime is a great time to help your child learn to combine words.

What to Do and Say

♦ allow your child to help fix meals and snacks
  - wash vegetables
  - make a sandwich
  - mix cookie dough

♦ help your child to set the table
  - One plate for Mommy.
  - One spoon here.
  - How many cups do we need?

♦ model table manners
  - Please pass the ____?
  - Would you like some ____?
  - Thank you.

♦ expand your child’s words
  - Juice. “More juice?”
  - Eat. “Yes, it’s time to eat.”

♦ repeat or restate your child’s words
  - Juice. “Yes, juice?”
  - Eee. “Eat.”

♦ make mealtime fun and enjoyable
  - create faces, shapes, animals with sandwiches and snacks
  - make a snack you read about in your child’s favorite storybook
  - talk about the color, size, shape of your food
  - use words to describe how foods taste: good, yummy, delicious, etc.

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Talk During Writing

Children begin leaving their mark in many places. Model writing for your child and help your child learn that his or her marks have meaning.

What to Do and Say

♦ write with your child often

♦ talk as you model writing
  Examples:
  • I’m writing to ______. I’m telling her, I miss you. When are you coming?
  • I’m writing my ABCs - A - B - C.

♦ ask your child to tell you what he or she is writing
  Examples:
  • Who is your letter for?
  • What did you write?
  • What does your letter say?

♦ comment on your child’s writing
  Examples:
  • (point) That mark says your name.
  • That looks like a heart.

♦ let your child help make grocery / shopping lists
  • have your child tell you one or two things to put on the list
  • help your child find pictures (coupons, ads) to glue on the list
Early Verbal

Language Activity #20

Learning Math Language

Math is a natural part of a toddler's world. Help your child learn new math words throughout the day.

What to Do and Say

♦ count objects
  • at the store (1, 2, 3, 4 carrots)
  • during cooking (1, 2, 3, cups)
  • setting the table (1, 2 spoons)

♦ sort objects
  • doing laundry (red clothes here)
  • picking up toys (cars in here, puzzles on the shelf, etc.)
  • playing with a shape box (circle, square)

♦ talk about patterns
  • stacking blocks (circle, square, circle, square)
  • planting (red flower, blue flower, red flower)

♦ talk about size
  • big and little
  • long and short

♦ talk about quantity
  • We need just one.
  • Now we need more.
  • Look how many.

♦ talk about numerals
  • Oh look. That's a one.
  • See that three.
  • A two, that's how old you are.