MORE THAN 15 IDEAS TO ENHANCE LANGUAGE AS YOU PLAY TOGETHER WITH PUPPETS, ACTIONS FIGURES AND/OR DOLLS

1. *Label the characters to be played with, ex. Lion, bear, boy, nurse, etc.*
2. *Make animals and people walk. Pretend to feed them making smacking sounds!*
3. *Have your child create names for the puppets/toys.*
4. *Follow your child's lead as you play together creating a scenario. Attempt to change the scenario by interjecting another action or person. Describe actions that the figures do. Ex. "Sam's eating cake."*
5. *Create a problem for the characters to overcome. Ex. "Uh-oh. There's an elephant knocking at the door. What should we do?"*
6. *Develop a story together. You may wish to write it down or record it on a tape player and later transcribe it onto a computer. Print out the story and have your child draw pictures.*
7. *Match or find different colors on the figures. Expand to finding matching colors in the immediate environment.*
8. *Find different body parts on the figures (ex. eyes, nose, mouth, etc.).*
9. *Describe the uses for the body parts or reasons why the figures have the parts. Match the parts to the child's own body parts.*
10. *Count different body parts.*
10. *Change the character's physical appearance - add a paper moustache.*
11. *Describe similarities and differences between figures.*
12. *Discuss why certain characters might be important in your town or city. Ex. Discuss where the person works. Discuss others who may work with the person (ex. a fire fighter may work closely with the police).*
13. *Place the figure into a particular position and have your child imitate the posture.*
14. *Ask your child to follow simple 2- and 3- step directions with the figures. Ex. "Make Sam jump, turn around 3 times, then sit down." (3-step command)*
15. *Talk about people or animals you know that might be similar to the characters you play with.*
16. *Add the characters into a hospital, dollhouse, restaurant, garage, airport, village, etc. Create the dialogue for the appropriate location.*