



Using clearer sentences

Unclear sentences can be confusing for listeners and frustrating for children. Sentences are **clearer** when they include all of the necessary words in the right order.

To help children use **clearer sentences**, you can:

- Talk about what children are doing** using short, **clear sentences**, and
- Rephrase children's sentences** to include all of the words in the right order.

Play with clearer sentences: Use clear sentences in your play together



Play...shopping and cooking

Pretend that you are shopping or cooking together. Describe what your child is doing using short, clear sentences.

Child: *(putting toy bananas in a basket)*

You: *You're putting bananas in the basket.*



At home...getting dressed

Talk about getting dressed in the morning and putting on pyjamas at night.

Rephrase what your child says to make a **clearer sentence**.

Child: I no that one.

You: You *don't want* that *shirt*.



Out and about...packing your bag

Pack your bag for the day together.

Rephrase what your child says to make it clearer.

Child: These go the bag in.

You: These *socks go in the bag*.



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Read with clearer sentences: Visit the library and borrow some books

Where is the Green Sheep? by Mem Fox

I'm a Dirty Dinosaur by Janeen Brian

Seadog by Claire Saxby

Words for clearer sentences: Use these words in your day

Key words to help make clearer sentences might include:

Words about people: *names of people, she, he, they, his, her, their*

Words about places or things: *names of objects, the, a, an, that, this*

Words about actions: *jump, run, kick, go, is, are, was, had, get, went, for*

Words for combining: *and, but, then, so*

Learn about clearer sentences: Ways to help language grow

When you **talk about what children are doing** using short, **clear sentences**, you are:

- Helping sentences make sense to them, and
- Helping children to use **clearer sentences**.

When you **rephrase children's sentences** to include all words in the right order, you are:

- Showing that you understand what they have said, and
- Showing children how sentences can sound clearer.

Children do not have to repeat words after you. The more often children hear **clear sentences**, the more likely they will understand the words and their order, and learn how to use them in their own talking.

Speech pathology key terms: semantics, syntax, parallel talk, recasting.