

HIAS HOME LEARNING RESOURCE

Promoting Talk at Home

A resource to support communication and develop pupils' spoken language

HIAS English team
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Final version

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Overview

Home learning is challenging in so many ways but one of the most important things you can do, is keep your children talking!

Spoken Language is the foundation for becoming an effective reader and writer and it is crucial that children develop into effective communicators. To support this, we have devised some short speaking and listening tasks, activities and games that we believe will be accessible to parents and all children.

Feel free to adopt and adapt these as you wish or evolve our ideas in whatever way works for your children. For example, you could allow children choice from a 'pick and mix' of activities, or just integrate some of the spoken language games into your everyday lives.

The beauty of these tasks is that most of them can be carried out at any point throughout the day: at the dinner table, on a walk, at bath time etc....

<p style="text-align: center;">Trust Walk</p> <p>This is a game of trust, that requires very clear spoken instruction. Take it in turns for children (and adults) to wear the blindfold and follow the directions you are given, around the garden/house/park/local woods. This game reinforces the use of commands, time related vocabulary and prepositions, eg Next, take three steps to the right, around the tree.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">I Spy</p> <p>Instead of saying what the object begins with, describe the object, eg “I spy something that we can eat, it’s long and orange and when you bite it, it’s crunchy.”</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Barrier Games</p> <p>Sit back to back, one person draws a picture, or builds an object out of Lego, or selects a shape etc...This person then has to describe and explain what they’ve drawn or made by giving verbal descriptions, eg I’d like you to draw a large square in the middle of your page.... The second person must draw exactly as they describe. When the instructions have finished, turn round and compare results!</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">One Word Story</p> <p>This game can be fun and silly! It doesn’t matter how many people you have to play it. Take it in turns to say one word at a time, each new word must build on what the previous person has said so that it makes sense. The story can end up going in all sorts of directions!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Family Quiz</p> <p>Ask open ‘Tell me’ questions rather than questions that require just a ‘yes/no’ response, eg Tell me about your earliest memory.... Tell me about your favourite food.... Tell me about your favourite TV programme... Tell me something I don’t know about you...</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Daisy Chain Sentences</p> <p>The rule of this game, is that whatever the sentence ends with, must begin the new sentence, eg Today it was sunny outside....Outside, the children played on the trampoline....The trampoline is covered in leaves...Leaves fall in Autumn....</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Scavenger Hunt</p> <p>This game is active and gets children listening carefully to instructions and supports comprehension. To add an element of fun, you could create a spinning wheel and use a stopwatch. The children spin the arrow and whatever it lands on they have to follow the instruction given, eg Find me a....pillow, Do.....ten star jumps, Hide.....in the bathroom, Collect.....three items from your bedroom</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Charades</p> <p>A good way of developing children’s vocabulary. Act out an action, eg swimming, digging, dancing, jumping and the children have to guess!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Hide & Seek</p> <p>A good way to teach children prepositions! Hide a ribbon, object or a toy. Ask the children to hunt for it (in the house or in the garden) you can use the language of ‘cold’ ‘colder’ ‘warm’ warmer’ ‘hot’ ‘hotter’ to describe how close the children are to finding the item. Whoever finds the item has to explain where it was hidden, eg My teddy bear was under the flowerpot.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">What if...?</p> <p>Ask ‘What if’ questions to encourage children to use their imaginations, eg what if the sky was red? What if there were no trees? What if dogs had 6 legs? What if the internet didn’t exist? What if you were invisible? What if you could fly?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Would you rather...?</p> <p>Another game that encourages children’s imagination to run wild, as well as make choices and give reasoned responses! Would you rather fly to the moon in a bathtub or on the back of a horse? Would you rather swim with mermaids or fly with dragons?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Odd One Out</p> <p>The beauty of this game is that there’s no right or wrong answer – it’s designed to get children thinking, disagreeing and talking! You can use pictures, objects or just list three items verbally, eg Which is the odd one out..... A banana, an orange or a carrot?</p>

