

Supporting your child's speech, language and communication at home
Storytelling Activities

This resource is designed to be used at home by parents and carers to support the development of their child's storytelling skills.

While the instructions often describe how the activities can be done by groups of children, **all of these activities can also easily be done with one child**, where the parent or carer takes turns with the child.

Picture sequencing

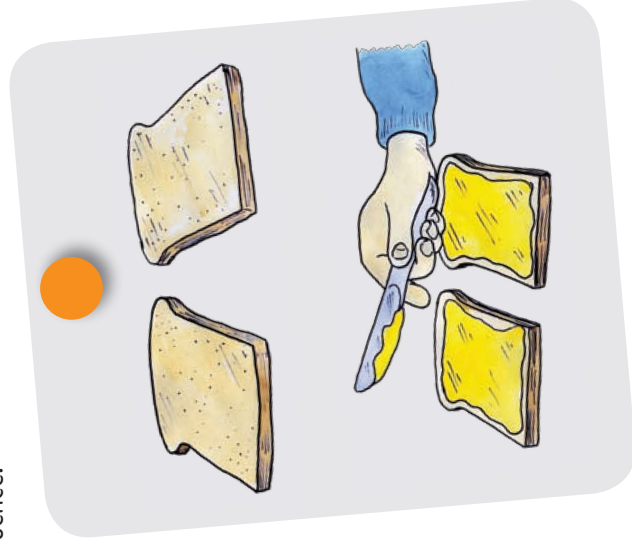


This exercise helps children learn how to tell their stories in the right order.

Setting up

First, create a set of picture cards from the *Picture sequencing* sheet.

The cards show the various stages of making a sandwich. The child's task is to put them in the right chronological sequence.



Getting started

Start by showing the children a part of the sequence and asking them to describe what's on the picture. Next, offer a choice of two pictures and ask: '*Which comes next?*'

When they've got the hang of this, make the task a little harder by asking them to order all the cards on their own. Get them to describe how a sandwich is made, using the cards as a guide.

Place special emphasis on words that are to do with ordering and organising, such as first, second, next, last, beginning and so on. This will help at school with organising their writing.

Variation

You can have great fun making up your own cards with a digital camera. For example, you could take a series of photographs of children getting ready for school in the morning - brushing their teeth, having breakfast, and so on. By playing the sequencing game with these photographs, you'll not only increase storytelling skills but will also familiarise them with the routine.

Get talking

Use the exercise as an opportunity to chat. If the pictures are about getting dressed, you could chat about the difference between winter and summer clothes, and so on.

