

How can I use books to help develop my child's language?

There are lots of ways that books can be used to develop children's talking and understanding as well as developing speech sounds. Try some of the following strategies:

- Use 'fun' words like "wheeee" and "boom" to help bring the story to life. Make animal noises like 'baa' and 'moo'
- Use props or real objects to accompany a story to make the pictures more real to the child
- Sometimes it's ok to sit back and watch how your child reacts to a book. Which bit interests them? Are they trying to say some words?
- Don't rush reading; sometimes children may want to spend time talking or looking at one particular page
- Try missing out the end of a sentence and pausing when the sentence is familiar and/or repetitive e.g. that's not my...(lion) or 'just like...(daddy). Your child may then take the opportunity to fill in the word
- Try to avoid too many testing questions such as 'what's that', 'where's the dog' and so on. These can be useful sometimes but children benefit more from hearing you say the words and using strategies like pausing to see if they copy e.g. I can see a dog, you can see a (pause)...

Snip