

TALK Adult-Child Interactions Extending Language

Guidance for Early Years Professionals



1	INTRODUCTION
2	THEORIES FOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT
3	THE GROWTH OF LANGUAGE
4	MAKING CONNECTIONS
5	QUALITY VS QUANTITY
6	LANGUAGE WHEEL
7	TALK NORMS
8	COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS
9	BLANK LEVEL QUESTIONS
10	MOUNTAIN OF QUESTIONS
11	ADDING MORE
12	TYPES OF SCAFFOLDING
13	MULTI-SENSORY VOCABULARY
14	USEFUL LINKS

The aim of this booklet is to provide information and advice to Early Years Professionals in Halton who would like to know more about supporting and extending a child's Speech, Language and Communication

Introduction

Why do we want to support language growth? Let's take a look and reflect on the following quotes....

It is impossible to escape the fact that disadvantage and associated delays in early language acquisition are significant predictors of achievement, well beyond the early years

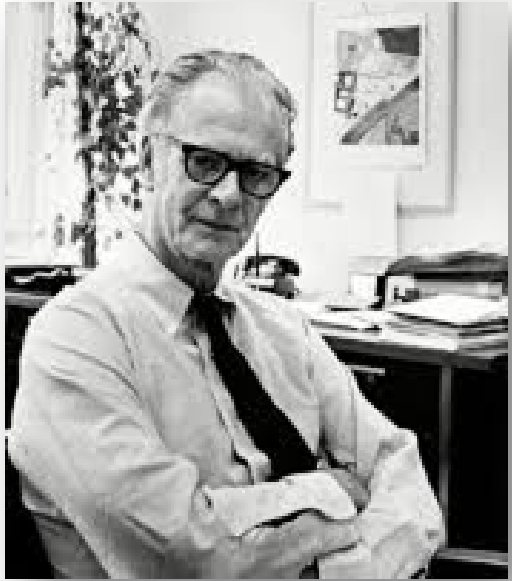
(Law et al, 2017)

“One of the most powerful things we can do to help a child’s development is help them to become a better communicator. Communication underpins children’s thinking and learning.”

Dr Julian Grenier (Nursery World -
Building Your Curriculum:
Communication & Language -
Starting points)

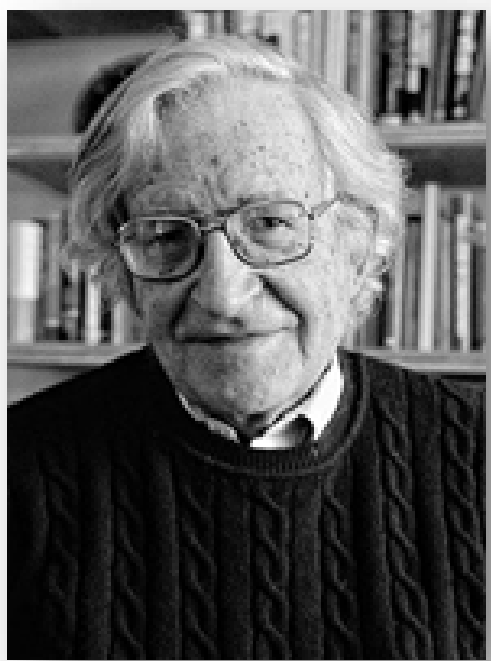
Which approach
do you follow in
your practice?

Theories for learning & development



Skinner

Children learn through trial and error. They are born 'blank slates' and learn to use language through imitation and reinforcement.



Chomsky

Innate knowledge of language structure. Child's language environment switches on these innate linguistic principles. But vocabulary has to be learned



Piaget

Thought precedes language. Children mature through 4 stages. Learning has to be initiated by the child. (Discovery Learning)



