

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD TO USE AND UNDERSTAND ACTION WORDS

Harder to Learn?

Action words (such as: eating, sleeping, jumping etc) can be more difficult for children to learn than naming words (such as: apple, car, cat etc). This is because they are more **abstract** and less **concrete**.

Why important?

Action words are what we use to link words together – they are the glue in our sentences!

For example, if a child said “mummy apple”, it might be difficult to understand what they are trying to say however by adding an action word, they have created a **meaningful** phrase “mummy eating apple”.

How to work on action words

- Set up the room with toys such as dolly, teddy, cups, plates and food items. When the child is playing, wait for **eye contact** and then **model** an action word (e.g. “drinking”).
- Play Simon says with your child to ensure that they understands these actions and when they is carrying out the action ask them what they are **doing**.
- Show your child pictures of **family/nursery members** carrying out different actions and ask them to describe what’s happening in the picture. You could model the first few or take it in turns so they know what to do.
- Encourage your child to link words together using an action word by **expanding** on what they say (e.g if your child says “teddy”, you could **repeat and add** to this by modelling “teddy eating”)
- Once your child is happy using **familiar verbs** (e.g eating, drinking, jumping etc), try modelling action words that are **less common** (e.g breaking, hiding, climbing, drawing etc). This will help to further **develop their vocabulary**.