

# The Power of Play!

## Enthusiasm and Engagement

Play is a highly motivating, enjoyable, and essential aspect of oral language development for children. Enthusiasm and engagement in play leads to more active language use and a higher level of language exploration and experimentation.

## Social Interaction

Many types of play, such as board games, pretend play, or sports, involve interactions with others. These interactions require communication and collaboration, which are fundamental aspects of oral language development. Through play, children learn to take turns, express themselves, listen to others, and negotiate meaning, all of which contribute to their language development.

## Sensory Experiences

Multi-sensory experiences like playing with water, sand, and clay help to build vocabulary when talking about the textures, shapes, and colours of these materials. Sensory experiences often provide many opportunities to reinforce language learning skills.

## Problem Solving & Concept Building

Play often involves solving problems or figuring out how to achieve a specific goal. For example, in building with blocks or constructing a Lego set, children need to discuss and plan their approach, which involves using language to communicate ideas, ask questions, and seek clarification.

Play also provides opportunities for children to explore abstract concepts such as cause and effect, time, and spatial reasoning. As children gain a better understanding of these concepts through experimentation, they are also developing language skills needed to express their thinking.

## Imagination and Creativity

Play encourages children to use their imagination and be creative. When children create imaginary scenes or act out different roles, opportunities to use rich language emerge naturally. Whether they are pretending to be a contractor building a house or playing with puppets and creating a dialogue between the characters, imaginative play provides opportunities for language practice and development.

## Narration Skills

An important element of play is being able to engage in storytelling. Play provides the opportunity for children to learn how to narrate what is going on while they're playing with their toys and creating a story. These experiences help children develop narrative skills such as sequencing events with a beginning, middle, and end, describing characters and settings, and other problem-solving skills.

