



Learning New Action Words

3-5 years

Mona Baltaji, Noor Muawwad, Seyda Atak & Ja Ing Sumlang

Parents and carers are essential in supporting a child's early language development. Learning through play is one of many effective strategies when teaching children new action words!

FACT!

Playing music in your native language allows the brain to access it's memory processes.
 -Place emphasis on the verbs in the song.
 -You can do this by singing the word aloud.

Bilingual Families

Both parents speak a native language: Both parents should implement the strategies listed below in their native language at home.

One parent speaks a native language: The parent that speaks a language other than English, should communicate with that dialect. This expands the child's lexical (vocabulary/language) capacities, increases knowledge of grammar, sounds and words; as they age.

What are some ways you can help support your child's language development when learning action words?

Singing Songs

Feel free to have some fun and sing along with your child, while also dancing with moves that match the lyrics of the song! Below are free videos and songs you can find on Youtube, in order to elicit the production of new action words:

- Walking in the Jungle by Super Simple Songs
- Freeze Dance by The Kiboomers- Kids Music Channel
- Can you (Point Your Fingers and Do the Twist?) by The Wiggles

Playing Games

While playing a game, encourage your child to explain what they are doing. For instance: During a ball catching game, you can ask your child what they are doing. Your child may respond "catch" or "catching". You can then form their answer into a sentence, and respond "Yes! You are CATCHING the ball." This technique can be used for many other games, such as a tea party. For instance: Parent: "What are you doing?" Child: "Eating cake", "Drinking tea", Parent: "Yummy, I love eating cake and drinking tea".

Reading Stories

Read a book with your child, and ensure to exaggerate the production of the action words. You can also act out the words together, as this will provide the child with a visual representation of the written word. Below are some recommended stories:

- We're Going On A Bear Hunt by Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury
- I Went Walking by Sue Williams
- There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly by Rose Bonne

Open Ended Questions

Open ended questions are questions which require more than a 'yes/no' response. Using open ended questions encourages the child to speak, and use the words they are learning; (i.e. You may ask "What are you doing?" or "What did you just do there?"). This will not only elicit the target word, but also familiarise the child with the nature of their action.

Emphasize Action Words

During activities place emphasis on the action word in the sentence. (i.e. "Are you RUNN- ING?")

Cuing and Imitation

When aiding a child to learn a new action word, it is important to reinforce the child's learning, with visual and verbal cues.

- Visual Cue:** Telling the child to watch how you say the word.
- Verbal Cue:** Telling the child where to place their tongue when producing the word.

After any form of cuing, allow the child to imitate the target action word, as this will reinforce the child's learning ability. (i.e. after cuing say "Good watching and listening, now it is your turn").