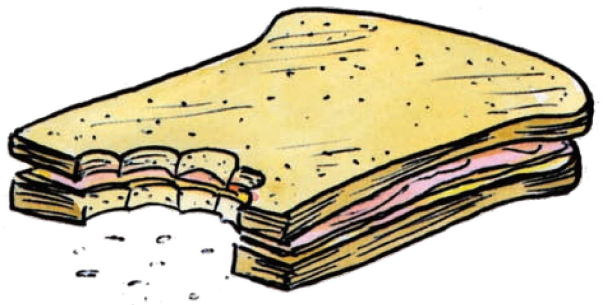
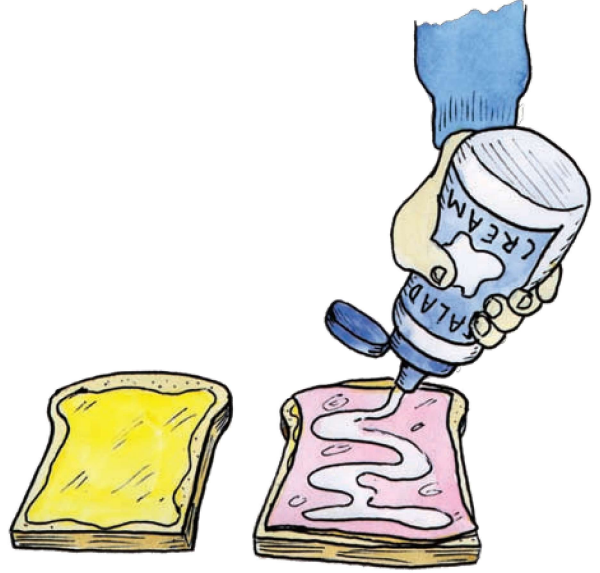
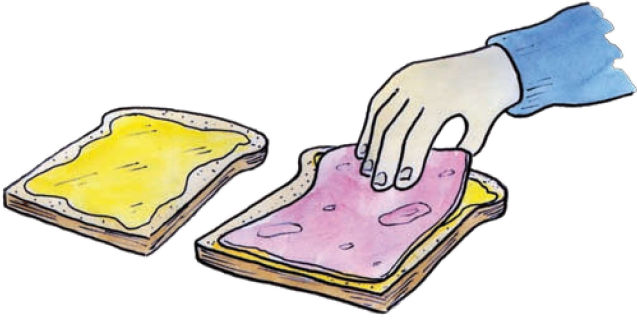
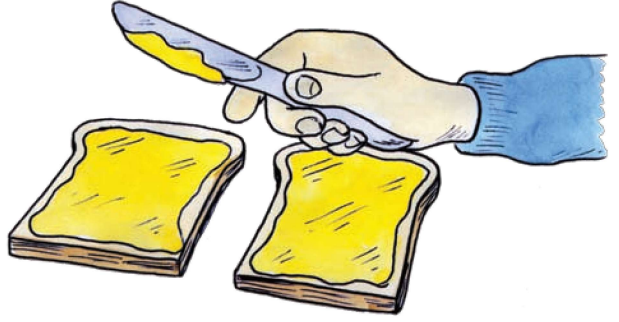
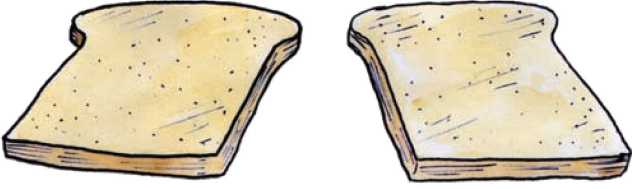
You can play an online version of this game at: www.communicationcookbook.org.uk