Vygotsky

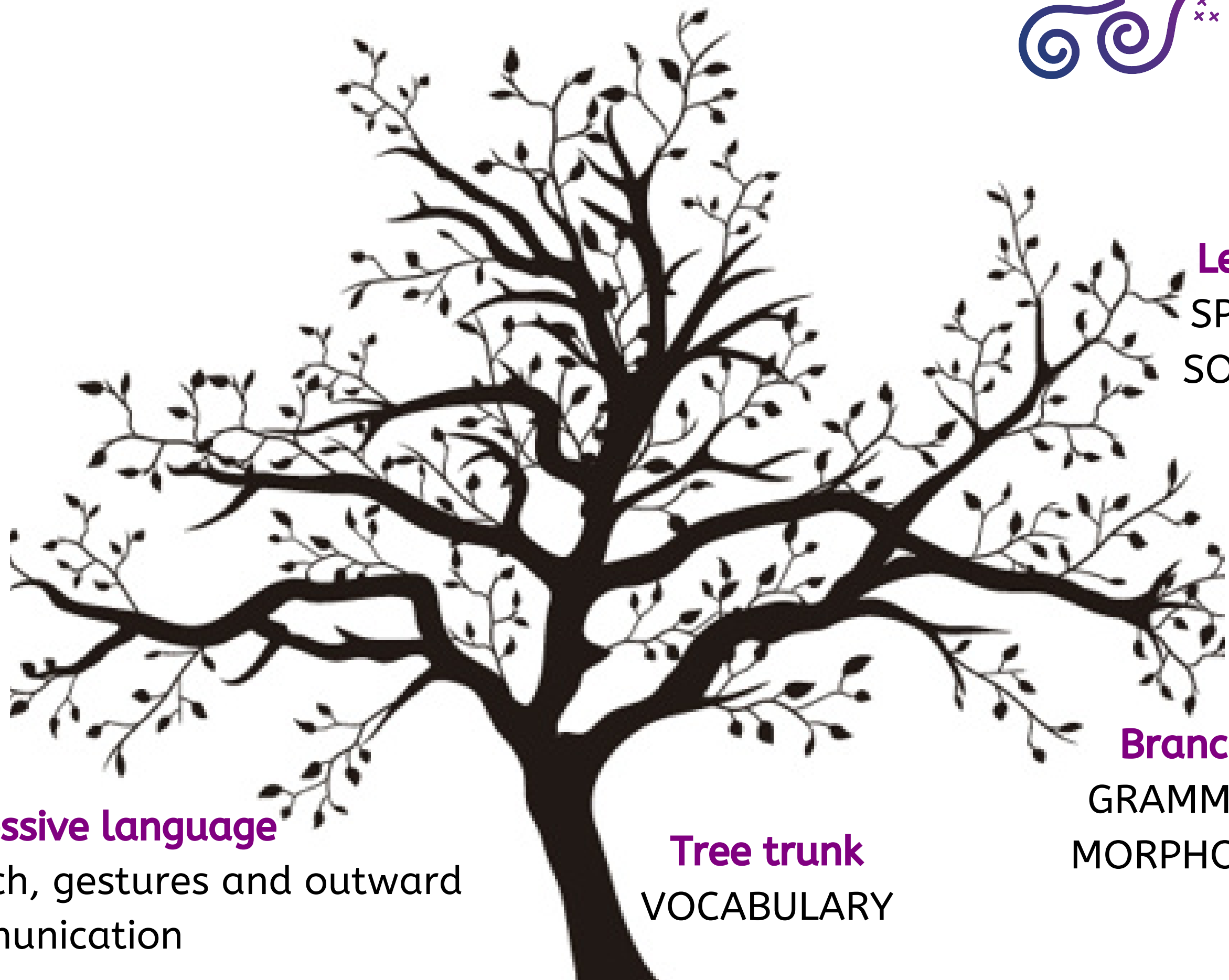
Social learning precedes cognitive development. Zone of proximal development – children need a 'more knowledgeable other' to scaffold. Culture plays a role



Bruner

Language development takes place in social/ interaction contexts. Language is experienced in the context of familiar routines repeated hundreds of times. Scaffolding

