



## *Playing: Balloons*

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You can't help but laugh and have fun together while playing with balloons. Use this opportunity to model the use of gestures, words and sentences as you blow, catch and pop balloons.

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- **Comment** and **label** as you play with balloons. Use action words and describing words to expand your child's language (see the Word/Concept Bank below). **Match** and **expand** to describe what you see and feel (*Child: "Balloon." Parent: "Throw the balloon to me."*).

- **Avoid anticipating.** Hand your child a balloon that needs inflating. Give your child a reason to communicate that she needs your help. **Wait** and then encourage your child to make a request using gestures, words or phrases. **Wait** and then **match** and **expand** (*Child: "Blow." Parent: "OK...blow up the balloon."*).

- **Do the unexpected.** Begin to blow the balloon up and then freeze or stop. **Wait** for your child to notice and then express what he wants. **Match** and **expand** his gestures or words and repeat to provide frequent language opportunities.

- **Ask good questions** to help your child participate in the play. You may try a **choice question** ("Do you want the balloon big or little? or "Do you want the green balloon or the blue balloon?") or a **closed-ended question** (Should I make the balloon hit the ceiling?").

- Your child may want to play with balloons in his own way. If your child wants to hide the balloon or put the balloons in a box, **follow his lead**. Use **comments** and **match** and **expand** to offer language support. Greater interest for the child leads to more gestures, words, signs or sentences.

### Word/Concept Bank

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| <b>Labels</b><br>Balloon, air, knot  | <b>Action Words</b><br>Want, blow, pop, tie, get, hold, touch, catch, throw, fly, find, look, open, close, boom |
| <b>Describing Words</b><br>Little, tiny, big, more, long, round, huge, colors, numbers | <b>Spatial Words</b><br>Up, down, under, over, next to, top, side   |
|  | <b>Social Words</b><br>My turn, your turn   |



## *Playing: Blocks*

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Build up your child's language skills as you create towers, houses or castles with blocks or other building toys.

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- **Comment** and **label** as you play with building materials. Use action words and describing words (see the Word/Concept Bank below). **Match** and **expand** to describe what you do and see (*Child*: "Big on top." *Parent*: "Yes. We'll put the big block on top of the house.").

- **Avoid anticipating**. Try to **wait** for your child to tell you what she wants to make or do. Try not to direct too much of the creative play. **Wait** and encourage your child to make a request using gestures, words or phrases. **Match** and **expand** (*Child*: "House." *Parent*: "OK. We'll make a house.").

-**Do the unexpected**. Put a block in an unexpected place or add another toy into the block area. **Wait** for your child to notice and tell you through gesture or words what you should do then use the **match** and **expand** technique (*Child*: "No teddy bear." *Parent*: "OK. Bye-bye teddy bear." ). Repeat often to provide frequent language opportunities.

- **Ask good questions** to help your child participate. Try a **choice question** ("Do you want the long block or the short block?") or a **closed-ended question** ("Who's going to live in your block house?").

- Your child may want to play with the blocks in his own way. If your child wants to push cars down a ramp made of blocks then **follow his lead**. Use **comments** and **match** and **expand** to offer language support ("Car goes down." "It's your turn then my turn."). Remember that greater interest in an activity leads to more language.

### Word/Concept Bank

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| <b>Labels</b><br>Blocks, door, window, roof , hole   | <b>Action Words</b><br>Want, need, get, hold, build, balance, roll, stack, put, give |
| <b>Describing Words</b><br>Little, tiny, big, huge, long, short, round, hard, wood, plastic, fence | <b>Spatial Words</b><br>Up, down, side, under, over, around, next to                 |
|  | <b>Social Words</b><br>My turn, your turn  |



## *Playing: Bubbles*

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As you blow and pop and watch bubbles float up and down, you can help your child practice using gestures, words and sentences to share ideas.

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- **Comment** and **label** as you play with bubbles. Use action words (want, blow, open, pop) and describing words (round, wet, slippery). **Match** and **expand** to describe what you see and feel (*Child*: “Bubble.” *Parent*: “It’s a big bubble.”).

- **Avoid anticipating.** If you hand your child the container with the cap on tight this will give your child a reason to communicate. **Wait** and encourage your child to make a request using gestures, words or phrases. **Match** and **expand** (*Child*: “Open.” *Parent*: “Open the bubbles.”). Repeat to provide numerous language opportunities.

-**Do the unexpected.** Stop or freeze in the middle of blowing a bubble. **Wait** for your child to notice and tell you through gesture or words what you should do (*Child*: Uses the sign for “More.” *Parent*: “Let’s blow more bubbles.”). Provide a model if needed. Repeat often to provide frequent language opportunities.

- **Ask good questions** to help your child participate. Try a **choice question** (“Should we pop the bubbles with our hands or our feet?”) or a **yes/no question** (“Do you want to blow more bubbles?”).

- Your child may want to play with the bubbles in his own way. If your child wants to feel the slippery liquid, try to **follow his lead**. Use **comments** and **match** and **expand** to offer language support (“Feels wet.” “Feels slippery.”). Remember that greater interest in an activity leads to more language.

