

WORD builders



Tell Me More

This is an activity to do throughout the day. When your child says a word to identify an object, add new information to what he has said. For example, if he says, **My shoes** or **My truck** you say, **Those are your blue shoes** or **That is your shiny truck**. Add one new word at a time to help expand your child's language.

Your child learns to talk as he hears you talk. Adding details to your child's words will help him learn more words and how to speak.



Mail is Here!

Make an event out of getting the mail from the mailbox. As you sort through each piece of mail together, talk about what it is.

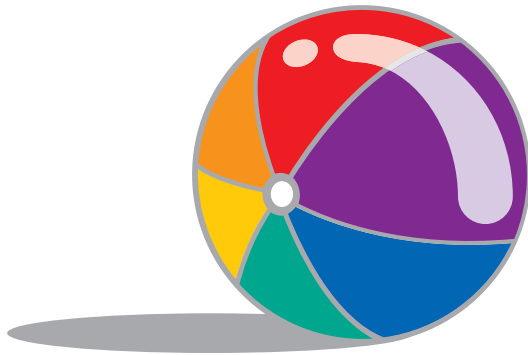
**This one is for Mommy;
it's from the phone company.
Do you like to talk on the phone?**

(Then, pretend to talk on the phone). Give your child the junk mail you do not want, saying:

This one is for Anna. Can you open it?

Let your child play with “her” mail and pretend to read it together. For a special treat, send a letter or card to your child so she has her own mail to open with you. Or help her send a card to a relative or friend. She can scribble-write and you write down her words on the card too.

Sorting through the mail with your toddler shows her there is value in written words and talking with her will teach her new words.



Fill in the Blanks

Read or tell a favorite story to your child. When you come to a place where you think he knows what will happen next, see if he can “fill in” the story. Ask questions to encourage him. For example, if you’re telling the story of the three little pigs, when you come to the part where the wolf is at the pig’s house, ask:

And then what did the wolf say?

After reading about the third pig, ask:

**What did the third pig use to
build her house? (Bricks!)**

Make sure your child has the words to respond to the questions you ask. You’ll be surprised at how accurately he can remember a story!

*Letting your child tell the story with you helps his memory skills,
and helps him learn new words.*



A Trip to the Library

Make a special date with your child to go to your local library. Many libraries have special “story-telling” time for kids, and most are open some evenings.

Find the children’s section in the library and ask where to find picture books. Your two year old will like books with lots of big, bright pictures or photographs and only a few words. Pick out some books together to read at the library. As you turn the pages, point to the pictures and name them. Asking questions helps your child with language skills, so try to think of questions for each page.

Where is the pig?

There it is!

What color is that balloon?

It’s red!

Try to find something in each book that is similar to your child’s life. For example:

**This child plays in a sandbox,
just like you do at the park!**

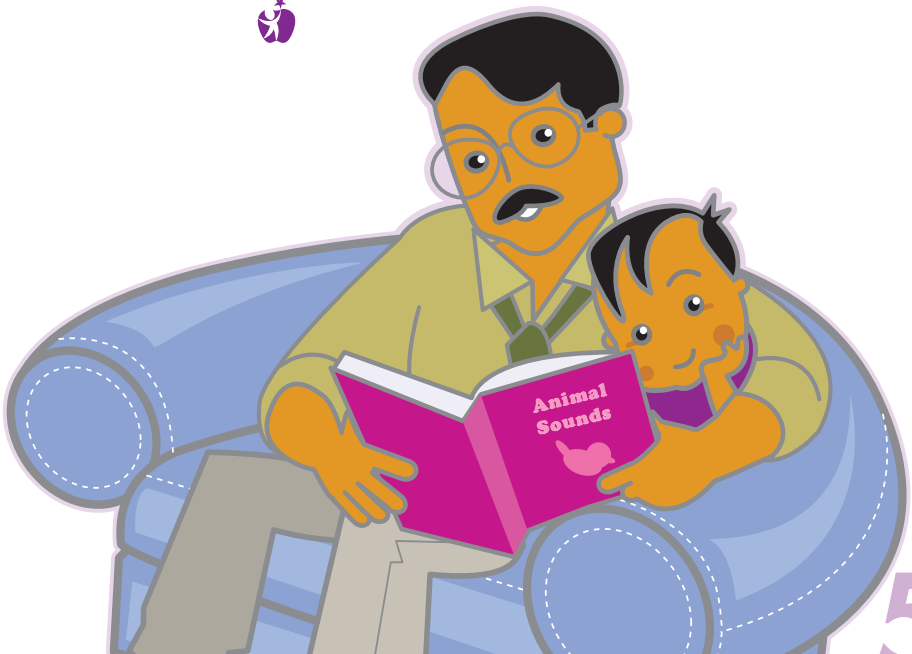
Looking at books and reading to your child will help him learn about words, language, reading, writing and listening.



