**How do I support communication and interaction in Step 1?**

Children use language to communicate every day. They grow up using ‘everyday’ language. Written language is not like everyday language, so it is important to give children experiences of the kind of oral language that supports reading and writing. We can give our children language-rich environments, with lots of opportunities to hear and to use new vocabulary, more explanations and more complex narratives. By giving them these opportunities, we are setting them on the path to reading and writing.

1. **Look at the table and tick the boxes that describe how you interact with the children you tutor.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Strategies that support communication**  | **I seldom do this**  | **I do this sometimes**  | **I do this** **often**  |
| 1. I show children I am actively listening to them.
 |  |  |  |
| 1. I pause during conversations with children to encourage them to join in.
 |  |  |  |
| 1. I use unusual words and explain word meanings.
 |  |  |  |
| 1. I ask open-ended questions that encourage children to think (what, when, where, why, how questions).
 |  |  |  |
| 1. I encourage children to tell their own stories.
 |  |  |  |
| 1. I repeat what a child says to affirm the child’s message and then add some more information to expand the language.
 |  |  |  |
| 1. I help children to express their thoughts and feelings.
 |  |  |  |
| 1. I create a safe space for children to ask questions. When I ask them a question, I give them time to think before they answer.
 |  |  |  |
| 1. I explain and describe how things work or why we do things.
 |  |  |  |
| 1. I use symbols, pictures and props (objects) to make the language more meaningful.
 |  |  |  |

1. **Choose 2 strategies that you would like to work on, to build children’s language during Step 1 and throughout your lessons.**
2. **Write them on your bookmark and keep it as a reminder when you work with your children**.