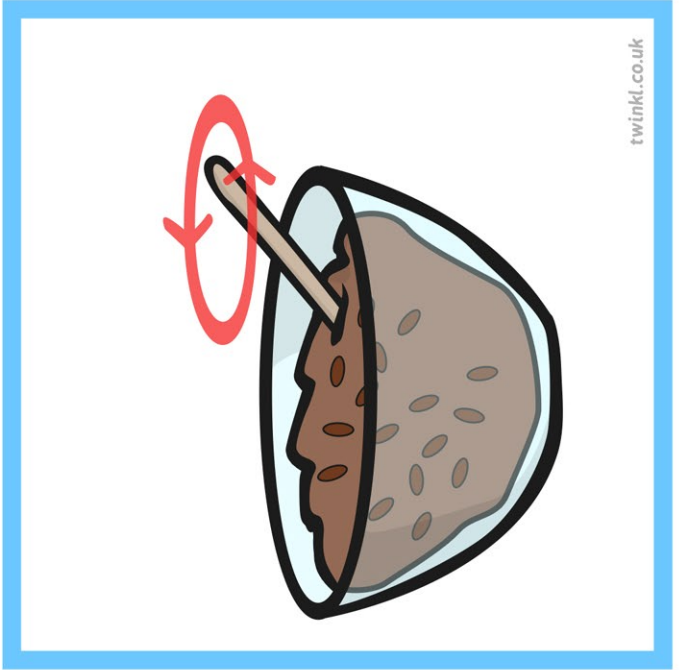
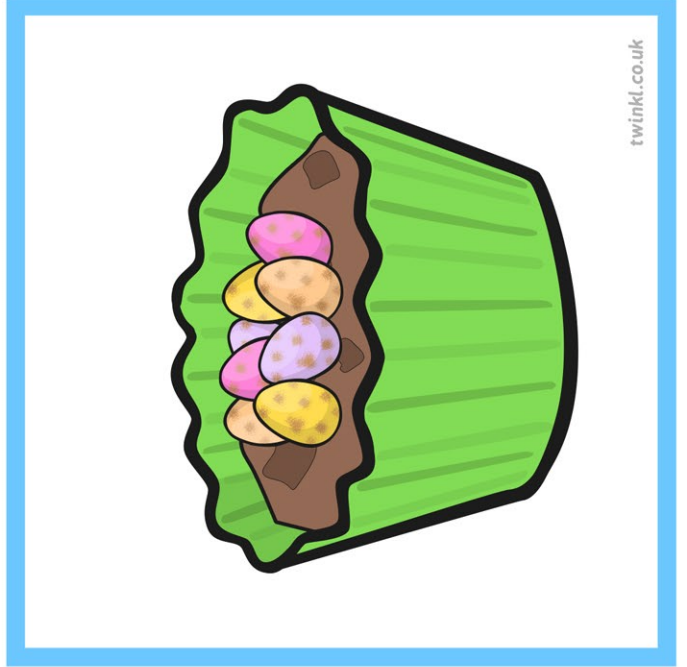
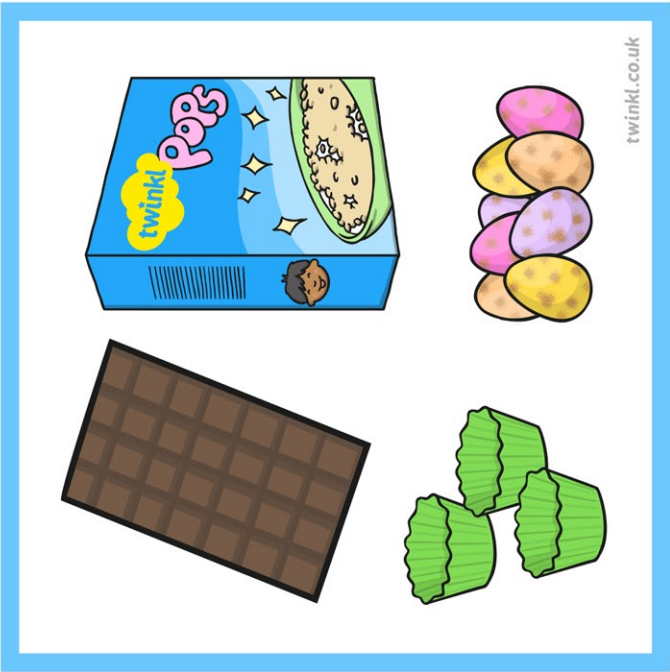
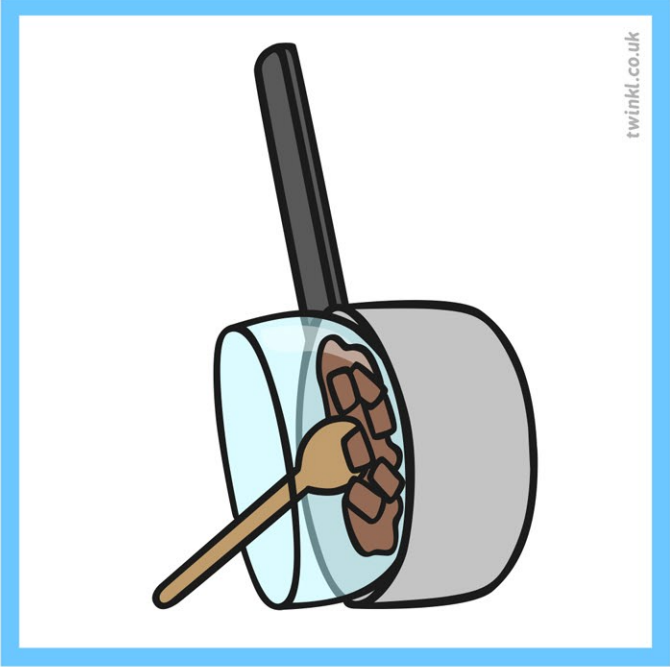
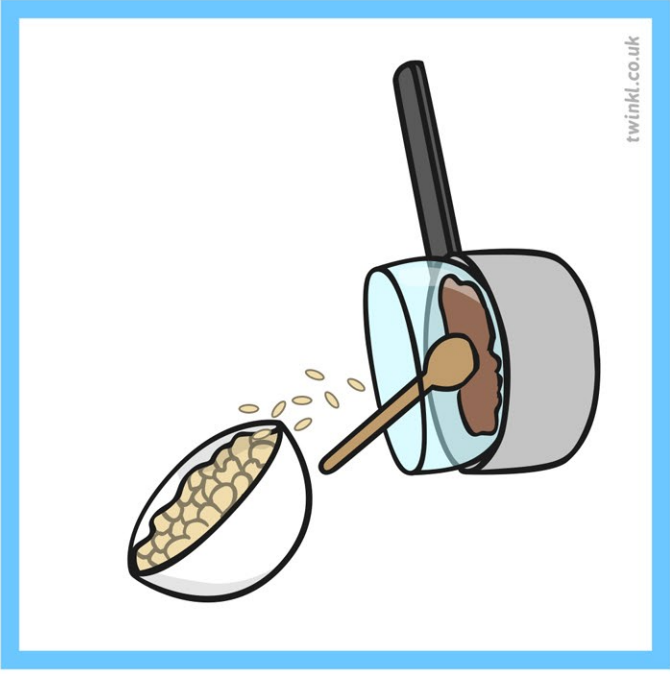
Other ideas for sequences...

