

# Talking Tennis

You can make a difference to your child's language development by:

Pointing to and naming the object they're looking at. For example, 'cat'.

Taking it in turns to talk with your child about what they are looking at, doing or how they're feeling.

Waiting for up to 10 seconds for your child to take their turn in the conversation, they may do this by babbling, looking or pointing, through gesture or words.

Crouching down to your child's level and looking at what your child seems interested in.

Modelling back words your child has said incorrectly in a positive way. For example, if your child points to the sun and says 'dun', you might say, 'Wow, the sun'.

Repeating back words your child has said correctly and adding one or two more. For example, if your child says 'ball', you might say 'Charlie's ball' or 'Roll the ball'.

Talking

Together

in Cambridgeshire

# Talking Tennis

Children communicate with us in many ways. They may smile, use sounds or gestures, look at or point to something, and when they're ready they might try to use words.

When we tune in and then follow their gaze to see what has caught their eye or respond with a smile, copy their sounds or talk with them about what it is they are interested in we make that communication into conversation. We then wait for the child to try to communicate again, and again we respond. These responsive and attentive back-and-forth interactions between children and adults are known as **Talking Tennis** and these interactions can make a difference to children's language development over time.

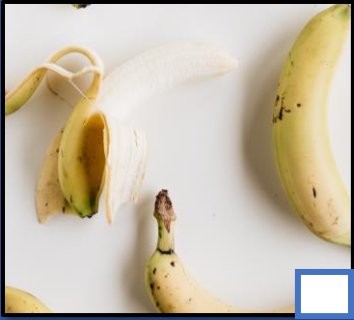
These cards are designed to help you have fun whilst looking for the different items shown and talking about them together.



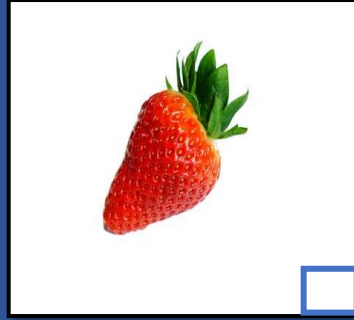
**We hope you have fun playing  
Talking Tennis together!**



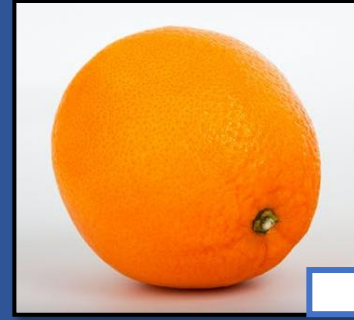
# At the supermarket (1)



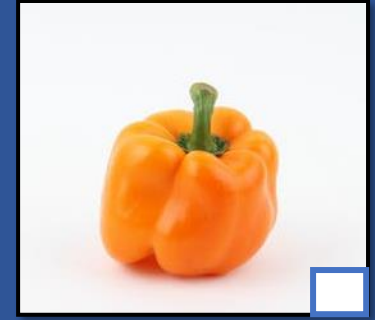
Bananas



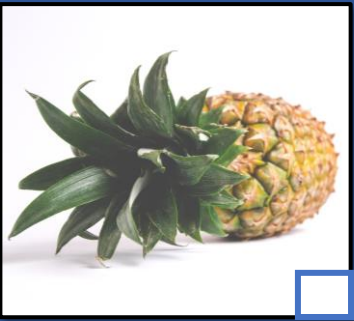
Strawberry



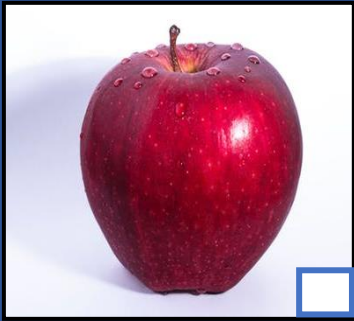
Orange



Pepper



Pineapple



Apple



Blueberry



Watermelon

# Top tips

Crouch down to your child's level and look at the photos of fruit overleaf together. Which photo does your child seem interested in?

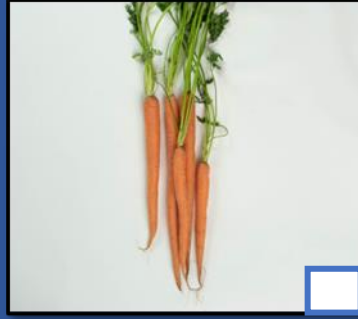
Point to and name the fruit shown in the photo. For example, 'banana'. Then add, 'Let's look for a banana'.

Use comments rather than asking questions. For example, 'Look, it's a long banana!' or 'I'm peeling the banana'.

# At the supermarket (2)



Potato



Carrot



Cabbage



Cauliflower



Sweetcorn



Peas



Tomatoes



Aubergine

# Top tips

Take it in turns to talk with your child about how the vegetable looks. At home you could talk about how the vegetable tastes, feels and smells too.

While looking for the vegetable, wait for up to 10 seconds for your child to look to you, babble, point, gesture or use words to say they've found the vegetable then smile or offer praise, 'Wow, you found the potato'.

If your child says a word correctly, repeat back the word and add one or two more. For example, if your child says 'carrot', you might say 'Charlie's carrot' or 'eating carrot'.