The growth of language



Leaves
SPEECH
SOUNDS

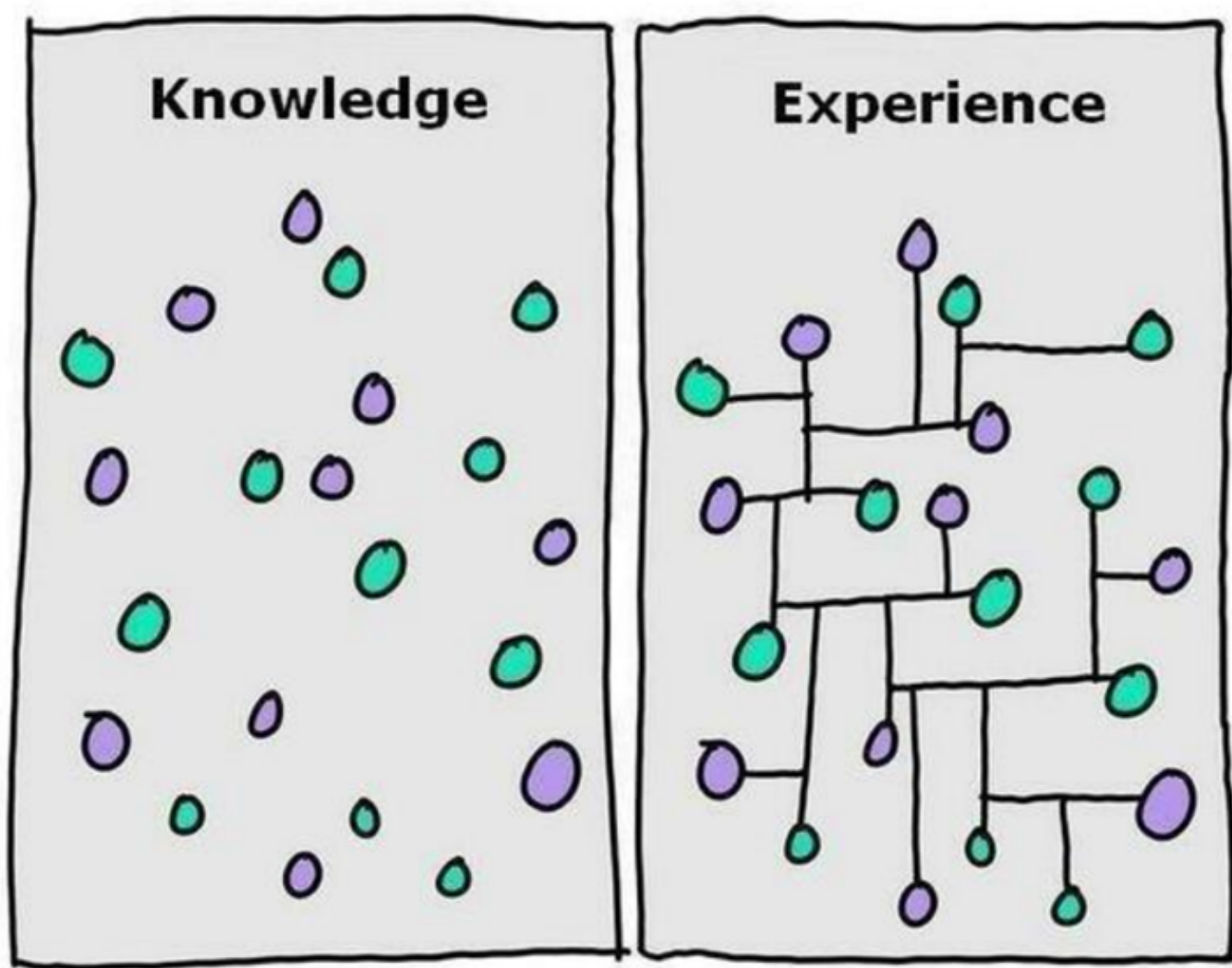
Branches
GRAMMAR &
MORPHOLOGY

Tree trunk
VOCABULARY

Expressive language
Speech, gestures and outward
communication

Receptive language
Understanding
others

Roots
COMPREHENSION



Making connections

For babies and young children, good conversation is nourishment for the brain.

Researchers such as Dr. Anne Fernald (Director of the Language Learning Lab of the Stanford Psychology Department) believe that the quality of our interactions with infants and young children affects their brain development for life.

How do stronger connections help?

The more we talk to children the more words they hear.

The more words they hear and the more quality interactions and experience they have the more connections they make.

The more this happens the stronger the brain connections become.

The stronger the connections the faster they process words during real time conversation.

The faster they process the words the more words they can take in

Quality vs Quantity

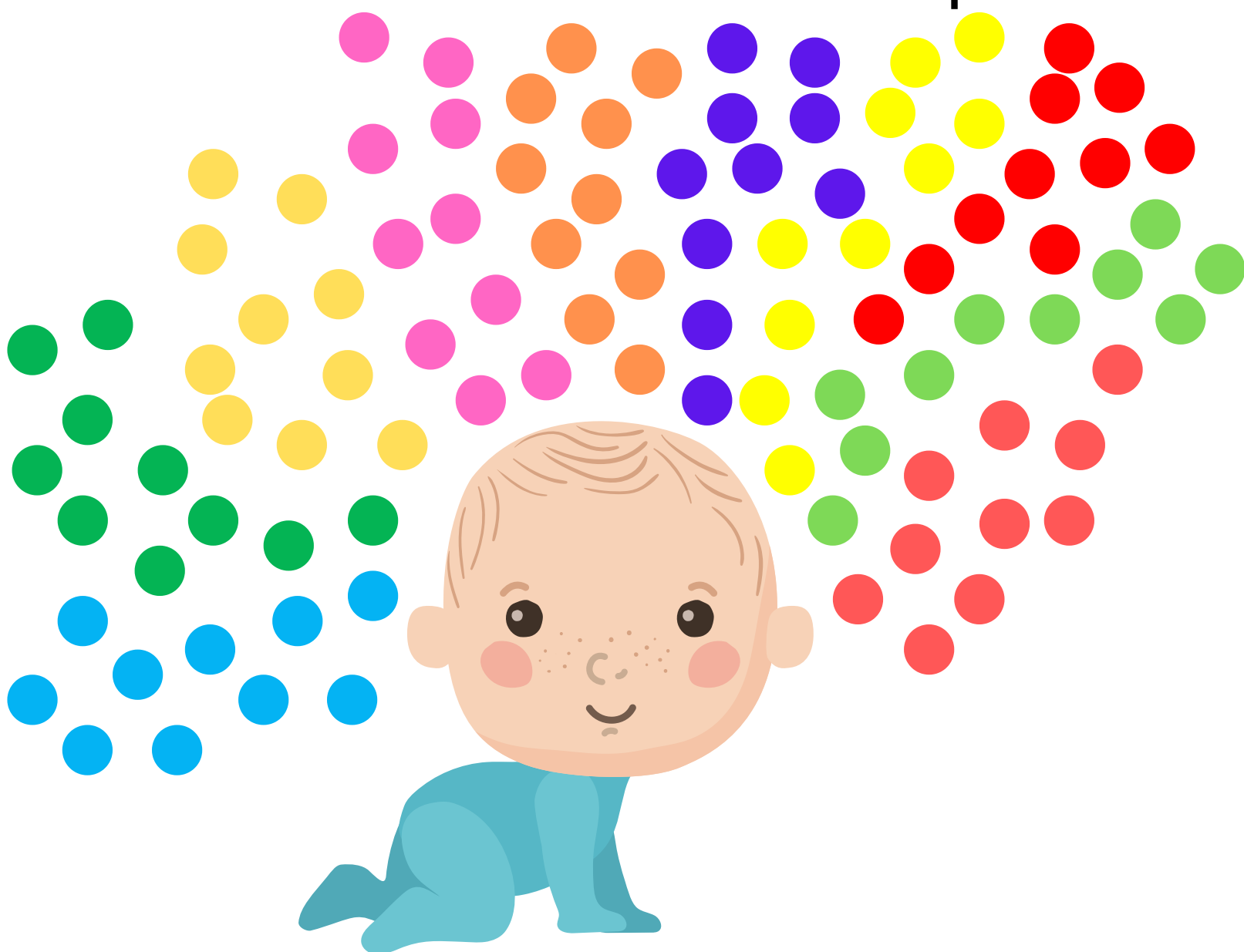
Quality

Quantity

In 2012, Meredith Rowe (Associate Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education) carried out a study which looked at what contributes most to a child's later vocabulary.

