

ICAN

helps children
communicate



Great games to help children get
ready for pre-school and beyond

Includes
advice for
parents
& carers



Which animal am I?

How to play

Choose an animal from the pictures and make its sound. ("Woof" or "Baa" etc.) Ask your child to guess which animal the sound belongs to by pointing to the right picture.



Help your child get ready for pre-school by making sure they're able to pay attention and listen. Telling the difference between sounds will enable your child to focus better on their teacher's voice. This game may seem simple but it's vital for encouraging good communication skills.



TOO EASY? Make two or three sounds in a row ("Woof", "Quack" and "Meow"). You could even ask your child to find the pictures in the right order.



MAKE YOUR OWN VERSION: Cut out pictures of things that make distinctive noises e.g. car, telephone, doorbell or other animals.

Ollie's shopping bag

How to play

Make up a story about Ollie going shopping, or use this one. Ask your child to remember what's in Ollie's bag.

“Ollie went to the corner shop. He bought a tin of beans and put it in his bag. Then he bought some cheese and put that in his bag. Next he bought a magazine. Ollie got on the bus and went home. But, oh no, he'd left his shopping bag behind. Can you help Ollie remember what's in his bag?”



! This game will help your child to deal with more than one piece of spoken information at a time. At pre-school, the helper might say, “*Wash your hands and then sit at the table*” so children need to remember and act on two pieces of information. It takes time to get good at listening and holding information in your head. Playing “*Ollie's Shopping Bag*” is a great way to build this core skill.



TOO EASY? You can increase the number of objects in Ollie's bag. You can also take turns at being the storyteller and the person who remembers. When your child is telling the story, they are still developing their memory.



TOO HARD? Cut out pictures of items for Ollie's shopping bag. Tell the story and show each picture as you say the name, then turn it over. If needed, use the pictures again to help your child remember. Or make up a story with only one item, then two and so on.



MAKE YOUR OWN VERSION: You can make up a story about almost anything; for instance, a dog going for a walk and seeing different things along the way or a visit to the seaside.

Things that go together

How to play

Tell your child that these objects are mixed up and need sorting out. Ask them to say which things go together – which go in the sandpit, which are for making pictures and which are clothes?



Your child will find pre-school easier if they know the names of some of the everyday objects there. This game builds vocabulary and teaches how to organise information into different categories – important for learning and language development.



MAKE YOUR OWN VERSION: Cut out some pictures that you can group together. For example: things you drink (milk, water) and things you wear (socks, hat), or things from the bathroom (soap, toothbrush) and things from the kitchen (bowl, glass). Sometimes a picture will fit both categories – a sponge, for instance (is it from the kitchen or the bathroom?). There are not necessarily right and wrong answers. You can talk to your child about why they think one thing or another.

Help your child develop their mental filing system by asking them to help sort their toys into two boxes. "All the cars in this box. All the shop things in that box." This also helps with the tidying up!

All about me!

What to
What to
do

Have fun filling in these pages together with your child. Talk about the information and include pictures and photographs. Also encourage your child to draw – whatever the result!

Look again at these pages from time to time. What's changed? For instance, does your child still have the same favourite toy?

The mini-scrapbook can help the staff at pre-school get to know your child better. Your youngster will also have something familiar to talk about with new friends.

Photo of me



At pre-school, your child will have the chance to make lots of new friends. Being able to talk about themselves will help them to do this. You can help by making this scrapbook together. Use it to talk to your child about what makes them so special.

My name:

Who lives in my house?

Things I like:

Special friends:

Drawing of my family

My pet

My pet's name:

My favourite toy

My toy's name:



SCRAPBOOKS: A scrapbook is a brilliant way of creating a personal history. Make another one with your child: You can use photos, drawings, letters, tickets, invitations and certificates to keep memories alive. Include information about friends and family, what your child likes doing and dates of special importance. If you ever get stuck for something to talk about, just pull out the scrapbook. They'll still love it years from now.

What do you hear?

How to play

Ask your child to
"Be really quiet,
so you can listen".

Together listen to the noises around you (the dog barking, the birds singing, the fridge humming, etc.) Talk with your child about what they can hear.



In pre-school, there will be many times when your child is asked to listen to some information or an instruction. Learning to listen is more than simply 'hearing sounds'. It is a skill that underpins all speech and language development. This game involves paying attention to sounds; sorting out which are important and working out what they mean.



PLAY ANYWHERE: Listen to sounds in different rooms, in the garden, in shops or on the street.



TIPS FOR TALKING: When you are talking with your child, be sure to reduce the other noises that will get in the way of them listening to you. Turn off the TV or the music. Also, say your child's name first so that they know you want them to listen. Try to have some quiet time together every day.

Tell me a story

“

It was morning time.

Ollie woke up feeling very happy. He wanted to drive his new van and help people. Ollie got up and brushed his teeth. Next Ollie put his clothes on. After his breakfast, he got into his new van. He smiled happily all the way to work.”



How to play

Tell your child that you will help them tell Baby Bear a story. Ask them to listen carefully so they can repeat the story to Baby Bear once you have finished. Prompt them if needed, e.g. “*What happened next?*” or “*And then...*”

For younger children, you could get some toys to ‘act out’ this story. This will help your child to remember what has happened.



There will be times in pre-school when your child will be asked to tell ‘a story’.

This might happen as a group, or when there is an argument over a toy and the teacher wants to know what has happened. By playing this game, you will be able to demonstrate how to tell a story well, and give your child the chance to retell it.



REMEMBER: Praise your child for what they do remember. It doesn’t matter if they don’t get it right first time. Practice will help.



TIP: You can use any story for this activity. Having a picture of each part of the story will help your child remember longer stories. Make up your own stories too. You can do this activity at home, out walking or while you are waiting somewhere.

Listen and colour

How to play

This game is about listening,

not about developing colouring skills.

Ask your child to colour in the picture bit by bit by following instructions like: "Colour the boy's arm" or "Colour the girl's top". It doesn't matter which colour is used.

Make sure you don't give extra clues by pointing.



This game teaches your child to listen and follow instructions. The better your child is at doing this, the more involved they can be at pre-school. The neatness of their colouring isn't important at this stage.



TOO EASY? Give your child a challenge by asking them to colour two things. For example, "Colour the boy's shirt and eyes". If your child knows the colour names add this to your instructions. For example, "Colour the girl's eyes blue".



MAKE YOUR OWN VERSION: Why not make your own drawings for this game? Don't worry about your drawing skills – draw what you can and tell your child what it is. Children are very forgiving! Or you can try this game with any colouring books that your children own.



