

Section 6.1

Understanding and using pronouns: 'he' and 'she'



Why is this important?

Pronouns are words that replace a noun or a person (e.g. the boy – 'he'; the girl – 'she'). Other pronouns include 'I', 'you' and 'they'.

What to do

- Find two character toys – one must be a girl (e.g. Barbie) and the other a boy (e.g. Buzz Lightyear, Spiderman).
- Gather together several everyday items (e.g. brush, cup, spoon, flannel).
- Demonstrate that the toys can do lots of different things (e.g. brush hair, wash face). Say:
 - ★ 'He's washing.'
 - ★ 'She's jumping.'
- Can the child choose the correct character to relate to the pronoun?
- Share books and use pronouns to talk about what's happening (e.g. 'he's running', 'she's skipping').
- Talk about what children are doing in the park when you are out for a walk, or on the bus. Use a lead-in phrase to help the child relate the pronoun to the male/female, e.g.
 - ★ 'Look at that boy, *he's* hopping.'
 - ★ 'Can you see that lady? *She's* eating.'



Step up

- Make the toys perform actions: the child can tell you what they are doing.
- Use action pictures showing men, women, girls and boys.
- Read simple fairy tales where a boy and a girl are involved (e.g. Hansel and Gretel) and emphasise the 'he' and 'she'. Can the child fill in the correct pronoun if you pause and point to the boy or girl?
- Play with puppets to encourage 'he/she' in a play sequence.

Step down

- Use one toy to begin with and perform instructions using 'he' then introduce the girl and work only on 'she' before trying them both together.
- Try working with two other familiar children – a boy and a girl: 'Let's ask Harry to jump. What's Harry doing? He's jumping', etc.
- Use prompt cards for 'he' and 'she' – these could be written words or symbols.

