

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

What's in the box?

This week's activity supports children's descriptive language skills while adding an element of mystery and fun by hiding objects in a box to increase their engagement.

Learning aims

- Using the sense of touch to identify objects out of sight
- Increase knowledge of language used for describing and predicting
- Identify objects by name and describe their use.



Resources

- Cardboard box
- Scissors
- Everyday objects (key, toothbrush, pine cone, comb etc.)
- Whiteboard and pen.

Activity outline

To prepare the box:

1. Cut off the back of the cardboard box. On the opposite side cut a hole big enough for a child's hand to get through but small enough so they can't see the items inside the box
2. Place the box with the hand hole facing the children and place a range of items inside the box.

Activity:

3. This is an adult-led activity that is best with a small group of children, perhaps at group time and ideally in a quiet, distraction free area
4. Explain to children that they are going to play a game of 'What's in the box?'. There are different items hidden in the box and they are each going to take a turn to put their hand in the box, pick up an item and describe how it feels to their friends to enable them to guess what it is. Start by modelling to children how to describe an object using rich descriptive language and see if they can guess what it is

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5. Invite each child in turn to put their hand in the box and feel for an item, closing their eyes so they don't take a sneaky peek. You can support by holding the item if needed. Once children have an item in their hand encourage them to hold, feel and describe the touch features of the item to help their friends guess what it is. Encourage the use of descriptive vocabulary such as bumpy, smooth, rough, long, short, soft, hairy, cold using sentences starting, "It is..... or I feel.....". If the child knows what the object is, encourage them to use their knowledge of the object to help them describe it to their friends without telling them what it is. For example, "It's cold and hard with bumpy bits and you lock the door with it" (key)
6. Record each child's guess on the whiteboard, as they may predict different objects
7. Ask the child to bring the item out of the box to see if anyone guessed correctly. Leave the item to one side and invite the next child to take their turn.

Extension ideas

- Once children are familiar with the game you can add items which children may be less familiar with. This will require them to describe the features of the item more and you can support by giving children new descriptive words to use.

NDNA products to support you with this activity

- [Vocabulary and early language skills](#) – online course.