

Talking Matters

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Goal: SEQUENCING

To develop the ability to describe a series of actions in a logical, well sequenced manner.

Sequencing skills are important in story telling and ordering a series of events when sharing information. This skill is important for developing early reading/writing skills and later leads to skills such as writing essays and science reports.

Sequence cards are a series of related pictures which can be arranged in order to show a simple story. They come in sequences of 3, 4, 5 or more pictures. Start with few pictures and build up as the child can manage more pictures. They are available from your speech pathologist and in some preschools and schools.

To use sequence cards;

1. Place all the cards in front of the child and ask him/her to put them in order. (Ask what happens first?). If this is difficult put the cards in order yourself, working left to right, describe the sequence, then mix them up again and ask you child to "make the story". Help to order them if needed.
2. Ask him/her to tell you the story. You may need to demonstrate first. Expect one sentence per card.
3. Repeat the child's story after him/her, fixing up any errors and linking ideas using "and then". Link the events between the cards eg: "The boy got out of bed and then he got dressed".
4. When the child can easily describe a simple sequence of actions, introduce ideas such as "because", "but", "after" and also more detail into the story and well as direct speech, "He said", "She said" etc.



Other activities include:

- a. Read stories with simple action sequences to the child using "and then" to link the action.
- b. Use a digital camera to make cards of your child doing familiar activities at home or to recount a family activity or outing. When you have finished sequencing them you could paste them onto paper to make a personalised book for your child.
- c. Some children's books and magazines have story sequences that you could cut up and use as sequence cards. You may need to simplify the story and tell it to your child before mixing up the pictures as the story may not be obvious just from the pictures.
- e. You could also buy old story books from second hand shops and cut up the pictures to make story sequences. Choose simple familiar books where the pictures show each step of the story.
- g. When your school aged child is confident with ordering pictures you could try writing steps on strips of paper without pictures. Ask your child to put the pictures in order, and then staple them together like a small book.

d. Talk about sequences in everyday activities such as dressing, cooking, household tasks.

See if the child can make his/her sandwich telling you the sequence. Talk about what he/she did after they have completed it eg: "Tell Daddy how you made your sandwich".

eg: When making a sandwich for lunch:

Ask the child what you need to make the sandwich. Then as you are making the sandwich say:

"First we spread the bread". "Then we put on the cheese and tomato". "Then we cut the sandwich and put in on a plate". "Then we eat it".

f. For school age children you could write each sentence on a card and place it under each picture. You could make "and then" cards to go in between. You could then mix it all up and see if you child can put the pictures and the words in the right order. Then see if he/she can put the sentences in order without the picture cues.

You can also use your sequence pictures for:

- Developing understanding of concepts such as: first, last, middle, beginning, end, next, before, after.
- Practicing answering questions:

Questions for young children:

What is this? - Your child names something you point to.

Say this "....." - Your child copies a short sentence that you say.

Find one like this - Your child finds the same thing that you point to in another picture.

Questions for four year olds:

Find something that can ... - Your child finds an object described by it's function.

Questions for five year olds:

What will happen next? - Your child predicts the next action.

What couldsay? - Your child takes the role of the character in the picture and says what they would say.

What is a? - Your child describes, including the function, an object depicted in the picture

Questions for six year olds

What made that happen? - Your child explains why an action occurs.

What will happen if....? - Your child predicts the next action.

Why would / Why wouldn't...? - Your child explains why/why not about a given scenario.

How can you tell that...? - Your child inferences how they know something to be true.