She found that:

- Children's vocabulary at 30 months was influenced by the quantity of words parents used one year earlier
- Their vocabulary at 42 months was influenced by parents use of a variety of sophisticated words one year earlier
- Their vocabulary at 54 months was influenced by parents use of narratives and explanations one year earlier



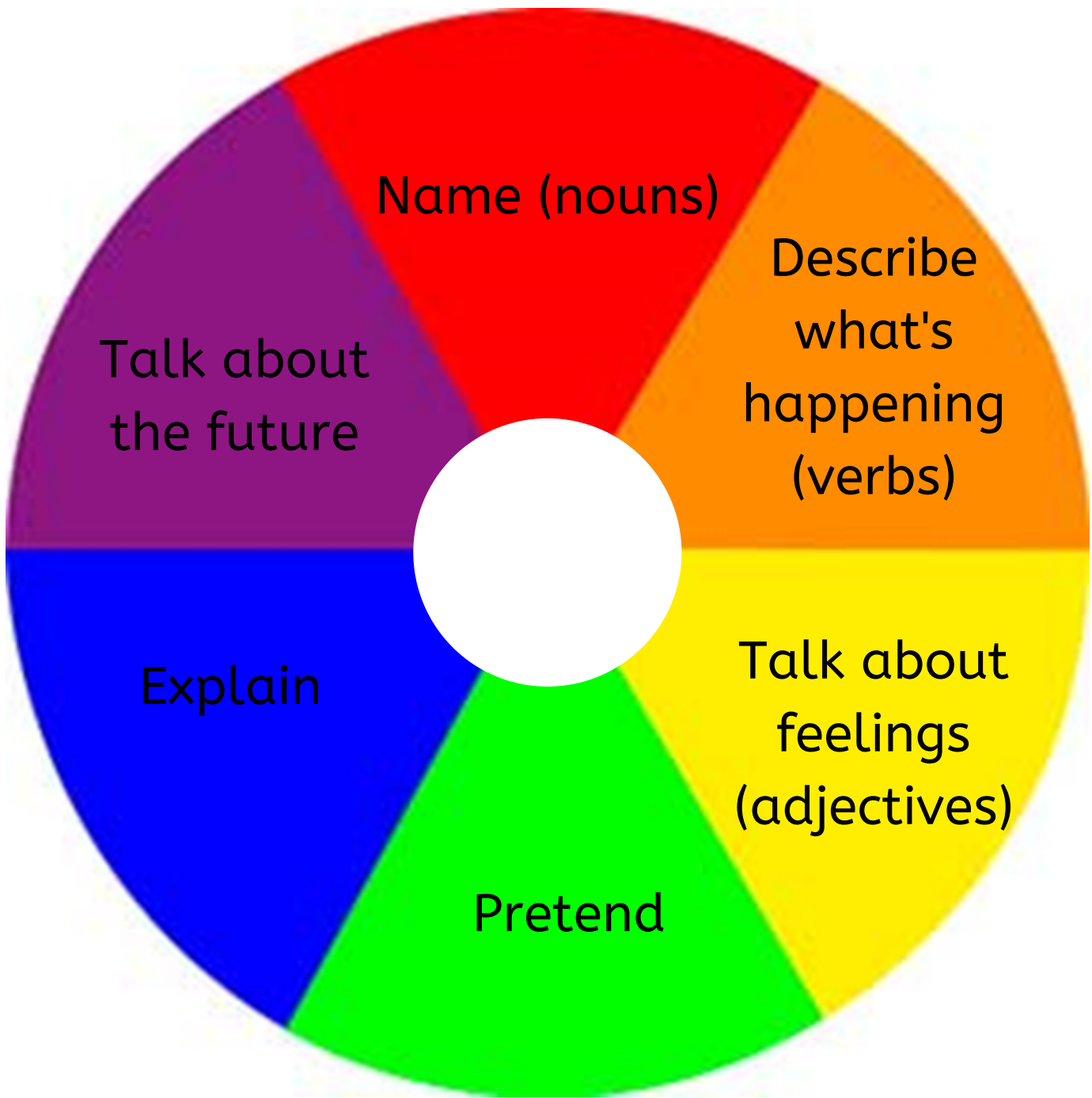
This child hears 100 words
in 5 minutes on 10 topics