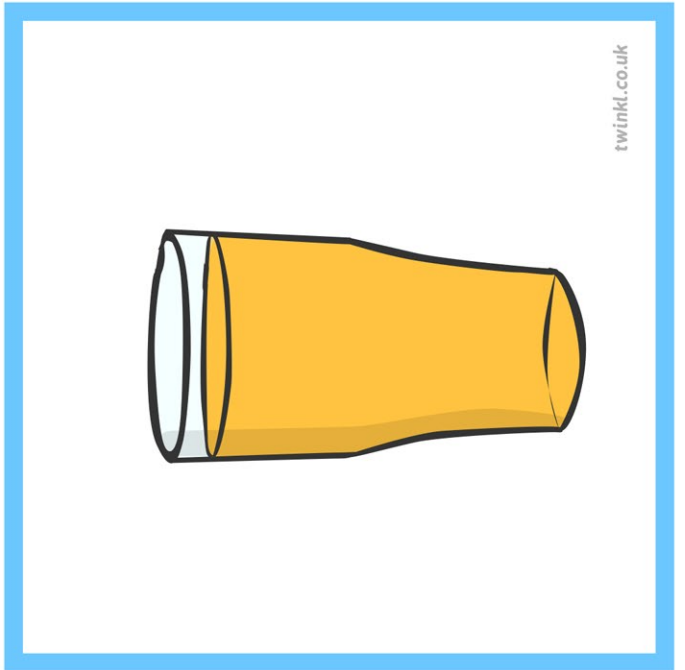
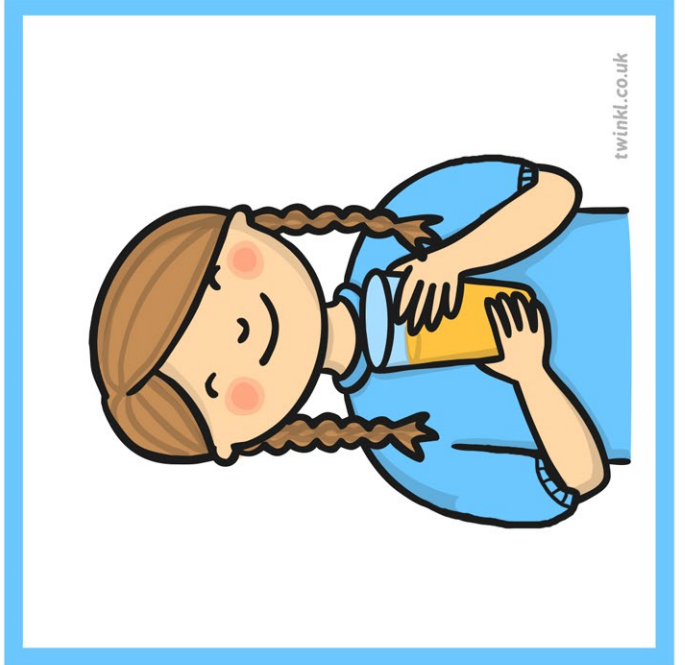
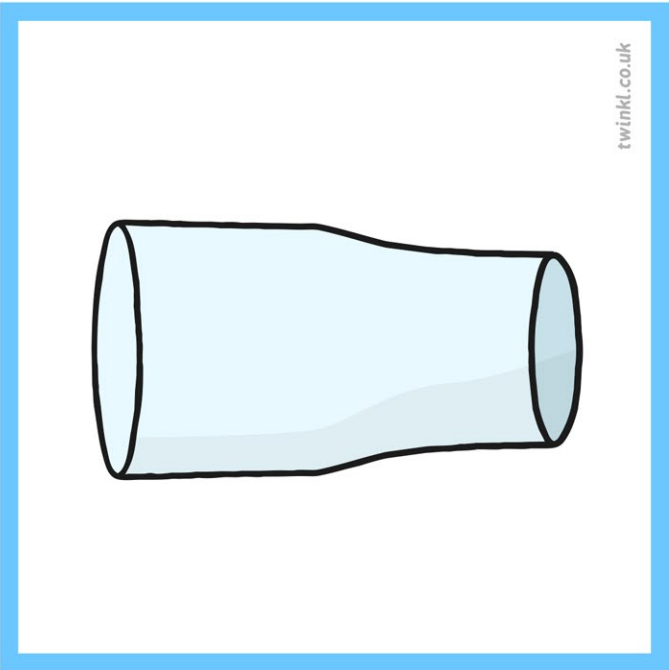
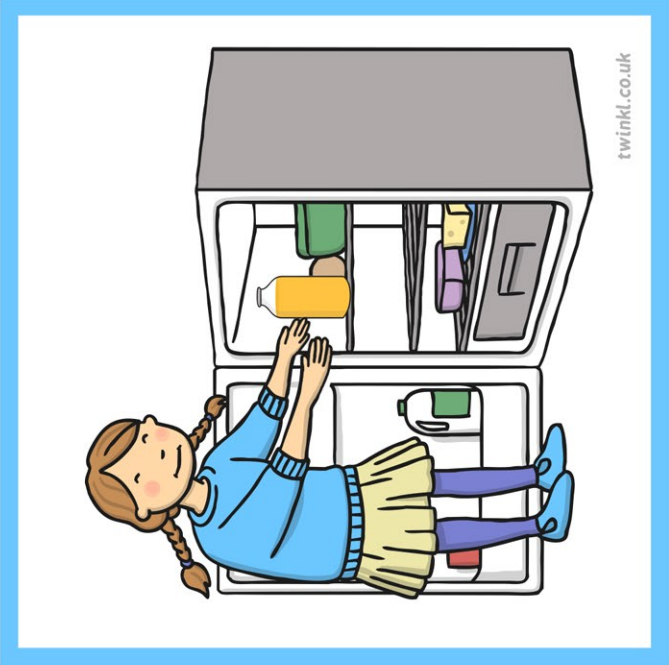
- What happens in the morning*
- At playtime*
- Going to school*
- Going to the park*
- Going to the cinema*
- Getting dressed*

