

Developmental Area: Expressive Language

Skill Strand: Sentences

Skill Phase: Systematic Preparation

Skill Step: I use more complex sentence structure and link thoughts, ideas and events with 'and,' 'because' and 'so.'

You may be wanting to facilitate this skill step with most of your children if you are considering targeted skill progression and creating firm foundations for progression. You may want to facilitate this skill step with just a few children or with an individual target child as this is their next step.

Whatever the reason, this Practical Ideas Sheet will help you to reflect on your current practice and maybe to get some new ideas. Where possible, the practical ideas are grouped into the three layers of your practice.

Interactions

This skill step is highly dependent on your interaction strategies above anything else. These include:

- Deliberately link two short phrases together with a linking word as you talk about what you or the child is doing. Adding language with this grammatical structure modelled more frequently than you would normally do so will support this skill step.
- When the child says two short sentences side-by-side but does not use a linking word, accept what the child has said but then repeat what they have said back but include an appropriate linking word.
- Emphasise the linking word slightly. Also leave a gap before you say something else to give the child time to process what you have said. It will also give them an opportunity to have a conversational turn too.

Targeted Use of the Learning Environment and Daily Routines

Opportunities to add this grammatical structure are ever present. However, it might be useful to take an area of your provision at a time and also your daily routines and think about the types of things you might be able to say.

Repeating sentences with this structure every time you carry out a daily routine would be beneficial. For example:

- I am peeling a satsuma **so** I can eat it.
- I am drying my hands **because** they are wet.
- I am putting on my hat **and** my gloves.

All resources create opportunities for you to add and model this grammatical structure. However, cause and effect resources or simply talking through what is

happening as you do things together really helps.

Focussed Activities

Create deliberate opportunities to add sentences with this structure into your existing group activities. For example:

- Jack's putting his hand in the bag **so** he can find something.
- Let's sing Heads & Shoulders **so** we can get moving.
- I am going to read The Gruffalo **because** it is my favourite.