

## Section 4.5

# Understanding more complex instructions



### Why is this important?

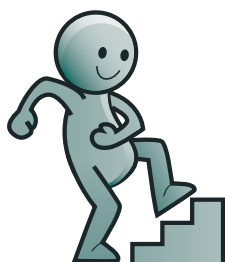
This activity will help children follow three key words in a sentence, thereby developing verbal understanding. You can find more information about this in the *WellComm Handbook* (pages 37–41).

### What to do

- Three-word level instructions can be given during any and all daily activities. In this way teaching and learning opportunities are available throughout the day.
- Gather together the following:
  - ★ Doll, teddy (or alternative toy character).
  - ★ Flannel, hair brush.
- Play together using the items to ‘wash’ and ‘brush’ doll/teddy’s body parts.
- Encourage the child to listen and then give an instruction using three key words:
  - ★ ‘Wash teddy’s feet.’
  - ★ ‘Brush doll’s hair.’
  - ★ ‘Brush doll’s hand.’

N.B. Try to remember not to look at, point to or give any visual clues (you can do this if you need to ‘Step down’).

- If the child doesn’t quite get it right, acknowledge what he/she has managed, repeat the instruction and then gently prompt/guide the child towards the correct toys. Repeat the instruction as you guide or the child copies you.



### Step up

- Reduce the use of signs and gestures.
- Reverse the roles so the child tells *you* what to do or ask ‘What did you do?’ Don’t worry if the child only uses one or two of the words at first!

### Step down

- Use gestures/signs alongside the key words.
- Use one of the characters only (e.g. doll) and give the instructions as above. The child will only have to understand two key words (e.g. for the instruction ‘Wash doll’s face’, the child needs to understand the words ‘wash’ and ‘face’ as there is no choice of who to do it *to*). When the child is successful, put teddy back and give the *same* instruction (e.g. ‘Wash doll’s face’).
- Look at the items as you give the instruction. You can gradually make this less obvious.