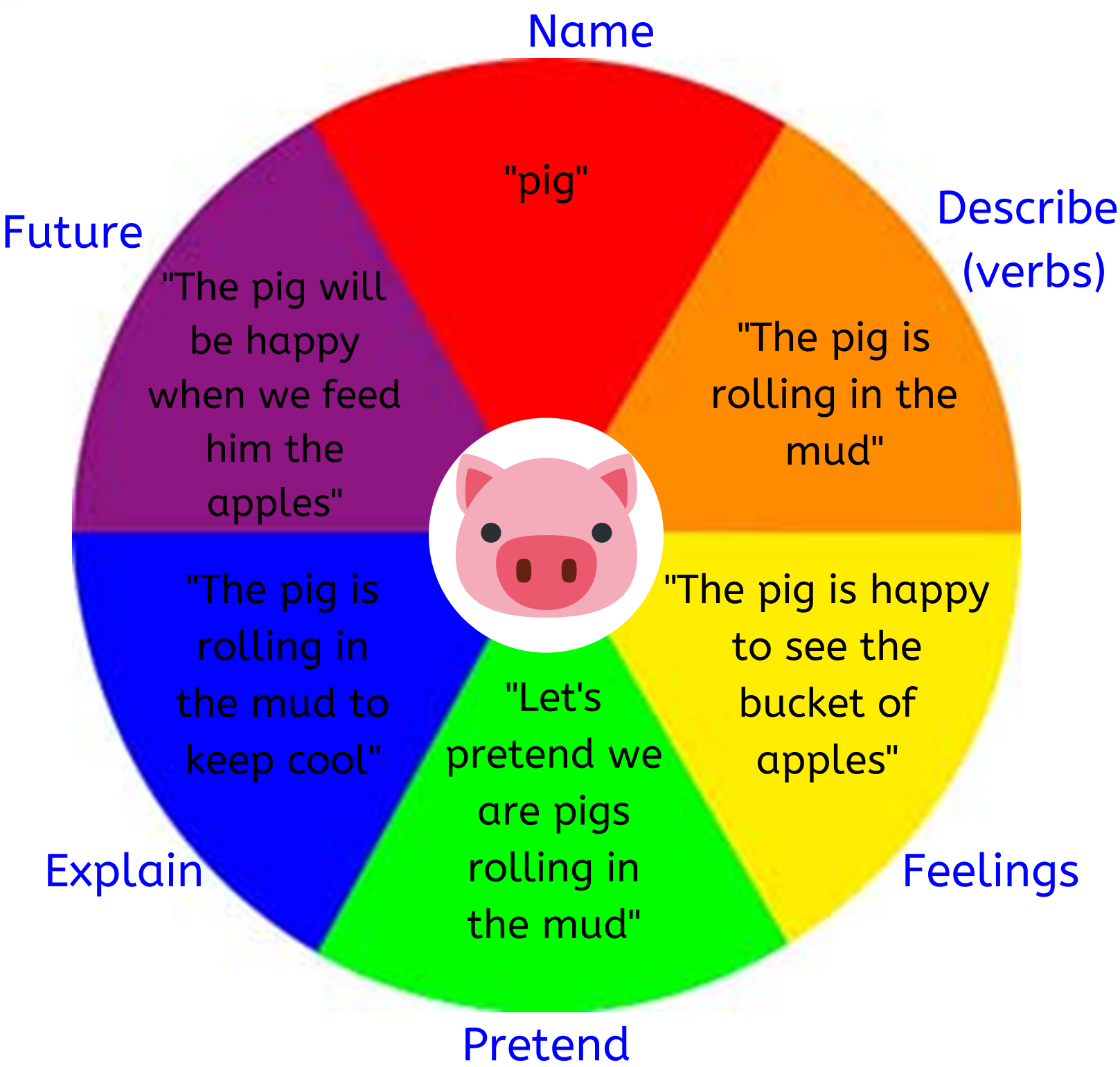
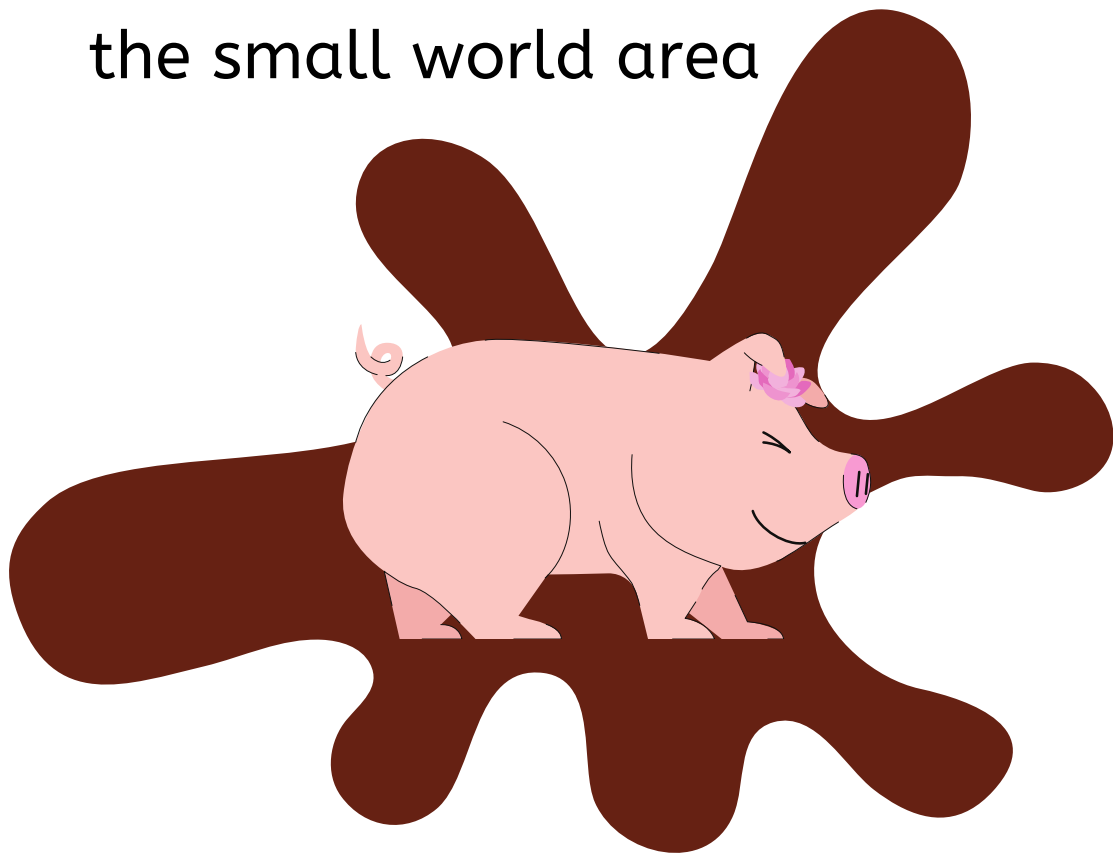
This child hears 5 words in 5
minutes on 2 topics

