

A DOZEN IDEAS TO EXPAND LANGUAGE WHILE YOU PLAY TOGETHER WITH BLOCKS

1. See how tall, wide, long, narrow, short, etc. your child can build. Ask your child to knock the blocks down and create again. Allow the destruction to be a fun part of the game.
2. Ask your child to create something, then ask questions like:
 - What is the name of this?
 - What do you use it for?
 - Where do you find it?
 - Why does it have this part?
 - Who could use it and how would they do so?
 - What can we play with it?
 - What would happen if I moved this over here?
3. Give your child specific directions to build something step by step and see if s/he can follow those directions precisely (ex. Put a large green block on top of a small yellow block. Next put a blue block next to the green block. etc.).
4. Have your child tell you how he made his creation.
5. Have your child tell a story about her creation. Help by providing prompts of "first, then, and last."
6. Put 3-4 objects in front of your child and tell him to look at them closely because you'll take one away later. See if your child can recall which item was removed.
7. Have your child describe similarities and differences between items.
8. Ask your child to separate the blocks by color, size or shape. Count the different block groups.
9. Categorize like blocks together and tell why they should go together.
10. Pretend that the blocks are vehicles. Create a place and develop a story following your child's lead.
11. Have your child give you directions to build a structure. Play dumb and put the block in the wrong place creating an unstable structure. Ask her to help you solve the problem.
12. Find a picture of a structure in a magazine. Together duplicate the structure with blocks.

Have fun!