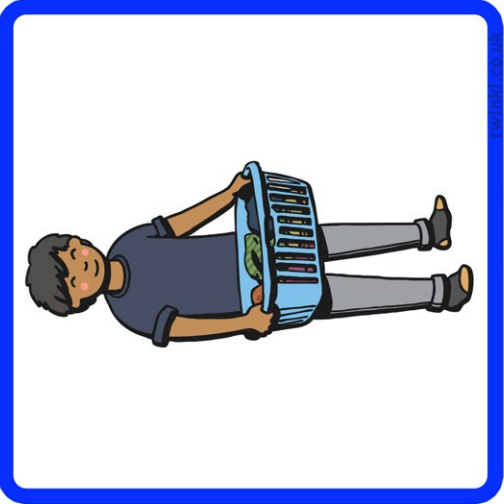
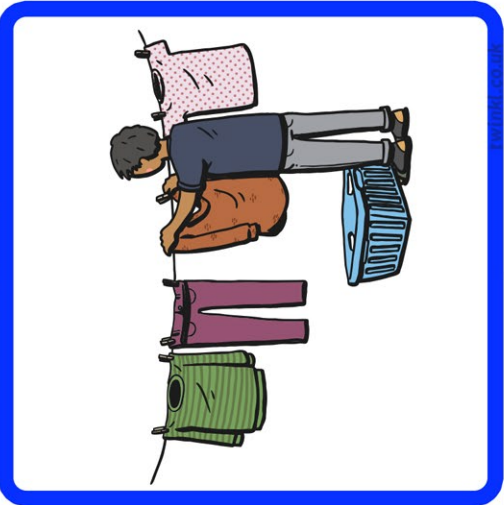
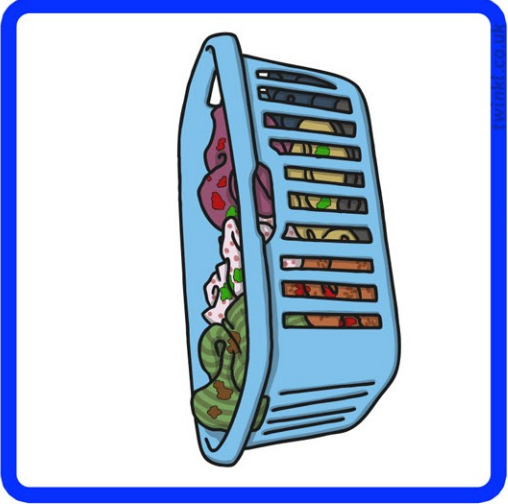
'This is a bit like a story.'



