

CONJUNCTIONS

What is a Conjunction?:

A conjunction is a word that joins two words, phrases or sentences together

e.g. 'and' – "shoes and socks" "the boy is running and the girl is sleeping"

'but' – "I like chocolate but I can't have any"

'because' – "the dog is asleep because he is tired"

Why is it important?:

Conjunctions are an important part of spoken language and allow children to give more information and use longer sentences when they are talking. They often miss them out giving two shorter phrases instead.

How to help:

The following activities aim to teach children to use conjunctions appropriately. Follow the instructions on the sheet and 'hints for practice' below.

HINTS FOR PRACTICE

Modelling:

When beginning the activities give the child examples of the responses you wish to hear.

e.g. Adult pointing to the picture: 'knife and fork'

'the man is reading and drinking tea'

'he is climbing the ladder because he

wants to clean the windows'

Then ask the child to repeat after you:

e.g. Adult: 'knife and fork, you say her knife and fork'

Child: 'knife and fork'

Specific Praise:

If the child responds correctly give specific praise ie, specifically tell the child that they produced the appropriate word. The child is then clear about what behaviour needs to be repeated.

e.g. 'Well done, it is 'shoes **and** socks'

Recasting:

If the child does not respond correctly simply re-model the correct response:

e.g. Child: 'the lady fall down stairs, break her glasses'

Adult: 'Let's say that again together, the lady fell down stairs **and** broke
her glasses' (exaggerating 'and')

ACTIVITIES

Target: To be able to use 'and' to join words and short phrases

1. Things that go together game. Use a published game, your own pictures or objects collected e.g. chair/table, shoe/sock, bucket/spade, pencil/paper. As the child joins the pictures together or matches the items, encourage the use of 'and'.
2. Drawing game. Have a background of a farm on a piece of paper. A field and barn/house will do!. Then ask the child to draw...
A flower *and* a farmer

A cloud *and* a cow

A pig *and* a pond

3. Have a large pile of action pictures divided into two piles. Place face down in front of the child. You say “Let’s see what these people are doing (turn over a card). He is jumping and (turn over another card) he is reading. Listen, he is jumping *and* he is reading”
4. I went to the Moon. Use this familiar memory game to encourage the use of and. Use pictures with younger children to make the game easier. “I went to the moon *and* found a tree” “I went to the moon *and* found a tree *and* a car”.
5. Group activity. Think of some familiar routines such as making a sandwich, going to bed, getting dressed and have a selection of pictures appropriate to these activities spread out. Say to the children “I want to get dressed. What do I need?” The children then pick out the pictures of what you need. As they select two each encourage the use of ‘and’ “a t-shirt, jumper *and* some socks”

Target: To be able to use the conjunction ‘because’

1. Model the target conjunction for the child in simple sentences in a variety of contexts, and ensure that they understands the meaning.
2. Use cause and effect pictures, and ask the “why” question, e.g., “why is the baby crying?”.
3. The child should be encouraged to use “because” in their answer, e.g., “because he was hungry” or “because he wanted some milk”. If they make a mistake or omit ‘because’ then model back to correct sentence to the child.
4. You can also ask the child questions using picture books/stories that have just been read.
5. You may use a written/visual reminder to remind the child to use the conjunction ‘because’ within structured activities.
6. Ask questions in everyday situations, ‘why do you eat breakfast in the morning?’ to stimulate their use of ‘because’. Ensuring that they answer in a full sentence (i.e. ‘I ate breakfast because I was hungry’)- model back the full sentence.

Activities to use in everyday situations:

- Talk about everyday situations and people doing activities e.g. 'What is she doing?' Oh look! She's playing with her dolly *and* tea set (use your voice to emphasise the pronoun).
- Look at photographs and talk about how people are feeling or what they are doing using conjunctions e.g. "Daddy is playing and Grandad is sleeping"
- When looking at books try to talk about two things people are doing or why they are doing something using conjunctions.
- When playing with lego or playmobil characters talk about what the characters are doing or using conjunctions.

Strategies to use in everyday situations:

If your child uses the wrong conjunction:

- Repeat the sentence they have said inserting the correct conjunction and emphasising it,
e.g. Child: 'he sleeping and feeling tired'
Adult: 'Oh yes, he is sleeping **because** he is feeling tired'
- Offer the child a forced alternative,
e.g. 'shoes socks or shoes **and** socks?'

Other useful resources:

- Black Sheep Press: Why?/because, Things that go Together,
- Things that go together – LDA game