

Useful websites

Oxford Owl
Spelling quizzes
Phonics Play

Bring grammar to life

Use questions to find out what your child knows about grammar. Do they know what a noun is? If not, show your child some objects. Explain that nouns are the names used for people, places and things. You can do the same with verbs by acting out some actions such as 'jump', 'hop', and 'clap'. Watch Charlotte's film "Grammar: the basics" (Oxford Owl website) to find out more about what these grammatical terms mean.

Play I Spy

Play I Spy with the focus on looking for nouns (e.g. dad, bridge, tree, shop, apple). Tell your child that you are going to ask questions about the noun they have chosen. For example, "Is your noun green?", "Can your noun fit in my hand?" In this way you can introduce grammatical vocabulary in a fun way.

Help with spelling

If your child is unsure about how to spell a word, encourage them to sound the word out and write the letter or group of letters (the grapheme) that represents the sound (the phoneme). Then they will realise that they know how to spell some, most or all of the word and you can help with any tricky bits as needed.

Play with punctuation

When you read, occasionally look at the punctuation and talk about what it is telling the reader to do. Show your child how a question mark tells you to raise your voice at the end of the sentence to indicate that a question is being asked. Explore how you can show the 'feeling' behind an exclamation mark. Are the characters shouting, has something unexpected happened, has something gone wrong?

Play silly games

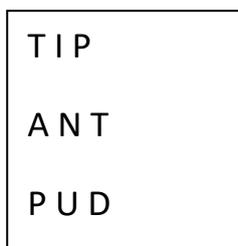
Silly games really help children to learn! Watch Charlotte's video 'How can I help my child with grammar, punctuation and spelling?' (Oxford Owl website) to see some quick and easy games in action.

Unscramble

Show a word muddled up, with each letter on a separate piece of paper eg A E L B T. Can they rearrange the letters to form the word TABLE?

Word grid

What words can you make ?



Extend to 4 x 4 grid.

Other games

Hangman, Bingo and Matching Pairs

Games to play

Nouns

Show your child a tray of objects. Name them together and explain that all these words are nouns. Nouns name a person, place or thing.

Ask your child to say their name. Explain that their name is a special noun called a proper noun. People's names have a capital letter at the beginning to show they are proper nouns.

Look for capital letters at the beginning of proper nouns e.g. on a map for place names, or the addresses on a letter for people's names, street and county names.

Plurals

When you have one of a noun then it is singular: one cat. When you have two or more of a noun it is plural: two cats. Most plurals are made by adding –s or –es to the noun. But some are different: child becomes children; foot becomes feet; person becomes people. Look at an animal book and describe groups of animals eg flock of birds, army of ants.

Adjectives

An adjective adds information about a noun e.g a red hat, a tiny bird.

Play guessing games to encourage your child to describe an object. Ask them to choose one of their toys and describe it to you. Make sure that you can't see the toy. Can you guess what it is from the adjectives they have used? Now describe an object for your child to identify.

Top Tip: Repeat what your child has described back to them and then ask for an additional adjective to help you work out what the object is like, e.g. "What does it feel like?"

Adverbs

An adverb gives more information about a verb, e.g shout loudly, play nicely.

Play 'Crazy Adverbs' – one person is given a verb and adverb to act out, e.g. 'dance gracefully, spin quickly'. The aim is for the actor to dance / spin in such a way that others can guess what the adverb is. It might be worth modelling this game for your child by taking the first turn at being the 'actor'.

Questions and commands

Show your child how a question is formed using question words such as how, where, when, what, why and who. Make up some questions together. You could try to find the answers too.

Together, practise asking questions using can, will, would, could, e.g. "Can you help me with lunch?", "Will you bring me a cup?" etc.

Now show your child how to turn questions into commands. For example, "Can you help me with the lunch?" becomes "Help me with the lunch.". Point out the difference in punctuation at the end of a question and a command. Can your child change a question into a command? They can imagine they are the captain telling you what to do!

Odd one out

Play 'Odd one out' – write a list of words with one word that is the odd one out e.g. the words are all plurals/ verbs / nouns / adjectives / adverbs except one. Can your child find the odd one out? Can they say what types of words are in the list? Can they tell you what type of word the odd one out is? If your child finds it too difficult, give them a clue.