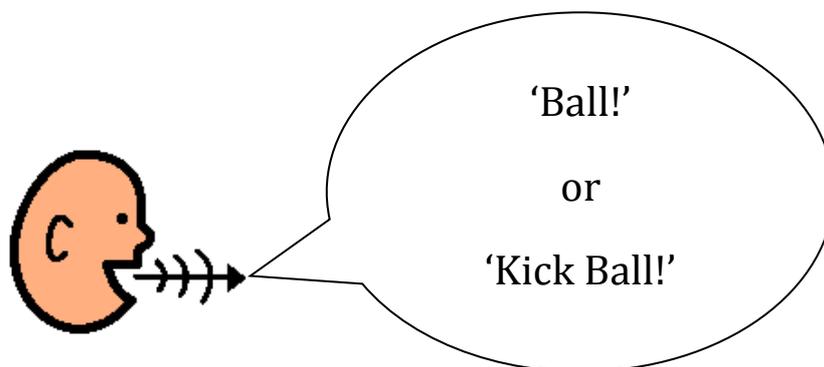


### Developing Language Skills – Modelling

#### *What is Modelling?*

- When an adult says the name of an action/object that a child is doing/looking at, they are providing a 'model'.
- Modelling is useful for helping children to learn new words.
- Children learn words by listening to the names of objects and actions that they hear adults and other children say.
- Some children find it hard to learn new words.
- They need to hear words lots of times before they can say them.
- You can help by using short sentences to talk about what your child is doing.
- In this way you will be providing lots of models.



#### Examples of modelling

An Adult says the name of an object/toy when:

1. It is given to a child,
2. The child picks it up,
3. The child looks at it or points to gain shared attention

#### 1. Object is given to the child

- The adult gives the child some banana.
- The adult says 'Banana'



2. The child picks up an object

- The child picks up a ball.
- The adult says 'Ball'



3. The child looks at or points to an object

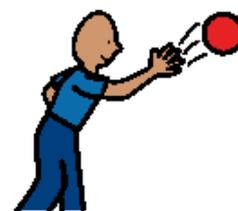
- The child looks at/points to a cup
- The adult says 'Cup'



Any sentence that does not contain the name of the object is not modelling the object, and later, how it is used in a phrase or sentence.

**Naming could also refer to an action:**

- For example, if a child throws the ball, the adult says 'Throw!' or 'Throw ball!'
- It is important to remember that if you ask 'What did you do?' you are not providing a model of 'throw' or 'ball'.



**These types of model can be used in many different situations:**

- Play situations
- Snack times
- Looking at a picture book etc.

The main point to remember is that modelling is about **giving** the child the right word or sentence rather than asking questions. So:

- Instead of 'What's that?' it is better to say 'spade'
- Instead of 'What's he doing?' it is better to say 'man digging'
- Instead of 'Where is he?' it is better to say 'in the garden'



**Extending**

- Children may be at the stage of using short phrases but not yet putting full sentences together
- It is therefore important to extend the child's phrases to show them how we would say it.
- This allows them to hear the difference between how they say it and we say it.
- For example, if your child says 'baby bed', the adult could then make the sentence either longer or more grammatically complex:
  - You could add an action word – 'baby **sleeping** in bed'
  - You could add a describing word – '**pink** baby bed'
  - You could add some grammar – 'baby's bed'
- You don't need to put any pressure on your child to copy

### Repeating and Emphasising

If your child says something which isn't quite right such as 'doing that book', repeating it back but emphasising the right word is helpful eg. 'reading that book, yes' (saying 'no, you need to say **reading**' isn't good modelling).

### Making Comments

- This is similar to the modelling examples described above
- But, making comments isn't a response to what a child *says* but a commentary on what the child *is doing* during play and any other situation.

### **For Example:**

- A child is playing in the water tray
- The adult watches him/her and provides a running commentary:
- 'pick up the jug....pour the water.....splash, splash.....wet hands.....' etc.
- None of these are instructions- they are what the child does, said as they are doing it.

This commentary technique can be used in any situation, for example:

- Outside - 'riding on the bike.....climbing up the ladder.....down the slide'
- During play - 'teddy eating apple, girl washing hands, cooking the dinner.'

### Use of books for giving commentary

You can also give commentary while looking through a picture book:

- Choose one with lots of action in it.
- Forget about reading it to the child.
- Just go through the pages and follow the child's interest - you don't need to say much yourself.
- You can occasionally point at something and perhaps say 'look' or 'oh' to encourage the child to make a comment.
- Child may say, for example, 'man'. You could expand this and say 'man walking' etc.