<p>Articulate!</p> <p>Select a relevant and engaging topic of interest to your children: animals, transport, dinosaurs. Write a list of key topic words relating to the chosen topic or draw simple associated pictures on post-it notes or paper to make word cards. Between you, take on the roles of articulator, guesser and timer! The articulator must select a topic card and explain and describe what this is in their own words, without saying the word written on the card/post-it. The rest of the team must guess the word from the descriptions. How many words can they guess within a minute? Keep score. Then swap roles.</p>	<p>PMI</p> <p>Positive, Minus, Interesting</p> <p>Prepare a list of statements that will get children thinking and discussing:</p> <p><i>Cinderella should never have gone to the ball.</i></p> <p><i>Humans should have the powers of invisibility.</i></p> <p><i>All children should be able to fly.</i></p> <p><i>Playtime should be banned.</i></p> <p><i>Children should be allowed to eat sweets whenever they want.</i></p> <p>Discuss the positives and negatives of these proposals and any other interesting related points they come up with.</p>	<p>Four Corners</p> <p>Write the numbers 1 – 4 on a sheet of paper and stick them into four corners of a large room or garden. Everyone to start in the middle. One person is blindfolded and counts down from 10 and the children must creep as quietly as they can to a corner of their choice. The person in the middle will be listening carefully because they must select a corner where they think most children are. If you are stood in the corner the person in the middle calls out, you are out. Take it turns to play the person in the middle.</p>
<p>Ship Ahoy!</p> <p>This is an energetic, highly interactive listening game! Children to line up and imagine they are on a captain's ship! They must follow the captain's instructions to get things ship-shape, putting actions to follow each instruction, eg</p> <p><i>Climb the rigging!</i></p> <p><i>Scrub the decks!</i></p> <p><i>Port!</i></p> <p><i>Starboard!</i></p> <p><i>Walk the plank!</i></p>	<p>Grandmother's Footsteps</p> <p>Another traditional favourite. One person takes on the role of Grandma and faces a wall (or could be blindfolded), the rest of the children have to spread themselves as far away as possible around the room. Their job is to creep as silently and as slowly as possible towards Grandma without her hearing and turning. Grandma can turn as soon as she hears any moment or sound – then that child is out. Take it in turns to be Grandma.</p>	<p>Simon Says...</p> <p>A traditional listening game to get children following instructions!</p> <p>Simon says....</p> <p><i>Climb the stairs.</i></p> <p><i>Do ten star jumps.</i></p> <p><i>Sit on the floor.</i></p> <p><i>Run to the end of the garden.</i></p> <p><i>Do a rolly-polly.</i></p> <p><i>Take it in turns to give and carry out the orders!</i></p>
<p>Line of Continuum</p> <p>Stick a long piece of marking tape along the floor in a straight line. Write 'strongly agree' and 'strongly disagree' on a piece of paper at opposing ends of the line. Call out controversial statements for children to consider their views, then physically place themselves onto the line, eg</p> <p><i>Zoos should be banned.</i></p> <p><i>All cars should be powered by electricity.</i></p> <p><i>Children should rule the world.</i></p> <p><i>School dinners should always include ice-cream.</i></p> <p>If they're not sure they could stand away from the line, if they're indifferent they stand in the middle.</p>	<p>Unfortunately/Fortunately</p> <p>Tell a story between you that begins with these words alternately, eg</p> <p><i>Unfortunately, there's nothing for dinner.</i></p> <p><i>Fortunately, I'm not hungry.</i></p> <p><i>Unfortunately, we'll have to go to the supermarket.</i></p> <p><i>Fortunately, this will be the perfect opportunity for me to buy sweets and chocolate.</i></p> <p><i>Unfortunately, sweets and chocolate are banned.</i></p> <p><i>Fortunately, I can still have biscuits...</i></p>	<p>What's the time Mr Wolf?</p> <p>A traditional favourite that's great for listening. One person becomes the wolf and stands at the end of the garden. Children stand a reasonable distance away, behind the wolf and call out, 'What's the time Mr Wolf?' The wolf will answer, 'Two o'clock, Three O'clock etc...' The children then have to take the equivalent number of steps – Four o'clock would be four paces towards the wolf. The wolf remains with their back to the rest of the children as they continue to ask the time and make their way closer to the wolf. The wolf can answer the children with 'Dinner Time!' at any point, and then the children have to run away while the wolf tries to catch them. If a child manages to touch the wolf on their shoulder before they turn, then they get to play wolf next time.</p>

Big Chief, Little Chief	Jumping Beans!	Traffic Lights!
<p>Better in a larger group. Sit in a circle, select one person to be the guesser – they need to go outside of the room and wait while the Big Chief is selected within the group. The Big Chief must carry out repeated actions for the rest of the group to follow, eg clapping your hands, clicking your fingers, patting your head. Every now and again, the Big Chief will change the action, and everyone else must follow suit. The guesser must work out who the Big Chief is.</p>	<p>Each type of bean called out has a particular action that the children do (this is also a good one to do on the trampoline):</p> <p><i>Broad bean – stretch as far and as wide as you can</i></p> <p><i>Runner bean – Run on the spot</i></p> <p><i>String bean – Reach as tall and high as you can</i></p> <p><i>Baked bean – curl up into a small ball</i></p> <p><i>Jellybean – Wobble your whole body</i></p> <p><i>French bean – say ‘ooh, la, la!’</i></p> <p><i>Frozen bean – Freeze like a statue or shiver</i></p>	<p>A great listening game that can be played with small or large numbers of children. Ask the children to spread out into a space and follow the orders:</p> <p><i>Red – stop/freeze</i> <i>Amber – walking</i> <i>Green – running</i> <i>Roundabout numbers – Roundabout 3 (children form a group of 3, link arms and go around in a circle), Roundabout 4, children get in groups of 4 and so on.</i></p>

HIAS English Team

The HIAS English team offer a wide range of high-quality services to support schools in improving outcomes for learners, including courses, bespoke consultancy and in-house training.

During the current school closures, we are still offering school support in a variety of ways such as video conferencing, phone calls and bespoke creation of resources remotely. Coming soon will be teacher training via virtual classrooms. We would be happy to discuss your needs.

For further details referring to English, please contact:

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For further details on the full range of services available please contact us using the following details:

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