



SLT Top Tips for supporting Expressive Language

Expressive Language is the way that we use language to communicate our thoughts to others either verbally (using speech) and/or non-verbally (e.g. using body language, gestures, signs, picture symbols, AAC). Children with expressive language difficulties can find it hard to:

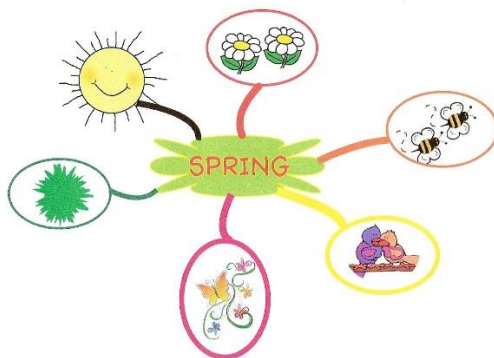
- Learn new words
- Find the right words they want to say
- Combine words in sentences
- Use the correct grammar when making sentences
- Tell stories
- Express their needs and ideas

Here are some **ideas for strategies** that can help:

- Give your child **extra time** to respond to questions and plan what they want to say.
- **Model words and language** for your child to listen to and learn during everyday activities.
- If your child uses the incorrect word or grammar when talking, try to repeat it in the correct way for them to listen to, without asking them to say it correctly (e.g. if they say 'I sawed a aeroplane' you could say 'you saw an aeroplane').
- Show your child how to **extend** their language/make their sentences longer by adding on to what they say (e.g. if they say 'look an aeroplane' you could say 'an aeroplane in the sky').

- Ask **open ended questions** or use **comments** to encourage responses (e.g. ‘what happened?’ ‘I wonder what would happen if...’) and avoid asking too many questions when you are talking to your child.
- **Repeat new vocabulary** many times in different contexts.
- If your child has difficulty finding the word they want to say give them **cues** to think about such as (what type of thing is it?, where do you find it?, what does it look like?, what does it do?)
- **Accept all forms of communication** that your child uses to express themselves (e.g. allow them to use gestures/signs, objects, pictures and writing to support their spoken language.)
- Allow your child to use **photos/pictures/writing** to support their spoken language (e.g. if they want to share some news with their friends about what they did on holidays it might be useful for them to have some photos to help them tell the story).
- Use visual supports such as **mind maps** and **story planners** to help your child with learning new vocab and developing narrative/story telling skills.

Mind Map example



Story planner example

When	
Who	
Where	
What happened	
Ending	