

Pretend Play

Pretending while playing is a great skill that involves using language that is already stored in our brain but using towards objects.

- Playing with dolls: I know that babies can drink from a bottle so I may put a bottle towards the doll's mouth instead of my own mouth. I can put them to sleep, bath them, take them for a walk.

It is also a good way to learn new things while pretending with objects because it can involve different sequences.

- Playing with animals: I know that a cow goes 'moo' but it can also jump, sleep, eat, even fly if you wanted it too!
- Playing with play food: I know that we eat hamburgers but I can also cook it, serve it on a plate, offer to others while using language that is matched to the action, ie. 'I'm hungry, I want __, here you go, eat it!'

The main thing with pretend play is that children understand that objects can also do actions. Taking perspective of the objects/characters can make it more interesting while providing social scripts appropriate to the toy.

- Making the animals talk to each other, ie. 'Hi, wanna play?, OK, let's go...jump...wee! Now see if your child will imitate the actions and the words. Still follow their lead but also add new sequences when you want to teach something new.
- 'Now let's go to the pool...jump in...splash!' 'Now we're wet!' 'Let's dry off'.