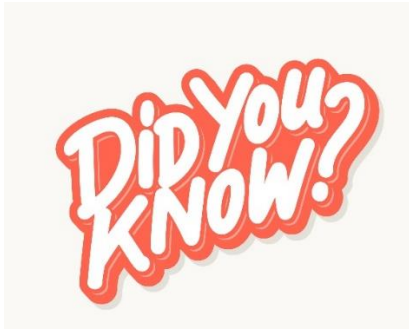
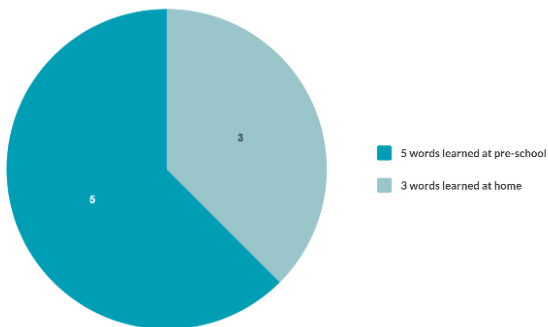


Language and Literacy for 2-4 year olds



- It is estimated that by 6 years of age, children have a vocabulary of 14,000 words
- ***Based on this, children between 18 months and 6 years old would have to learn 8 new words a day***

Eight words a day



- Research has shown that children who have poor vocabulary at 2 years tend to do less well at school by 7 years



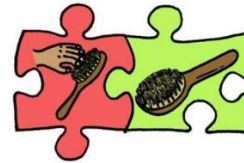
How can you promote the vocabulary development of your child?

How do we learn new words?

Here we will use the example of a hairbrush. You will begin to see the link between play and vocabulary development.



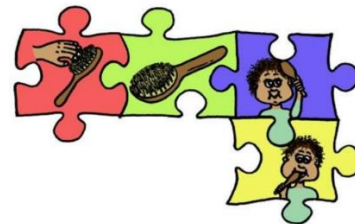
Initially, the child learns what the object looks like.



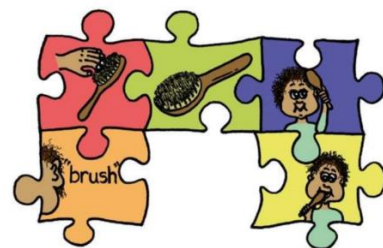
The child learns what the object feels like.



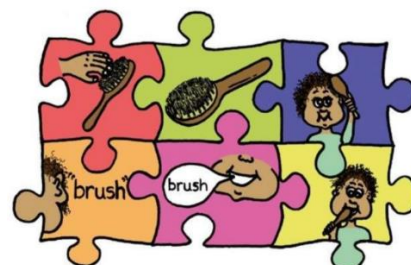
The child learns what you do with the object. They also learn what you can't do with the object!



The child develops an understanding of what the object is but doesn't yet know the word.



The child then starts to understand the word 'brush.'



Finally the child learns to say the word 'brush.'

How to support the development of nouns (object words):

1. **Start with the child's interests** – A child is more likely to listen and to use vocabulary that is linked to their interests.



2. **Talk about what the child is doing or looking at** – This will ensure your language matches the child's focus of attention.
3. **Introduce simple vocabulary first** – Use simple versions of words first e.g. talk about 'trousers' then add 'jeans', 'dungarees', 'jogging bottoms', etc.
4. **Give the child time to think and respond** – Young children need time to plan what they want to say.



5. **Model the words** – Give the child time to think then, if they still do not respond, say the word so that they hear clear examples.
6. **Use a variety of multi-sensory activities** – Encourage the child to explore objects through a wide range of senses e.g. hearing the word, seeing, feeling, using and sometimes smelling and tasting the objects.
7. **Use books** – Pictures, stories and books provide useful opportunities to reinforce vocabulary.

Activities to encourage the development of verbs (action words):

1. **Modelling** – Say the word while the child performs the actions e.g. You are *kicking* the ball.



2. **Video** – Video your child indoors and outdoors carrying out a variety of actions. Play the video back, pausing and naming the actions.
3. **Teddy likes...** Collect objects that are associated with simple actions e.g. ball, book, apple. The child takes turns to pick an object, demonstrate how teddy uses the object and name the action e.g. Teddy is *reading* a book.
4. **Books** – Emphasise what people and animals are doing.



5. **Simon Says!** – The children can take the turn of the 'teacher' and give an instruction.

Supporting the development of adjectives (describing words):

1. **Encourage the development of a wide range of describing words** – There are many groups of describing words. It is important to help young children to explore describing words from all the following groups;
 - **Size:** big, small, long, short, heavy, light
 - **Colour:** blue, green, red, black
 - **Shape:** line, round, flat, circle, square
 - **Position:** on, off, over, through, behind
 - **Movement:** fast, slow, quick, still
 - **Texture:** hard, soft, cold, warm, hot, dry
 - **Quantity:** all a lot, some, another, many
 - **Number:** one, two, three, first, next, last
 - **Time:** again, now, soon, after, today
 - **Emotion:** happy, sad, angry, pleased
 - **Sounds:** noisy, quiet, loud, soft
2. **Start with the child's interests** – As an example, If the child loves water play, add big and little fish, buckets, boats to the bath if you want to develop their size vocabulary.



3. **Model the language** – Expand the child's phrases by adding adjectives.
Child: 'That's my ball.'
Adult: 'Yes, that's your *red* ball.'
Or just describe the object your child is looking at.