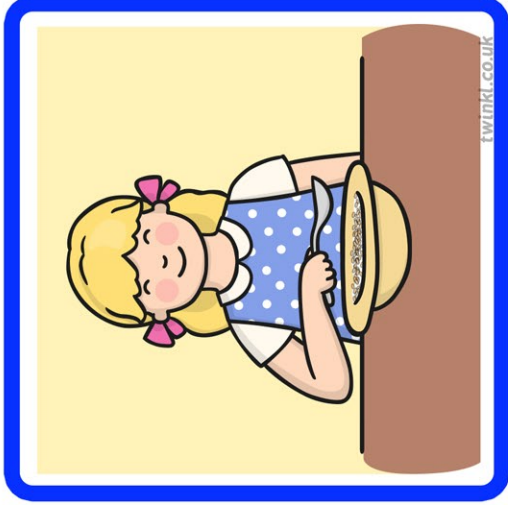
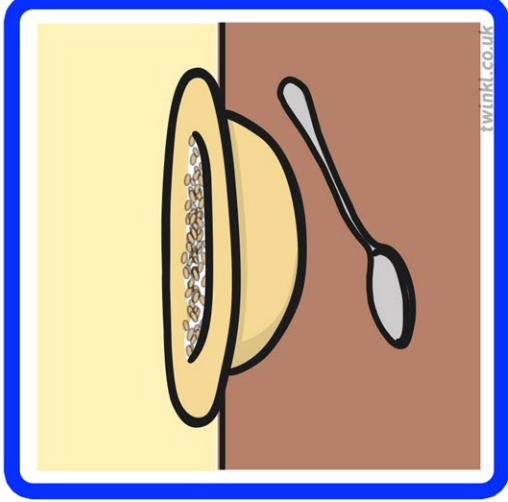
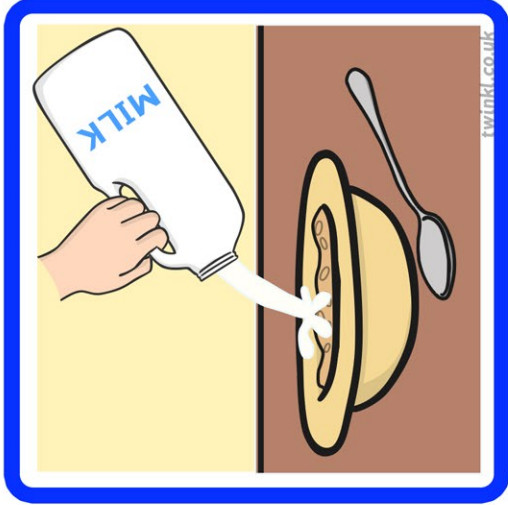
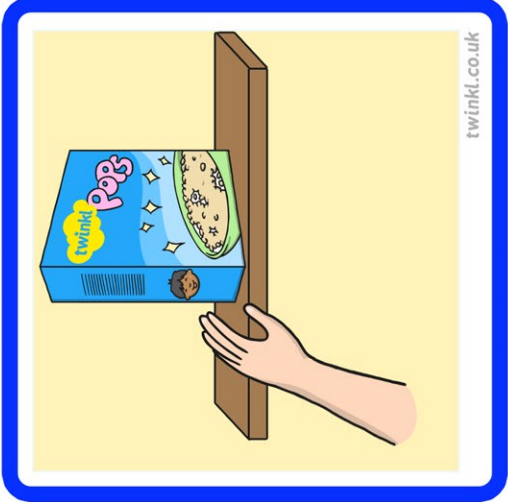
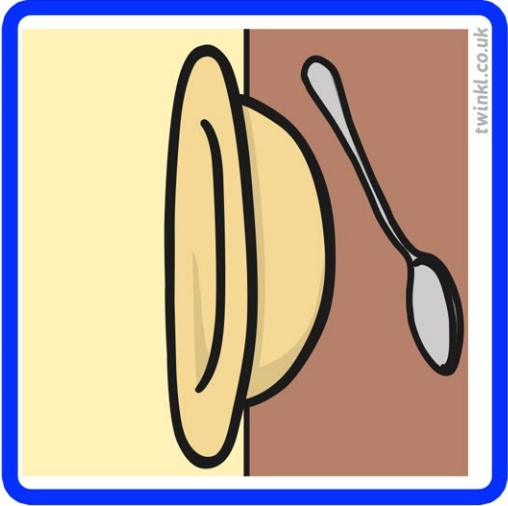












