

To further develop vocabulary:

1. For new vocabulary, try to provide visual cues or associations when possible. For example, "yes, a glacier is like a frozen waterfall like in our backyard."
2. Play with synonyms (like words, ex. yummy and tasty) and antonyms (opposites, ex. bad and good).
3. Try to help your child visualize a concept. Give them words to picture the new vocabulary within their heads.
4. Play category games where you name as many members of a category as you can.
5. When a child answers a question with one word, encourage a longer sentence by asking probing questions. For example:

Adult: What did you eat for breakfast?

Child: Cereal.

Adult: What kind of cereal did you eat?

Child: Cocoa Puffs.

Adult: So you ate cocoa puffs cereal for breakfast today.

Child: I ate cocoa puffs cereal today. (hopefully the child will repeat at least part of the modeled sentence). Include questions about colors, size, texture, number, location, etc.

Adding Descriptors/Modifiers to increase sentence length

- Talk about similarities and differences.
- Help children add descriptors to sentences by asking encouraging questions, then having them repeat the complete sentence. For example:

Child: I see a frog.
Adult: Yes, what color is the frog?
Child: Green.
Adult: So, you see a green frog? (or tease saying, So you see an orange frog?)
Child: Yes, I see a green frog.
Adult: What is the frog doing?
Child: Hopping.
Adult: How is he hopping?
Child: Up high.
Adult: So, you see a green frog hopping up high?
And so forth!

Adding Prepositions to increase sentence length

1. Place an item in a particular position. Ask the child what it is, then ask where it is. Connect the two responses, and either ask them to repeat directly, or leave it at them hearing your completed sample (depending on the developmental level of the child).

Adding Conjunctions to increase complexity of sentences

1. Give a child two items and ask them to tell you what they have (in a sentence – you'll probably have to model this first – "I have a dog and a cat.")
2. Make a list of items that a child repeats, sees the items and names, or recalls from previous knowledge (ex. "What do we need to brush our teeth:" – toothbrush, toothpaste, cup, and water). Encourage and model the use of the word "and."
3. At circle time, have two different children do two different activities at the same time. A third child should be chosen to describe what the other two are doing. Ex. "Sam is walking and Abby is eating."
4. Have a child describe the activities taking place that would encourage the use of "but." For example, set a situation where 3 children are reading books, while 3 children are building. Say, "The 3 girls are reading, but the 3 boys are building." You could of course also use, "and" or "while."
5. Find pictures to help with eliciting "because." For example, a picture of a giraffe eating leaves might elicit "The giraffe can eat the leaves because he has a long neck." Or "The hippo is in the water because he is hot." You can encourage the answer by setting a model and asking "why" to further the response. Model having the child put the two parts to the answer together with the word "because."

© **Kate Ross, MS, CCC-SLP (2011)**