

Setting up shop -

you can make your very own role play shop at home. First, decide what kind of shop: food, shoes, clothes? Together with your child, collect the things you'll need: for a food shop you can collect empty food packets and cartons; a shoe shop means collecting all the shoes you have! And boxes they might fit in if you have any; for a clothes shop, gather some different sized clothes, maybe some hangers, any accessories? Now set up shop. Let your child take the lead: where will it be? How will all the items be laid out? Have you got any bags the 'customer' can use? Use bits of paper and tape to make price labels (an opportunity to talk about money and mark make some numerals/amounts), or mark make name labels for items. Could you use a box/ tub as a till and loose pennies for money, or bits of paper again? Time to go shopping! Use lots of talk, model how to pretend, take on different roles, make a shopping list, try things on, give yourselves made up names. Have fun!

Measuring -

no rulers needed! Help your child to find something to measure with. It could be a stick, a piece of string, or for more of a challenge you could use same-sized Lego bricks/building blocks. Now find some things to measure: how long is the rug, how tall is the table, how long is the train you made earlier? Show your child how to hold the stick/string at one end of the object, put their finger to mark where the stick/string gets to, and then move the stick/string along to that point and repeat. Don't forget to count as you go. Then you can say 'The rug is 8 sticks long'. If you're using bricks/blocks you can stack/lay these along the object - there'll be lots of counting to do. Extend the activity by making comparisons: taller than/shorter than/longer than. For earlier stages of development use the language of length as you play- tall, short, long. Add gestures with your hands and arms to give visual clues - arms out wide for long, and hands close together for short.

Book words and story language -

you can help your child to know their way around a book by doing a few things when you share a book together. Use 'book' words: cover, front, back, title, page, turn, illustration, letter, word, sentence, rhyme, author, illustrator. Depending on their stage of development, are there letters they recognise (from their name?). Comment on initial letters in a word and make the sound, e.g. bus...'bbb...bus'. Hold the book upside down or back to front and see if your child corrects you - this is fun to do with children at an earlier stage of development. Use story language: beginning, middle, end, once upon a time, happily ever after, The End, before, next, what will happen, why do you think that? Talk about the pictures using lots of describing words: enormous, dark, furry, tiny, bright, curly. What does your child notice? If you have a non-fiction book (on dinosaurs? Animals?) you could model how to use this to look something up using information book words: contents, index, page number... then use lots of descriptive vocabulary to discuss the pictures. At earlier stages of development, your child may point to pictures and make sounds and you can respond, mirroring their excitement and adding words: 'Yes, the elephant is sooooo big!'

This week's activities for you to try at home with your child are about the Specific Areas of Learning - **Literacy (L)**, **Maths (M)**, **Understanding the World (UTW)** and **Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)**. You know your child best, so have a go at adapting these to meet their interests or to use whatever you have available in your home.

Mark making -

this is a sensory experience, it's about movement, it's about the process rather than the product, and it helps to develop early writing skills. Hunt around for things your child could make marks in: paint, sand, cornflour, playdough, mud. You'll need something to contain your mark making resource - a flat surface with shallow sides is best, but don't worry too much: a tray, washing up bowl, large plastic plate, washed up ice cream tub. Put a thin layer of your mark making resource in the bottom of your tray/tub. What are you going to use to make marks with? Fingers, sticks, forks and spoons, paintbrush, old toothbrush. Remember to make sure things are safe. Your child (and you!) might want to be wearing an old T shirt in case it gets messy. Give your child time to explore what happens when they push a fork into dough, or drag a stick through mud, or wiggle their finger through cornflour. Use lots of words with them - wiggly, straight, wavy, sticky, soft, squidgy. For early stages of development, use fingers, hands, and feet to explore. At a later stage they might begin to make recognisable marks, perhaps a letter from their name, or they may explain what their marks represent.

People who help us -

if possible, start from your child's interests: they might love watching the dustbin lorry from the window, they might be asking a lot about germs and illness, they might like playing shops. Talk about what a refuse collector/shop assistant/nurse does, what do they wear, how do they travel, how do they help us? Perhaps find some pictures of people doing these jobs. If your child joins in with the clapping every Thursday, help them to think about one of these jobs and the people who do it when they clap and say 'thank you'. They might like to make a rainbow with you to put in your window. For earlier stages of development, keep talking about family or friends/ look at photos.

WEEK 8



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