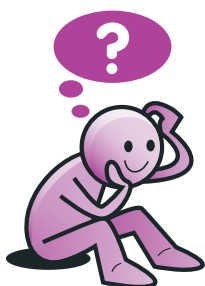


Section 3.4

Understanding sentences with two key words



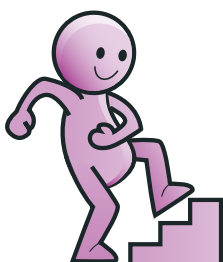
Why is this important?

This is part of the continuum of language development: children learn to abstract meaning from one (key) word and then move to being able to do the same with two. This is explained more fully in the *WellComm Handbook* where word levels are discussed (pages 37–41).

What to do

- Gather together:
 - ★ Teddy and doll (or two of the child's toys).
 - ★ Two of the following objects: bed/chair/table/box/plate/cup.
- Put out the two toys and three objects.
- Ask the child to put one of the toys 'in'/'on' one of the objects, e.g.
 - ★ 'Put *doll* on the *table*.'
 - ★ 'Put *teddy* in the *box*.'
- Vary the instructions and use different toys and objects.

N.B. The child doesn't need to understand the prepositions in/on to do this task.



Step up

- Add another toy (e.g. a monkey or another object, like a bed).
- Reduce signs and gestures so the child is relying solely on the words.
- Encourage the child to tell *you* what to do.
- Draw some pictures on shoe boxes (e.g. animal faces, clown, dinosaur). Ask the child to put an object/toy in one of the boxes, e.g.
 - ★ 'Put the *keys* in the *cat*.'
 - ★ 'Put the *plate* in the *dinosaur*.'

Step down

- Use gestures/signs alongside the key word/s.
- Demonstrate the activity first.
- If the child chooses the wrong toy or wrong place, praise the child for trying, then:
 - ★ Repeat the question and see if the child is successful this time.
 - ★ Demonstrate what you asked.
 - ★ Replace the toys and then repeat the question so the child can copy what is required.
 - ★ If the child is struggling, reduce the number of toys to one *or* the number of objects to one.

