

Understands wh-questions (who, where, what questions)

Being able to answer and ask questions using the words starting with 'wh' help children to join in conversations, show their knowledge and understanding and find out more about their world. Children will learn the 'wh' questions in sequence. Some questions as they are more concrete are easier than others e.g., 'what' and 'where' and some are more difficult e.g., when and who.

Typical development

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| 2 to 3 year olds will be learning to: | understand simple questions about who, what and where. |
| 3 to 4 year olds will be learning to: | understand questions like "why do you think the caterpillar got so fat?" |

General Strategies

- Remember to get the child's attention first before asking your question – say the child's name or touch his/her shoulder and say name and once the child gives a signal that s/he is focussing on you, ask the question
- When you have asked a question count to 10 to give the child time to process the question and answer
- If s/he does not respond, ask the question again
- Verbally prompt as necessary by giving the first few words of the sentence
- Try using the Makaton signs with the question word to help understanding
- Teach one question word at a time
- Remember to keep questions in the 'here and now' initially

Who questions

Start by using familiar people e.g., when Mummy or Daddy pick up from session ask "Who is this?" pointing to the person. Ask children questions about actions that are taking place immediately in front of the child such as "Who is painting?"

Example of who question: Who brought you to Pre-School today?

Where questions

Get children to show you different body parts in response to where question "where are your eyes?" If necessary, prompt with hand over hand.

You could also put objects familiar to child on a table and ask "where's the x?" Use 2 objects initially.

Example of where questions: Use where questions for child to name where a person is e.g. "where is X?". Is she in the garden or in the bathroom? When child has had a go at responding, you could both call "Jo where are you?" and the named adult respond "I'm in the garden" etc.

Use every day routines to model where questions e.g., when going outside, "Where are your wellies?"

What questions

Think of things that the child is familiar with and motivated by (toys, foods, drinks) Use objects and pictures of objects and hold an item up and ask "What's this?" If the child does not respond, model the answer. When the child responds correctly affirm "Yes it's a x". When the child answers confidently each time move on to other objects. Move on to questions that involve verbs e.g. "What's Jo doing?" As before, if the child does not respond, model the answer. Take photos of people doing everyday actions such as drinking, eating brushing (hair) etc.

Examples of what questions: What do you eat? What do you do with a brush?

Useful links

Further ideas and examples of questions <https://www.provide.org.uk/levelsofquestioninginformationsheet>