



EARLY COMMUNICATION SKILLS

By Carol Read

HOW TO ENCOURAGE EARLY COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Give children lots of support and practice in naming things in English.
- Use simple chunks of repeated language in routines, activities and games so the children can start using them too.
- Encourage them to start interacting and taking turns with others.
- Use choral repetition to prepare older children for a short activity or role play. They practise taking turns to ask and answer questions.



3 EARLY COMMUNICATION SKILLS ACTIVITIES TO TRY WITH YOUR CLASSES

1 Weather routine

Look out of the window, hold up a flashcard and ask *Is it sunny today?* Ask the children to say with you: *No, it isn't.* Repeat with other flashcards. *Is it rainy? No, it isn't. / Is it windy? No, it isn't. / Is it cloudy? Yes, it is!* Ask older or more confident children to even lead the activity instead of you.

2 Categorising

Use your class puppet to demonstrate a conversation. For example, with a feely bag game ask the puppet: *What's in the bag, Mimi? Is it a banana?* (Mimi says) *Yes, it is!* Then take the object out of the bag and ask the children: *Is it a banana? Yes, it is! Mimi's right. Very good!* Repeat with other objects, for example, *Is it an apple? Yes, it is! / No, it isn't.*

3 Choral repetition

After watching a video of Sam and Anna asking Uncle Dan about food, say *Let's ask Uncle Dan about food!* Children ask questions with you in chorus, for example, *Do you like bread, Uncle Dan? Do you like eggs, Uncle Dan?* Children then ask you questions in chorus in the same way and you answer: *Yes, I do. / No, I don't* for each one.



TOP TIP: Give children lots of examples of language to copy but never oblige them to produce language until they are ready to do so.