The language wheel

To help to increase a child's understanding try adding additional information by using the language wheel



Example for a child playing with the farm animals in the small world area



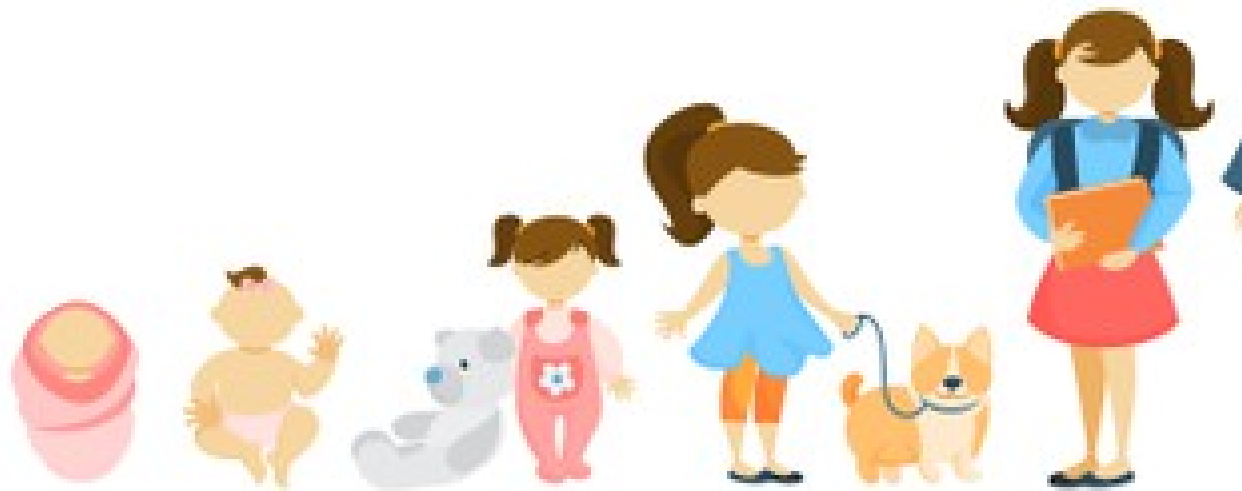
Think of an area in your setting

What words can you think of that could be added to language wheel for that particular area?



Talk Norms

Age	Typical expressive language	Morphology	Example
12-18 months	Say up to 20 single words (such as cup, daddy, dog) to ask for things or to comment on what they see Uses strings of jargon and single words when playing.		car
18-24 months	Use 50 or more single words Start to put 2 words together such as 'more juice' 'by nanny'		That car More juice
2-3 years	Use up to 300 words Putting more words together e.g. 'want more juice' 'he took my ball' Use action words such as 'run'	-ing Plural 's'	It going Falling off My cars
3-4 years	Use longer sentences and link sentences together Ask many questions using words like 'what' why' where' Start to be able to answer questions about 'why' something has happened (still basic level) Describe events that have happened	Irregular past tense possessive s 'to be' verb Articles Regular past Third person regular present tense	Me fell down You sat on mummy's shoe are they there? a book the book she jumped he swims she goes
4-5 years	Use sentences that are well formed Think more about the meaning of words, such as describing the meaning of simple words or asking what a new word means. May still have some difficulties with grammar. For example, saying 'sheeps' instead of 'sheep' or 'goed' instead of 'went'	Third person irregular Auxiliary verb Contractible	She has She does Are they swimming? She's ready I'm here They're here They're coming He's going I'm done



