

Language Comprehension:

Background Knowledge-This refers to the knowledge your child already has about the information being read or that can be applied to the information being read.

A few ideas to work with your child on this are included below.

1. Categorize words and objects – strawberries, apples, bananas
2. Compare and contrast everyday objects – How are apples and bananas the same? What is different about them?
3. Talk about different experiences you have with your child – hikes, trips, etc.

Vocabulary Knowledge - A child's vocabulary consists of all of the words they know. When thinking about your child's vocabulary, think of it in terms of these characteristics:

Breadth: How many words does your child know?

Depth: How much knowledge does your child have about the words he/she knows? Can they use the words appropriately in a sentence?

Ways to support increasing your child's vocabulary knowledge include:

1. Use “grown-up words” in normal conversation.
2. Talk about new words as you read.

Language Structures-This includes **syntax** and **semantics**, or your child's knowledge of how to construct a sentence with proper grammar and meaning. **Syntax** involves the rules of constructing phrases and sentences in a language. Think about the different aspects of sentences and phrases: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositional phrases, etc. and how they are arranged to interact together and form an appropriate sentence or phrase.

Here's an example of a sentence with good syntax: "My Mom is a nice lady." Now here's one with problems with syntax: "Mom make cake". This sentence is missing a verb (like "is") and there is trouble with tense and agreement ("make cake" could be "is making cake" or "makes cake". It is common for children to use syntax inappropriately while they are still learning up until around the age of 6.

Working with your child to improve their use of syntax can be educational and fun. Here's a way to guide them along:

1. Make index cards with various nouns, verbs, adverbs, etc. and help your child to put the words together to form sentences.

Verbal Reasoning-This involves your child's ability to make inferences and construct meanings from the text that is being read. Understanding metaphor meanings and references is also an indicator of verbal reasoning skills.

Ways to help your child in this area include:

1. Play word association games.
2. Reading aloud and discuss different aspects of a text.

Literacy Knowledge-This includes your child understanding print concepts, text genres as well as text structures.

Ideas to support **concepts of print** include:

1. Point out the differences between letters, words, and sentences.
2. Discuss book parts – front, back, direction we read, title, how to hold a book.

Ways to support their understanding of **genre** and **text structure** are listed below.

1. Go to the library to find different books in different genres. Discuss how they are different.