Every Day Reading

Try reading to your child 15 minutes each day for a week. You can try it at the same time each day (like making it a part of bedtime), or create a special place where you read each time (a rocking chair, or a blanket with pillows on the floor). Perhaps offer a snack. Let your child sit on your lap as you look at books together. Don't be surprised if he likes to read the same book over and over. For even more fun with reading, pretend to be the characters in the book after you have read it. For example, if you read about a kitten, pretend to be kittens together, "meowing" and doing the actions from the book.

Your toddler is learning about words, language, reading, writing and listening. Reading with your child on your lap will make him feel special and loved.



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two year old

Go Grocery Shopping

When you're not in a hurry, use grocery shopping as a learning time. First, make a grocery list together. Let your child see you write the things you plan to buy, and say each item as you write it. Let your child add an item to the list, writing it on the list when he says it. As you do the shopping, talk about each item you select.

Here are the apples. There are so many colors of apples – red, green, yellow! Which kind do you like?

Describe what the different grocery store workers are doing.

Look, there is the man in charge of all the meat. He has lots of tools to cut meat for us. This lady puts all the groceries into bags for us. She works hard.

Making a shopping list together teaches your child that written words have value. Talking together about the grocery items at the store teaches him new words.



Learning Opposites

Go on a walk with your child around the neighborhood or around the house, looking for opposites. For example, help your child find a big leaf, and a small leaf. Or a smooth rock and a rough rock. In the house you can look for a big toy and a small toy. Or a cold drink and warm laundry. Do this four or five times, talking with your child about the items and how they are different.

Your child is learning new words and the meaning of opposites like big and small, cold and warm.





Make a Treasure Box

Kids love to collect things, so collect things with your child to teach him about nature and colors. First, decorate a box or staple pieces of paper together to make a special book. Take a walk outside and look for things that interest your child such as leaves, rocks, sticks, flowers, and grass. Let your child have fun exploring his world! Talk together about each of the items you collect.

What color is it? What is its shape? Can you smell it? Put the things you've collected into the box, or paste them into the book. You can also look through a magazine together and find things your child wants to put in the box or book. If your child likes the color orange, cut out all the orange things you can find and put them on a page of the book, with the word "orange" for a title. If your child likes animals, cut out pictures of animals and put them on one page or in the box. Have your child tell another family member about his "treasures."

Asking questions and talking together about each item will build your child's language.



Color Bingo

Take a sturdy piece of paper or cardboard and draw a chart on it with nine large squares – three across, and three down. Color each of the squares a different color, for example, one red, one blue, one yellow, one green, etc. (If you want to play, or you have other children who want to play, make more charts!) Look through a magazine with your child, and cut out a picture for each of the colors on your chart. For example, cut out a red apple, a black dog, etc. Cut out more pictures for more players. Try to find pictures that are small enough to fit onto your chart. If you want to make the pictures stronger, you and your child can glue them onto a piece of paper and then cut out the shapes. Once you have the pictures, put them all in a bowl. Give your child the chart with the colored squares. Let her take one of the pictures out of the bowl, and see if she can match it to the color on the chart. As you are playing this game, talk with your child about the names of the colors and the names of the pictures.

Your child is learning about the names of colors and other objects.



Read a Poem

Do you remember poems from your childhood? The rhythm, rhyming and humor of poems make them easy to remember and fun to say! Teach your toddler the rhymes from your childhood, or find a book of children's poems like Mother Goose Rhymes at the library or book store. Make up a tune and hand motions to help your child remember the words.

Learning about words – how they sound, their rhythm, and lilt – builds your child's knowledge of language.



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two year old

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