Understanding Language // Year 1-2

Barrier Games

Collect two identical sets of objects, one for you and one for the child. Put a barrier between you (e.g. a folder) so you can't see each other's objects. Give each other instructions about where to position the objects in relation to each other (e.g. "put the book under the pen") Remove the barrier and see if the objects are in the same place?

Hide and Seek

Place objects around the room and ask the children to bring you things, describing...

- the way the object looks, e.g. bring me something that's big and red
- where you'd find the object, e.g. bring me something you would find in the bathroom
- what you do with the object, e.g. bring me something you wear when it's cold

Actions

Give the child a sequence of two to three actions to do. For example 'touch your nose and then clap your hands' or 'stamp your feet, touch the floor then put your hands in the air.' To help the child initially you could do the actions as you say them so they have a visual clue. As they improve stop your demonstration of the actions. You could also add an action the child shouldn't do, as in Simon says, e.g. 'Stand up, turn around, but don't sit back down again'.

Comparatives and Superlatives

Develop awareness of comparatives (big/small) and superlatives (big/bigger/biggest). Start by categorising objects or pictures into the groups 'big' and 'small'. Then look at each group separately, saying that "they are all big but look, this one's bigger that that one, and this one's the biggest". Repeat the task using different resources and then question the child to find one bigger, the biggest, smaller, the smallest, longer, the longest, taller, the tallest, etc. You can then get them to apply the skill in everyday situations, e.g. get the children to line up according to height.

Sequencing skills

Get children to match sequence patterns, this can either be by:

- o Copying the colour pattern of a string of beads, expanding in complexity and length.
- o Copying the colour pattern of a string of beads as shown on a picture, again increasing in complexity and length.
- o Copying the colour pattern of a string of beads, but you say the colour sequence instead of showing the child the beads. Start by giving them 3 colours at a time, then build up to 4.
- o Use pre-drawn patterns for the child to colour match.