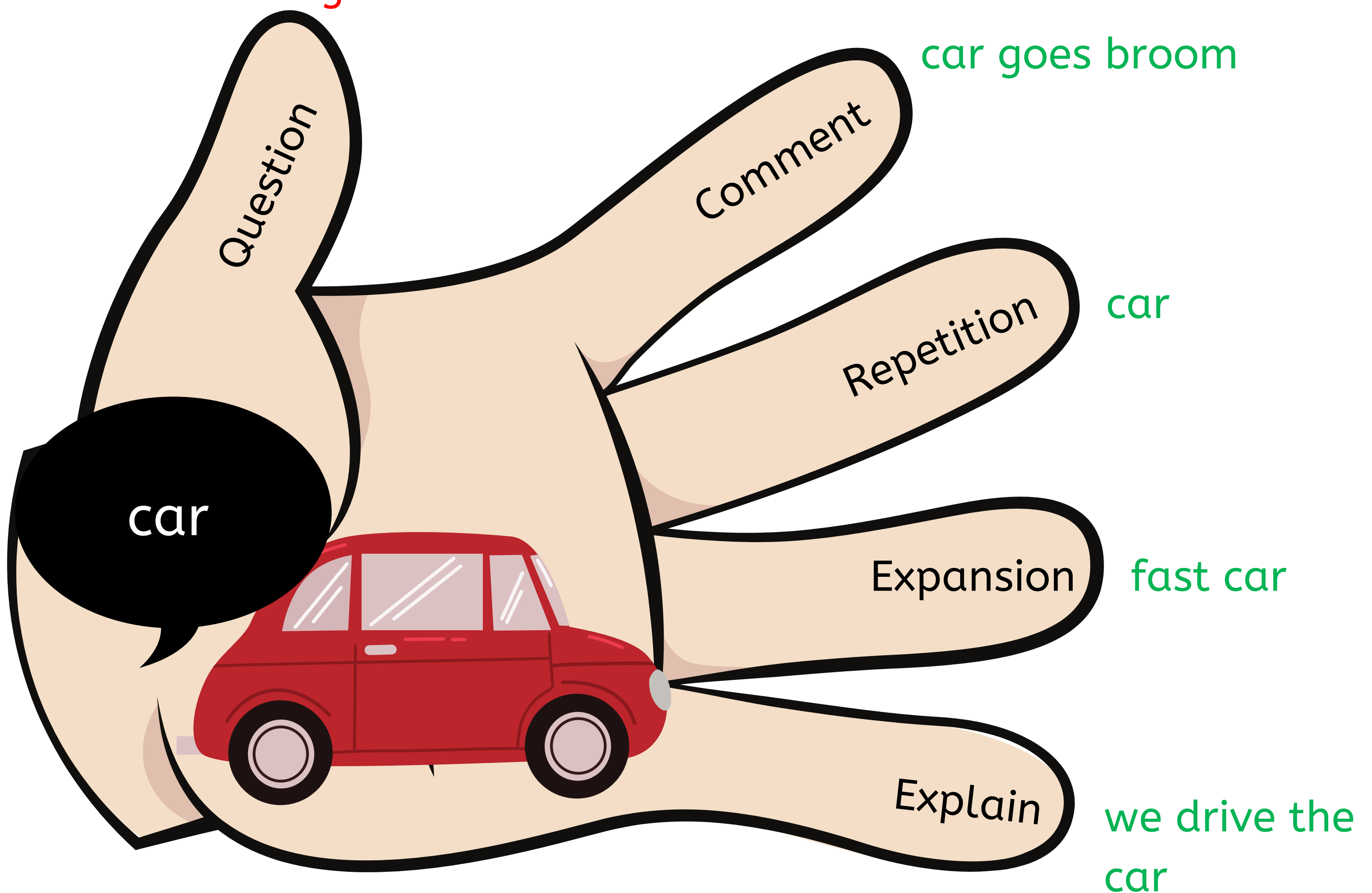
Comments and questions

You will be exposing a child to richer language and helping them to learn new words when you use comments during your interactions with them.

Try not to ask too many questions. Lots of questions can put pressure on children to communicate, it may feel like a test and they can quickly stop the flow of the conversation.

Try using 1 question for every 4 comments. For example.....

Where are you
driving the car?



Blank level questions

Blank's Levels of Questioning is a questioning framework developed by psychologist, Marion Blank. There are four levels of questioning which move from simple, concrete questions to more difficult, abstract questions.

NAMING

Responding to simple commands which involve matching what they can see

Find one like this
What can you see?
What did you hear?
What did you do?
Where are the?

1

DESCRIBING

Focuses on something in particular. Starts to describe. Asking who/what/where

What happened?
What shape is it?
What size is it?
What colour is it?
Where did ...?
Who did what?

2

IDENTIFY

Talking about stories and events. Focus on an object in its context and making links

How are these the same?
Tell me something else.
Tell me a story
Find me one to use with this
What does...mean?
Tell me how

3

PREDICTING

Using and answering complex/abstract language

What will happen if...?
Why?
What could you do?
How can we tell?
What should we use that...?
Why is...made of...?

4

For more information about Blank Level Questions please refer to our
Blank Level Questions Booklet

Mountain of questions

The question at the bottom of the mountain is easiest for a child to respond to. Questions get more difficult as you go up the mountain.



If you ask a question that a child doesn't respond to, or answers incorrectly, rephrase it with a question a little lower down the mountain.

Adding more

Try using the following approach to develop expressive and receptive language.

