

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.

Activity: Tasty Talk Time

Everyday routines are powerful opportunities for language development. Whether during snack time, a nappy change or putting on a coat, these regular activities provide natural moments for children to learn new words, practise what they know and engage in conversation.

This structured yet flexible activity helps to integrate language development into a familiar and enjoyable part of the day.

Learning aims

- To encourage children's language development through conversation, vocabulary building, and social interaction
- To promote turn-taking and listening skills
- To support and encourage children to express their thoughts, preferences and feelings.



Resources

- Snacks including water and all the accoutrements of snack time (plates, bowls etc).

Activity outline

1. Ideally all the snacks, plates, cups etc should be accessible to the children to promote independence and boost self-esteem
2. Sit with the children to model behaviour and language
3. As children make their selection, ask open-ended questions such as, "What would you like to eat today?", "Why did you choose -----", "Which colours of food are you choosing and why?"
4. Model descriptive language for the children, for example, "My apple is crunchy and sweet"
5. As the children eat, engage them in conversation about their snacks, choices and experiences, for example, "How does your orange smell?", "What does it feel like in your mouth?", "Can you describe the colour of your grape?", "Do you like your snack today? Why or why not?", "Does it look like the food you eat at home?"
6. Encourage peer interaction and prompt children to ask each other questions such as, "Can you ask Amira what she is eating?", "Let's ask Theo if he likes his orange"
7. Introduce new vocabulary as children describe their snacks and experiences, for example, "This orange is soft, stringy and sweet", "This breadstick is crunchy"

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.

8. There are also plenty of opportunities to develop mathematical language. If children set the table, they will need to count out plates, cups, spoons etc. You can also focus on the shape of different food and use the language of comparison, such as, "This carrot stick is longer than that one"
9. After children have finished eating, you could ask which was their favourite food today and if they tried anything new
10. Acknowledge the children's participation in the conversation, e.g. "You used such great words today!", "I enjoyed how you described your food.", "My favourite word was -----."

Special considerations:

- Create word signs of the best and/or most favourite descriptive words and display them near the snack area to remind the children of the wonderful words they've used.

NDNA products to support you with this activity:

- [Online course: Vocabulary and early language skills](#)
- [Communication and Language Champions](#)