

Understanding 4 key words

These are phrases where the child needs to understand a minimum of 4 words in order to carry out the instruction. These 'key words' are underlined in the examples. The other words are obvious from the context so do not need to be understood in order to carry out the instruction.

- Make sure there is a choice for each of the underlined words.
- Remember not to give clues but rely on the words to convey all the information.
- Make sure you give the whole instruction before allowing the child to respond. Breaking up the instruction makes the task easier.

Take turns to give instructions to allow practice of expressive skills as well as understanding instructions. Expand and model as appropriate, e.g:

Child: "horse and cow in pond"

Adult: "horse and cow jumping in the pond" or "horse and cow running in the pond"

Hide & Seek / Tidy Up

You need: A choice of objects (e.g. book, pen, ruler)
A choice of places to put them (e.g. box vs bag)

Say: "put the book in the bag and the pen in the box"

If your child is confident with these instructions, try introducing size and possession (harder) with a choice of characters and big and little spoons and knives, e.g:

Say: "put the big spoon in dolly's bowl"
"put the little knife on rabbit's plate"

Actions and Objects

You need: a choice of characters (e.g. cow/sheep/horse/dog, or man/girl/boy)

Say: "make the sheep run and the cow jump"
"make the horse sleep and the dog walk"

Or introduce a choice of places:

Say: "make the cow and horse jump on the table"
"make the sheep and pig run on the chair"

Also: "make the horse and dog run to the ball"
"make the sheep and pig walk to the book"

Using a Setting

You need: Choice of characters (e.g. boy/girl/lady/man, or cow/horse/pig)
Choice of places to go (e.g. rooms in a doll's house, barn/field/pond on a farm)

Say: "put the boy in the bath and the girl on the bed"
"put the man in the kitchen and the girl in the hall"

Or: "put the pig in the pond and the horse in the barn"

Action to Place

Set up places to run, walk, skip, e.g. hoop, mat, bean bag. (This activity requires the instruction to be remembered for a long time, which may prove difficult. Using a toy to do the actions may be easier.)

Say: "run to the hoop and walk to the beanbag"
"hop to the mat and skip to the hoop"

Colouring Games

You need: Line drawings of, e.g. big/little girls and boys, dogs and cats, buses and cars

Say: "colour the big girl's skirt blue"
"colour the little boy's hair black"

Or: "colour the big car's wheels black"
"colour the little bus' door blue"

Or: "colour the little cat's tail orange"
"colour the big dog's paws red"

Activities taken from:

<http://www.slc.cambridgeshire.nhs.uk/ActivitiesIdeasandInfo/PreSchool/PreSchoolResourcePack/Understanding4keywords/tabid/1387/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>

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