### Word/Concept Bank

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| <b>Labels</b><br>Bubbles, lid, top, cap, wand  | <b>Action Words</b><br>Want, need, get, hold, touch, pop, blow, catch<br>open, close |
| <b>Describing Words</b><br>Little, tiny, big, more, wet, slippery, hard, soft,<br>huge, enormous | <b>Spatial Words</b><br>Up, down, side, under, over                                  |
|  | <b>Social Words</b><br>My turn, your turn  |



## Playing: Dress-Up

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The language opportunities are as wide as your imagination when your child dresses up as a fire fighter, a princess or a pilot.

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- **Comment** and **label** as you play. Use action words (want, tie, put on, zip) and describing words (beautiful, handsome, strong, bright, shiny). **Match** and **expand** to describe what you see and feel (*Child*: “Hat.” *Parent*: “Yes, a fire fighter wears a hat.”).

- **Avoid anticipating.** As you help your child put on a fancy dress, don’t automatically button or zip or snap. **Wait** and encourage your child to make a request using gestures, words or phrases. **Match** and **expand** (*Child*: “Mama.” *Parent*: “Mama can zip. Mama zips up the dress.”).

-**Do the unexpected.** Put the clothes on a doll or an adult. Put a hat on your shoulder. Put a necklace around your child’s ankle. Be creative. **Wait** for your child to request through gesture or words. Provide a model if needed. Repeat often to provide frequent language opportunities.

- **Ask good questions** to help your child participate. Try a **choice question** (“Do you want the fire hat or the police hat?”) or a **yes/no question** (“Do you want to tell Daddy about your outfit?”). Avoid repeating “What’s that?” too frequently or as your only question.

- Your child may want to play with dress up items in a unique way. **Follow his lead** as you use your imagination. Use **comments** and **match** and **expand** to offer language support. Remember that greater interest in an activity leads to more language.

### Word/Concept Bank

#### **Labels**

Dress, necklace, fire hat, sheriff , badge, police hat, radio, gloves, shoes, boots, scarf, wig

#### **Describing Words**

Soft, rough, pretty, big, little, tiny, beautiful, handsome

#### **Action Words**

Drive, fly, put out, climb, chase, run, build, check, listen, want, need, open, close, zip, button, put on, catch

#### **Spatial Words**

Up, down, side, under, over

#### **Social Words**

My turn, your turn



## *Playing: Modeling Clay*

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Clay provides a perfect opportunity to play with your child while you both stretch your imaginations and your language skills.

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- **Comment** and **label** as you create. Use action words, describing words, and spatial words to make your comments more exciting (see the Word/Concept Bank below). **Match** and **expand** to describe your activities (*Child: "Snake." Parent: "Let's make a long blue snake."*).

- **Avoid anticipating.** Hand your child the container with the top on tight and give your child a reason to ask for help. **Wait** and encourage your child to make a request using gestures, words or phrases. **Match** and **expand** (*Child: "Help." Parent: "OK...let's open the purple."*).

-**Do the unexpected.** Put the clay on your head or roll it with your elbow. **Wait** for your child to notice and tell you through gesture or words what you should do. Your child may communicate with you using eye gaze, pointing, signs, or words like, "No head." Repeat often to provide frequent language opportunities.

- **Ask good questions** to help your child participate. Try a **choice question** ("Should I cut the hot dog with a spoon or knife?" "Do you want a hot dog or a pancake?") or an **open-ended question** ("What do you want me to make?").

- Your child may want to play with the clay in her own way. If she wants to stack or roll the containers, **follow her lead.** Be creative and have fun. Use **comments** and **match** and **expand** to offer language support. Remember that greater interest in an activity leads to more language.

### Word/Concept Bank

**Labels**

Clay, container, lid, table, hands, snake, pancake, grapes, rolling pin

**Describing Words**

Flat, round, long, short, soft, hard, big, huge, tiny, little, squishy, colors, numbers,

**Action Words**

Want, need, hold, open, close, cut, roll, share, count, push, squish, squeeze

**Spatial Words**

Up, down, on top, side, under, over

**Social Words**

My turn, your turn, please, thank you



## *Playing: Puzzles*

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You may think of puzzles as a quiet activity, but there is so much to talk about! Sizes, shapes, colors, numbers, body parts and more are all there for you to label, match and expand.

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- **Comment** on and **label** the puzzle picture and pieces as you play. **Match** and **expand** to describe what you see (*Child*: “Red one.” *Parent*: “Here’s the red apple.”).

- **Do the unexpected.** Hold onto the puzzle pieces and **wait** for your child to notice. Hand the pieces out one by one as you encourage her to ask for them using words or phrases. **Wait** then **match** and **expand** (*Child*: “Wheel.” *Parent*: “Here’s the wheel on the car.”).

- **Ask good questions** to help your child participate. You may try a **choice question** (“Do you want the dinosaur’s tail or the dinosaur’s head?”) or a **closed-ended question** (“Which piece do you want?”).

- Your child may want to play with the pieces in her own way. If your child wants to hide puzzle pieces or put them in a box, try to **follow her lead**. When your child is interested in her own creative activity, even if it is not the typical way to play with a puzzle, it often leads to more language.

### *Word/Concept Bank*

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Labels</b><br>Piece, board, picture, table, box, edge, corner                            | <b>Action Words</b><br>Want, need, get, hold, touch, fit, turn around<br>Turn over |
| <b>Describing Words</b><br>Little, tiny, big, circle, square, colors, shapes, numbers, more | <b>Spatial Words</b><br>On, next to, in, out                                       |
|   | <b>Social Words</b><br>My turn, your turn  |