

Telling your own stories and playing the Word Dice game

At home you may find a lot of what you say to your child has to do with every-day commands or questions, such as: "Please wash your hands!" or "Have you brushed your hair?" This conversation is important but not very interesting or much fun for a child.

One of the ways we can spend time with our children and really give all their language skills a BIG BOOST is by telling personal stories together, in an interactive way. These "stories" may be about the child's school day, about an outing to the park or about something that happened quite long ago. These personal stories are very important; they are the child's first stories.

Read and talk about the two following stories:

Story 1: Talking together after school

Mother: *How was your day at school today?*

Child: *It was good and not good because we had a story about a boy and his donkey but it made me feel sad*

Mother: *Oh my, why did you feel sad?*

Child: *I was sad because the boy was hungry and I was also hungry.*

Mother: *Oh dear you were hungry. What did you do?*

Child: *Then I saw Auntie Jodi and she gave me a sandwich.*

Mother: *Oh you are so good, come and give me a hug. Go and tell your Pa that story.*

Story 2: Before sleep chat about the holiday last year

Child: *Dad when did we go to pa's farm?*

Dad: *It was July last year, remember it was very cold.*

Child: *And Dad, who fetched us from the station?*

Dad: *It was my Boeta, he came in his big red truck.*

Child: *Oh yes and then we saw the lamb. Where was he stuck?*

Dad: *He was stuck in the fence, and I got him out and wrapped him in my new jersey.
Do you remember how we fed him?*

Child: *We gave him milk*

Dad: *Yes, we made the milk warm and put it in a baby's bottle*

Child: *And now he's a big sheep. Can I tell that story to my teacher tomorrow?*

Dad: *Yes you can and you can tell your Auntie Jodi too.*



The story telling game using the Word dice

How to play the game:

Cut and fold the **word dice** and glue the sides together to make your word box

Ask simple questions with all the words as you make the box. For example: **Who did you play with today?**

What did you play? How are you feeling? If necessary translate these words into your home language.

OR Do you remember when ...

Now chat about a familiar event together, using the word dice to get started.

Take turns to tell a personal story, using the word dice

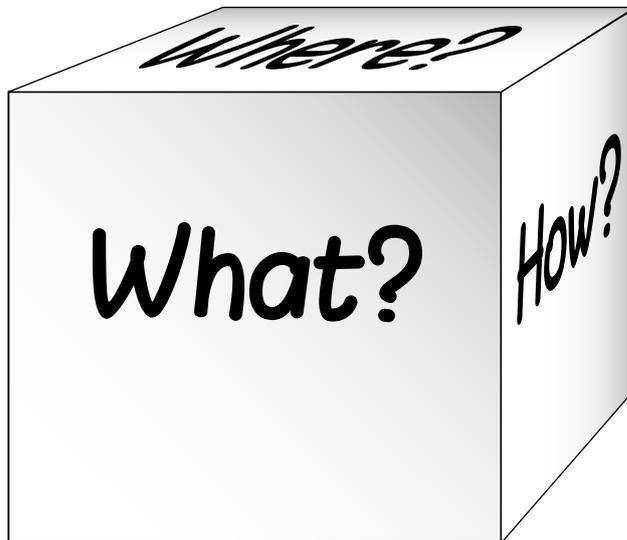
Play the game often so that your child gets used to telling personal stories with lots of interesting details.

Encourage your child to play the game with different family members

Think about when to play, for example: when your child gets home from school; before bed; on Saturday morning; straight after supper.

Play the "game" without the word dice – tell your own stories together.

Telling these personal stories together is very important for children's language development.



It only takes a few minutes to make a BIG difference!

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