

Attention and Listening // Age 4-5

Helpful Tips

Any activity where a child is focusing their attention on a specific goal for a period of time is helping them to develop their attention and listening skills. Activities such as painting, building models with bricks, and looking at books together, all give the child opportunities to stretch the time they are able to focus their attention.

Set time limits for your child to carry out these focused activities. Use a sand timer to show how long the activity will last. Make the time more than achievable to start with, then gradually increase the length of time you expect the child to remain on the activity.

Alternate between focused tasks and more active ones. Movement breaks (star jumps, run around the garden, stretching etc.) allow your child to release some energy which will then help them to focus better when they return to the task.



Action Rhymes

Use action rhymes, such as head, shoulders knees and toes, or 10 fat sausages sizzling in a pan. Once they are familiar with the actions that go with the rhyme, the adult should speak and not do the actions, and the children should not speak, just listen and do the actions.

Musical bumps

- Play music or use a musical instrument
- When the music/noise stops, the children need to sit down as quickly as possible
- The last child to sit down is out of the game, but can help to find the slowest child in the next round

Find the Animal

Use pictures of animals and scatter them around the room. Make the animal sound and see if the child can find the matching animal.

Table Top Games

Lots of different table top card games are available to buy. Lotto games, and simple card games such as pairs, snap, or shopping list games all require attention and listening skills in order to join in. Start by using a small number of cards (e.g. 3 pairs of cards to find), and build up to larger numbers of cards as your child's attention span develops.