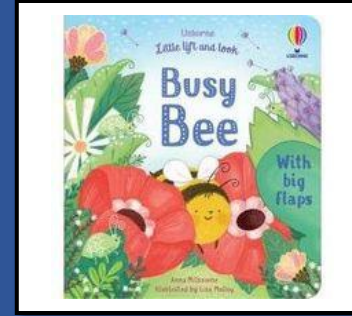
# Playing with toys



**Ball**



**Cars**



**Book**



**Teddy Bear**

Playing with toys



**Puzzle**



**Building Blocks**



**Stacking rings**



**Duck**

# Top tips

Take it in turns to talk to hold and feel the toy. Rather than asking questions label what you see, for example rather than “What colour is the car?” say “This car is red!”

Point to and name the fruit shown in the photo. For example, ‘ball’. Then add, ‘Let’s look for a ball’. See if your child can match the picture to a real ball.

If your child says a word incorrectly, repeat back a correct model of the word in a positive way. For example, if your child points to the Teddy and says ‘eddy’, you might say, ‘Yes, a teddy’.



# Getting Dressed



Hat



Socks



Jumper



Shirt



Dress



Coat



Shoes



Gloves

# Top tips

Make a matching game with pairs of socks. See if your child can find the matching pair and say “well done, you found a pair!”

Think about the words you use for putting on clothes – “We’re pulling on our socks”, “We’re zipping up our coat” so that children learn action words as well as naming words.

Talk to your child about when they might wear each item of clothes, “we wear a hat when it’s cold, we wear a dress when it’s not cold”. Teaching one concept at a time (cold and not cold rather than cold and hot) will help your child understand the new concept.

# Singing together



Twinkle, twinkle little star



Sleeping Bunnies



Old MacDonald had a farm



Five Little Ducks



I had a Tiny Turtle



The Wheels on the Bus

# Top tips

Sing a line of the song and see if your child can remember and join in with the last word.

Don't worry about singing with your child – they love to hear the sound of your voice and don't mind how tuneful (or not!) it is.

Singing nursery rhymes regularly helps your child develop a sense of rhythm and rhyme, which supports their early reading skills later.

# On a walk



Post box



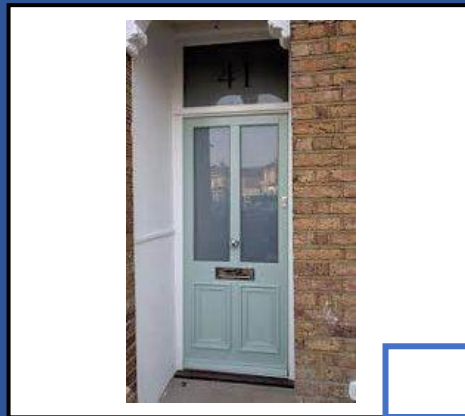
Flowers



Bench



Path



Front door



Pedestrian Crossing

# Top tips

Whilst you are walking take some time to listen to the sounds you can hear and point them out to your child. See if they can identify them.

Make up simple rhymes about what you see “Let’s go for a lark in the park”, “Feel the heat as we walk down the street” will help encourage simple rhyming.

Point out where children can see writing in the environment. Let them feel or trace the letters. It doesn’t matter if they can’t read them it will help them understand that writing in their environment has a purpose.

# At the Park



Rocker



Seesaw



Slide



Rope



Sign



Trees

# Top tips

Crouch down to your child's height. This will help you make eye contact and see the world from their eyes!

Playing on play equipment can help your child develop the muscles that they need to be able to write effectively later on.

Taking turns on swings and roundabouts will help children learn about taking turns in conversation.



# On a journey



Car



Tractor



Aeroplane



Train



Bike



Motorbike

# Top tips

Point to and name the transport shown in the photo. For example, 'car'. Then add, 'Let's look for a car'.

If your child says a word incorrectly, repeat back a correct model of the word in a positive way. For example, if your child points to the car and says 'tar', you might say 'Yes, a car'.

While looking for the transport, wait for up to 10 seconds for your child to look to you, babble, point, gesture or use words to say they've found the transport then smile or offer praise, 'Wow, you found a car'.

# Why Talking Tennis Works

- **Picking up on your child's interests** – When you and your child look at or look for something which they are interested in, your child sees that you are interested in what they're doing.
- **Pointing and looking** – When you point to or look at the object and say the word for it, you help your child make the link between what you are saying and what you are looking at.
- **Waiting** – When you wait, your child has time to think about what you have said and how they should respond to your last interaction.
- **Taking turns in interacting** – When you take turns, your child has an opportunity to practise interacting with you. This is an important building block in learning how to have conversations.
- **Commenting on what your child is looking at or doing** - When you use comments, you help your child learn more about their world.
- **Repeating back and adding one or two more words** - When you repeat back what your child has said and add one or two more words, you offer your child a model of the words they might want to try and say in the future.
- **Repeating back what your child has tried to say** – When you repeat back how the words are said, you offer your child a good model for the future. If you smile and talk in a positive way, you also show that you value your child's attempts at talking.

# Talking Together in Cambridgeshire

Talking Together in Cambridgeshire (TTiC) is funded by Cambridgeshire County Council's Early Years, Childcare and School Readiness Service and focusses on improving outcomes for children aged nought to five. Our key objective is to increase the awareness, knowledge and understanding of our communities in how to support young children's communication, language, and literacy development.

We offer professional training and resources for all those working with and caring for children under five in Cambridgeshire.

Find out more about our work on our Facebook Page or search in your internet search engine for "Talking Together in Cambridgeshire".



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