Expressive language

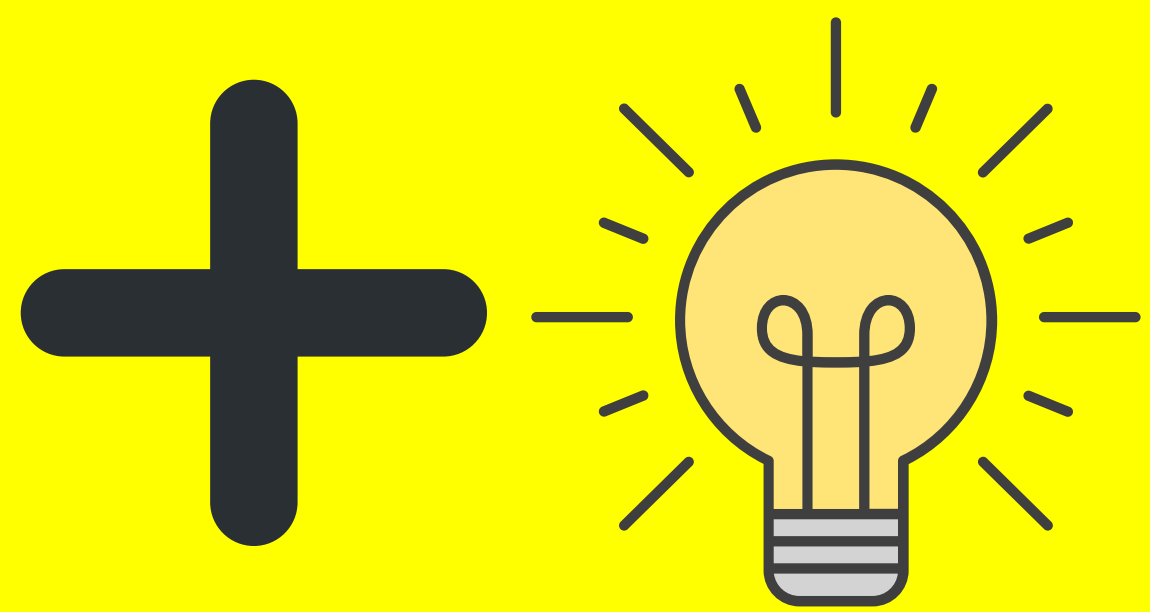
What we SAY



ADD one WORD

Receptive language

What we UNDERSTAND

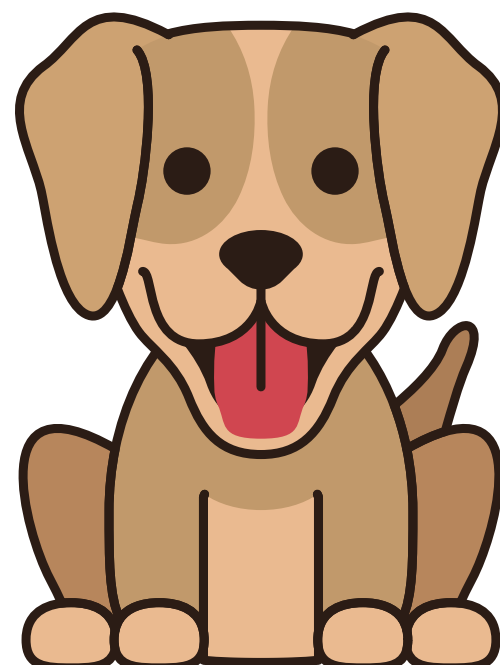


ADD one IDEA

"little dog"

"playful dog"

"dog"



"the dog is
wagging his tail"

Consider using a variety of perspectives when modelling words and phrases

Types of scaffolding

Responsive labelling (naming)	Self talk	Parallel talk	Toy talk
- Naming - Labelling the toy/item the child has <i>"that's a ball"</i>	Describing your own action with the toy/item <i>"I'm rolling the ball"</i>	Describing the child's action with the item <i>"you kicked the ball"</i>	- Describing the toy/item itself. - Talk about location, properties and actions <i>"the ball rolled away"</i>

When thinking about the vocabulary we want to teach children, think about Goldilocks. It shouldn't be too easy or too hard, it should be just right!

	Anchor words		Goldilocks words		Step on words
Children have a good understanding of words that are used regularly		Focus for direct teaching, useful words that will be encountered a lot		Subject specific words. Exposure is good but don't spend time teaching	

Think of a theme and see if you can identify anchor words, Goldilocks words and WOW words. Here's are possible examples for a pirates theme.....

	swim ship pirate parrot		treasure adventure escape brave		ransack eye patch palm tree Jolly Roger
--	----------------------------------	--	--	---	--

Multi-sensory vocabulary



There are lots of different ways to use a multi-sensory approach to introduce new vocabulary. For example;

- Use a symbol, picture or photograph
- Clap the syllables of the new word
- Say it to your friend in different ways (e.g. whisper, shout)
- Expand the meaning (e.g. bring the word into the children's experiences)
- Act the word out
- Sing or create a rap about the word
- Create topic tables, topic boxes, curiosity cubes, etc
- Make concept books of photos with the children showing the word in different ways - ask parents/carers to contribute photographs of the child exploring the new word at home.

IMPORTANT!

Share new words with parents/carers for them to use at home

Put the new vocabulary words around the room to remind practitioners to use them in everyday conversations

Useful links

You may be interested in the following links to further your knowledge.

<http://www.hanen.org/SiteAssets/Helpful-Info/Articles/Shoot-for-the-SSTaRS-A-Strategy-for-Teaching-Vocab.aspx>

https://www.hanen.org/SiteAssets/Helpful-Info/Articles/printer-friendly_Helping-children-develop-language.aspx

<https://www.hanen.org/SiteAssets/Helpful-Info/Articles/printer-friendly-moving-beyond-here-now.aspx>

<http://www.hanen.org/SiteAssets/Helpful-Info/Articles/Language-and-Literacy-Article/Language-and-Literacy-printer-friendly.aspx>

<http://www.hanen.org/SiteAssets/Helpful-Info/Articles/preparing-preschoolers-for-schooltalk.aspx>

<http://www.hanen.org/SiteAssets/Helpful-Info/Articles/Teaching-Children-to-Think---PF.aspx>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyMnn-EWmu8> - Word aware (Goldilocks words)