The basics of storytelling

This activity helps children to develop a good set of storytelling skills. It can be quite hard work compared to some activities, but it pays dividends.

The idea is to break down how you tell (and listen to) stories into a number of key steps, which you then practise with the children.



How it works

Start with the skills of listening to a story. As with all good listening, the basics are: (a) sit still; (b) look at the person who is talking; (c) think about what the person is saying.

Explain that when you are listening to a story, there are five things to think about:

- Who is in the story?
- Where is the story taking place?
- When is it?
- What happens?
- How do the people in the story feel?

Tell them a story. It might be a real-life story, like *'What I did while you were at school today'*. Or it could be a story from a book, like *Little Red Riding Hood*.

After you've told the story, ask the children to talk about who was involved, where the action took place, when it took place, what happened, and how the people felt.

Repeat with other stories until you're happy that they understand and remember all the important parts of a story.

Remember to praise good story listening behaviours. *'Well done, you really listened to what was going on and where it happened!'*

What's in the story

Now let's look at the skills of telling stories.

Get one of the children to tell a short story. It might be about something that happened in the playground or at lunchtime. Or it could be a familiar story, like *Snow White*.

Ask the children what they think they need to do to tell a story well. Listen to what they say, and thank them for their ideas.

Explain that the first step is to plan what you're going to say. Show the children how drawing a few rough pictures can help with the planning. For instance, if you are planning to talk about a birthday party, you could draw some stick people to remind you of who was there and some drawings of food to remind you of what you ate.

The next step is to make sure that you include all the right details when you tell your story. Use the drawing as a reminder:

- Who is in the story?
- Where is the story taking place?
- When is it taking place?
- What happens?
- How do the people feel?



'Now I know what I need to do to tell a story. The list helps me remember.'

How to tell it

The final points you want to get across are about how to speak when telling a story.

- Look at the person you are talking to
 - Speak loudly enough for everyone to hear
 - Speak at a good speed – not too fast, not too slow
 - Make the story sound exciting
 - Use actions and pictures to bring your story to life
- Ask each child to tell you a story and praise when they get things right: *'Well done. You spoke very clearly and you made the story sound really exciting.'*

Day to day...

When children tell you stories about what's happened during their day, you can help reinforce the basics by prompting them. Example: 'So you played with Miles today in the playground, WHEN was that? In the morning or the afternoon?'

Important story words

The aim of this activity is to get children to identify the different elements within a story and to think of lots of different words for each category.



10-15 mins

How to do it

Cut out the cards from the *Important story words* sheet. The cards represent five kinds of words that are very important for storytelling. *Who* words. *When* words. *Where* words. *What* words. *End* words. Use these cards throughout the activity to remind the children of the five kinds of words.

Tell the children a very simple story that includes examples of the five kinds of words. For example: *'Daddy and me went to the cinema last night. We saw a very funny film and then ate fish and chips. I was tired but happy when I got home.'*



The cards

Use the cards to help the children identify different types of information in a story.

- **Who words** Me and Daddy
- **When words** Last night
- **Where words** Cinema
- **What words** Saw a funny film, ate fish and chips
- **End words** I was tired but happy

Spend time brainstorming each category.

'Let's think of some who words. That's right, there's you and me and Daddy and Mrs Brown.'

End words

End words tend to be a conclusion or final action of some sort. *'We stopped playing when it rained.'* They can also refer to how people felt, including the person telling the story. *'I was upset by how angry he was.'*



