



## Answering questions

When we **answer questions**, we share information about what we know and have experienced. **Responding to questions** is important for interacting with others.

To help children **answer questions**, you can:

- Model how to answer questions in your own talking**, and
- Give children a choice question** that shows two possible ways to **answer**.

## Play with questions: Answer questions in your play together



### Play...then pack away

Pack away toys together when you've finished playing. Ask **where** the toys belong, and show how to **answer**.

You: **Where** do the trains go?

Child: *(pointing)*

You: **In the basket**.



### At home...cooking

Decorate a cake or biscuits together.

Ask a **question** about **what** to put on the cake, and give two options for the **answer**.

You: **What** should we put on the cake next? *(pause)*

Will we put on **strawberries** or **kiwifruit**?



### Out and about...getting ready

Get ready to go out for the day. Ask a **question**, and give two answers for your child to choose between.

You: **What** shoes will we wear to the park? *(pause)*

**Sandals** or **boots**?

Child: **Boots**.



## Answering questions

**Read** with questions: Visit the library and borrow some books

*Where's Spot?* by Eric Hill

*Sunshine* by Jan Ormerod

*Belinda* by Pamela Allen

**Words** for answering questions: Use questions in your day

Children can **answer** easier and then harder **questions** as they grow and learn.

Easier: *What is that? Who is it? What are they doing?*

Harder: *What happened? Where did you go? How are these different?*

Even harder: *What happens next? What should I do? Which one is not...?*

Hardest: *What happens if...? Why? How can we tell?*

**Learn** about answering questions: Ways to help language grow

When you **model how to answer questions in your own talking**, you are:

- Helping the **answers** to make sense to children, and
- Helping them to **answer questions**.

When you **give children two possible ways to answer a question**, you are:

- Showing how questions can be **answered**, and
- Giving children chances to practice **answering questions**.

Children do not need to repeat words after you. The more often children hear **answers to questions**, the more likely they will understand **responses** and use them in their own talking.

**Speech pathology key terms:** responding to questions, modelling, binary choice.