

Activities for developing understanding of 'wh' questions

Who?

- **Picture book** - Ask 'who' questions about the pictures in the book. Ask the child "Who is this?" and model the answer if the child has difficulty e.g. "This is Jim". The same can be done using photographs from home or school.
- **Tea party** - Set up a tea party pretending to feed toys. Ask questions such as "Who has the egg?" and model the answer "Look teddy has the egg". After modelling a number of times encourage the child to answer for themselves.
- **Everyday questions** - Use the 'who' symbol card and ask easy 'who' questions e.g. "Who is your teacher?", "Who did you play with?", "Who are you sitting next to", "Who delivers the post?", "Who wears a crown?" etc. Model the answer if needed.
- **Who bingo?** - Make up some bingo grids with the pictures/names of 6 different people on each grid, for example policeman, postman, doctor, vet, teacher, plumber. Talk through the different people naming them and talking about what they do. Ask who questions, such as "Who looks after sick animals?". Prompt your child to put a counter on their grid if they have the answer to the question. Encourage them to name the person or remind them if they don't know the name.

Where?

- **Find dolly** - Hide the doll in various locations e.g. in a box, under a chair, on a table etc. Ask the child "Where is dolly?" modelling the answer to begin with e.g. "Dolly is on the bed".
- **Find the sound** - Use different instruments and make sounds at different places in the room. Ask the child to identify 'where' the sound is coming from, modelling the answers to begin with e.g. "Where is the shaker?", "It's by the door".
- **Where does it belong** - match up the objects to the room they belong in e.g. "Where would you find a toothbrush?" and see if the child can match it to a picture of the bathroom. Encourage them to answer e.g. "In the bathroom".

- **Animal homes** - Use pictures or toy animals and pictures of different animal homes. Ask the child 'where' the animals live and draw a line from them to their correct home e.g. "Where does the bird live", encouraging them to answer "In a nest".
- **Where am I?** – Describe different locations to your child e.g. 'There are lots of swings, a slide, a sandpit and children are playing.' – see if they can guess the different locations you describe.

When?

- **Day or night?** – Draw a moon and sun to represent day and night. Explain the difference e.g. "In the day the sun is out, it is light" etc and "At night it is dark, we go to bed" etc. Ask the child to show you the picture of day and the picture of night to check their understanding. Ask the child 'when' questions where the answer is day or night e.g. "When would you see the moon?", "When do we eat lunch?", "When do we go to school?" etc and see if they can point to the day or night picture. Encourage them to say the answer also.
- **Sequencing** – Take photos of different things you do during the day e.g. brushing your teeth, eating lunch, watching TV, having a bath etc. Talk together about 'when' different things happen.
- **In the bag** – Find pictures of different seasons or events e.g. a Christmas tree, birthday cake, snowman, baby lambs etc. Place the pictures in a bag and get the child to pull them out one at a time, ask the child 'when' they would see that item e.g. "When would you see a Christmas tree?".

What? (N.B this is what? rather than what doing? It is important to treat these questions separately as they give different answers)

- **Picture book** – Ask 'what' questions about the pictures in the book. Ask the child "What is the boy holding?" or "What is the girl eating?" and model the answer if the child has difficulty e.g. "A book" or "A banana". The same can be done using photographs from home or school.
- **Everyday questions** – Use the 'what' symbol card and ask 'what' questions e.g. "What is on my head?", "What do you eat at breakfast?", "What do babies drink?", "What does a queen wear?" etc. Model the answer if needed.
- **What game** – collect together real objects or pictures of objects and place a selection of 4 on the table. Ask 'what' questions, for example "What do you wear when it's sunny?" (sunglasses). Replace the guessed object with a new one and ask another 'what' question.

What doing? (N.B this is what doing? rather than what? It is important to treat these questions separately as they give different answers)

- **Picture book** – Ask ‘what doing’ questions about the pictures in the book. Ask the child “What is the boy doing?” or “What is the girl doing?” and model the answer if the child has difficulty e.g. “The boy is climbing” or “The girl is eating a banana”. The same can be done using photographs from home or school.
- **Everyday questions** – Use the ‘what doing’ symbol card and ask ‘what doing’ questions e.g. “What is your brother doing?”, “What is mummy doing?” etc. Model the answer if needed.
- **What doing game** – Act out different actions and ask the question “What am I doing?”. Encourage your child to describe what you are doing, for example “brushing your teeth”, “digging a hole”, “jumping”, “dancing”. You can also look for some action pictures online (<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/search?term=verb+cards>) and ask the question “What is X doing?” and support your child to give the answer, for example “He is riding a bike”.

Why?

- **Story** - Make up a short story e.g. “Molly went to the park because she wanted to feed the ducks”. Ask the child “Why did Molly go to the park?”. Encourage the child to start their answer with “because...”.
- **Why-because** - Use the pictures enclosed. Take the first picture of the pair and ask the child a question e.g. “Why is the boy happy?”. Show the second picture and encourage the child to start their answer with “because...”. Model if the child is having difficulties e.g. “Because it is his birthday”.
- **What’s wrong?** – Make up your own silly pictures e.g. a man with no eyes and a tail, holding his umbrella upside down. Ask the child to identify what is wrong and explain why.
- **Emotions** – Look at pictures in books or find some pictures online of people feeling different emotions because of something they have done, for example a picture of a boy crying because he’s fallen off of his bike. Look at the pictures and discuss how the people are feeling in each picture. Ask the child why questions, for example “Why is the boy feeling sad?”. Encourage the answer “Because he fell off his bike”.