

## **Home Activities - Matching**

Remember: Be sure your child is attending to you when you ask him/her to match or get same. Follow through when you ask them to do something. Be sure they do it even if you need to help them. Get happy when they follow the direction. Be happiest (tickles, claps, whatever they love) if they do it independently of you but still be positive (say “good trying”) if you have to help. Use activities that your child likes and are natural opportunities for motivation.

Matching: Emphasize the words “match” and “same.”

1. Use natural opportunities. Many clothing items come in pairs and you can add a few more items to make a group to choose from. When getting dressed, hand your child a shoe (sock, mitten) and tell them to get the same. Have the matching item by the child at first with one or two other items. Once your child is doing this, move the matching item a little further away so they have to go get it. Think of the natural opportunities. If your child loves going outside, getting shoes and socks on is an good opportunity to practice matching and have a good pay off when it's done.
2. Natural opportunities can be used by observing items your child likes to play with and getting another item to match it. For example, if your child likes dinosaurs, cars, animals etc., get an identical toy and have them pick up the one you have. Then play with it for a bit by imitating them or guiding play by trying to get them to imitate you.
3. Meal times can offer matching opportunities. Have your child help by getting/giving the same item you show him (cup, bowl, spoon). Snacks can be matched. Food is often a good natural motivator.
4. Art activities like play doh and coloring are opportunities to do matching for colors. If your child likes sensory opportunities, these activities provide natural motivation.
5. Many single inset puzzles have matching pictures in the frame.

## **Home Activities - Imitation**

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Imitation and Play Skills: We use imitation with a toy to start to teach imitation skills. The words you use are "do this" as you demonstrate an action with a toy. Making it a play action starts to teach your child appropriate ways to use toys. You can say "do this, roll car" which labels the action. Learning what "do this" means opens doors for your child to learn skills. If you have matching items, you can get your child to match first and then play. Or, if you only have one item, you can take turns which is another play skill.

1. Here are some toys that offer purposeful, play interactions that can be imitated:
  - a) Blocks – stack, put in container, knock over
  - b) Cars – roll cars, put in block building your child helped you make, put in a doll, roll on ramp, wash them
  - c) Musical instruments – (drum/bells/shakers/tambourine) - can have child get the same instrument as you and then imitate your actions – tap/shake. Once doing this easily, add marching feet and have a parade.
  - d) Trucks – load and unload dump trucks
  - e) Play doh – rolling snakes, pounding
2. Toys that allow for turns and imitation:  
Ring stack, shape sorter, play phone, play piano, putting on hats and looking in a mirror, bean bag toss, play doh rolling/cutting with cookie cutter, brush or comb hair, pop up toy, ball play
3. Activities which encourage imitation:
  - a) Interactive songs with finger plays. Start with one or two actions as you sing and help your child do them. An extra adult may be helpful here as one demonstrates and the other helps the child.
  - b) Coloring – imitate strokes
  - c) Watercolors – imitate actions of dip in water, then paint, then painting.
  - d) Dance music, making a "freeze or stop" game using the pause button on the CD player. Some children's CD's have movement songs where they stomp, jump etc. and can be used for imitation play.

## **Home Activities - Receptive Language**

Receptive language is the hearing and then showing that you understood the language by reacting. It is the language that comes in to the person. Expressive language is the language the person produces using speech. It is the language that goes out.

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Receptive instructions – notice the routine things your child does and add an instruction to them. It is good to make many of the instructions a positive thing like "eat the cookie." You can and should make any instruction positive. Tell the child what you want them to do rather than what you don't want them to do. For example, if your child is standing on the table, you can say "feet on the floor" (instead of "don't stand on the table") and help them get there. When your child follows an instruction, reinforce them with praise that labels the action done and then you might clap, give high fives or any other social feedback your child enjoys. Think of routines that you do often and add the words to it. These may be "put this in the trash," "open the door," "close the door" (can have it so child doesn't need to turn knob to follow open instruction), "sit down" (the natural reinforcer for following this direction can be a snack or meal, playing a computer game, watching TV, etc.). At first you may need to guide your child through the action. After a few times try to give them time to follow the instruction on their own. If they don't, give them a start or hint by touching an elbow, pointing, starting them off. When they follow the instruction independently, give them praise. Then, as they get better at it, you can move to a natural response like thanking them.

Receptive labeling – This is knowing what things are when another person says them. Usually, receptive language is ahead of expressive which is being able to pull up the name of an item and say it on your own. It's important that your child know items have names.

1. Start with things that are important to them. It will be more likely for them to learn these items if they care about them.
2. Your child may have a large number of these words. It is a good idea to keep track of the items they know.
3. You can tell your child knows the items when you say "get item" and it is out with a few other items. Sometimes they choose an item because they prefer it over the one you are asking for. Try to be sure the one you are asking for is interesting to them.
4. Even when we think we know what they prefer, kids can surprise you. If they reach for a different item than the one you named, say 1<sup>st</sup> "get item" and then ask them to get the preferred item and guide them if necessary.
5. When they choose the items, they can then play with them which is naturally reinforcing.
6. Label items that you are using with one word to start. Before reading, hold up a book and say "book." You can point to pictures in books but be sure your child is looking at the picture you are pointing to and labeling. Sometimes it is better to use simple books with one picture on each page to start. You can move your child's finger to a picture or let them touch the pictures as you label them.
7. Naming body parts can be a fun game if you add in songs ("this little toe went to market"), tickles, bubbles in the tub. Focus on one or two body parts and then see if they can touch it when you ask them. If they can't, guide their hand to the spot and give a muted playful response. If they can, give the big, fun response.

## **Home Activities - Self-Help with Task Analysis and Visual Schedules**

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A “task analysis” means you take an activity that has many steps and break it down to its single step parts. A “visual schedule” is when we use pictures to show each step so your child will gain some idea of sequence and time as well as have a motivating item as the last step. “Self-help” activities are things your child will learn to do by themselves and for themselves as they develop, like dressing and feeding themselves.

An example would be getting dressed in winter clothes to go outside. If your child loves to be outside, this activity has a natural reinforcer—going out!!!!

1. Think of the steps involved (coat, hat, mittens, boots). Use pictures of them set up in a sequential order. Have a picture of them playing outside so they can anticipate where they are going. You can use pictures from magazines, real pictures from a camera or picture symbols. If you feel your child may not understand picture symbols, you can pair them with a real picture so they will learn the association.
2. Think about what your child can do in the sequence on their own. If they have skills, let them do that part of it. If they can't put on certain items, help them to start using a hand over hand approach. Then fade out your assistance by letting them finish the last bit. Keep going backwards in the process. For example, help them grab the hat, bring it up to their head, start it onto their head but let them do the final tug. Once they are doing the final tug, see if they can get it started on their head and tug. They may need some wait time so they will try. Give lots of praise when they complete all of part of a step.
3. Now you have pictures in a sequence and know where you may need to help your child. Start by showing them the schedule, naming the steps through the end. Then do the first step (as discussed, either alone or with your help). Have your child move the picture of the step they completed off the schedule. Clap, high five, etc.
4. Go to the next picture and continue on down the sequence until it is complete and the final goal – outside! - has been reached.
5. As your child becomes better at doing the steps, fade your praise to every 2 steps and then every 3 and so on until the praise is only at the end of the sequence.
6. Sometimes kids need reminders as they are moving through a sequence. Just try not to go backwards by helping them more and more. This may mean adding more time to the process of going out.
7. Other activities you can do this with are dressing, undressing (bathtime a natural reward?), helping set up snack (items needed on table).