Speech & Language Therapy

NHS
Oxford Health
NHS Foundation Trust

Barrier Games

You will need two identical sets of resources, such as bricks, photocopied pictures, or a blank piece of paper and coloured pencils. Put a barrier (e.g. a folder or whiteboard) between you and the child so that you can't see each other's work space. Then take turns to give each other instructions in the following activities.

Colouring

Use two identical line drawings that are ready to be coloured in. Feel free to draw your own to make them easier or harder according to the child's level of understanding. Also make sure you have the same coloured pens or pencils.

Give the child instructions to colour the pictures, such as:
* 'Colour the car green'
* 'Colour the bed red and blue.'

After the child has followed the instruction, you also colour in your picture. Compare the pictures after each instruction to see if they are the same. If they are not the same, can the child work out where the difference is, and say what they should have done?

With more detailed pictures, you can also give harder instructions, such as:
* 'The girl with the glasses is wearing a green spotty hat.'
* 'The second flower in the top line has purple petals.'

Drawing

You can also start with a blank piece of paper and give each other instructions for how to draw a picture. Compare pictures after each instruction. You can make this activity as easy or difficult as you like!

Easier instructions:

* Draw a flower
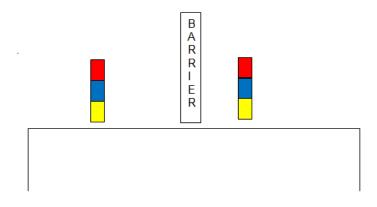* Draw a sun in the corner
* Draw a big square

Harder instructions:
* Draw a big yellow circle with a blue line above it
* Draw a red house with four windows and yellow curtains
* Incorporate 'silly' instructions such as 'draw a long tail on the man'

Each person needs the same number of different coloured bricks. Make a simple tower with 3 bricks. Tell the child the colours in the tower, making it clear you are starting with the bottom brick.   Then remove the barrier and see if your towers are the same.

Making Patterns

Have the same set of resources, such as coloured shapes, K'Nex or magnetix bricks, coloured links, etc. Give instructions for how to arrange these on the table, then remove the barrier to compare your patterns.