

Section 2.3

Understanding what real things are for

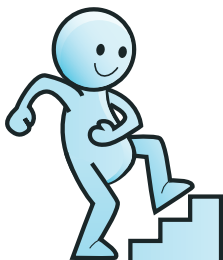


Why is this important?

Symbolic play is the ability to play meaningfully with different things (e.g. talking into a telephone). Like language, symbolic play involves the use of symbols: symbolic play is therefore crucial as it provides the context for language development. It is fun and motivating and key to learning.

What to do

- Gather together some real everyday objects (i.e. not toys but real things):
 - ★ Spoon
 - ★ Keys
 - ★ Cup
 - ★ Brush
 - ★ Telephone
- Hand one to the child and encourage him/her to demonstrate what to do with it (e.g. drink from the cup; put the keys in the door).



Step up

- Use toys to represent real objects (e.g. a toy telephone instead of a 'real' telephone).
- Encourage the child to use the real or toy object on a dolly or a teddy.
- Increase the range of items.

Step down

- Use the child's *own* spoon or brush, etc.
- Model what to do and encourage the child to copy.
- Guide the child's hand to drink from the cup/eat with the spoon, etc.

