

Section 7.7

Using comparatives: 'bigger', 'longer' and 'smaller'

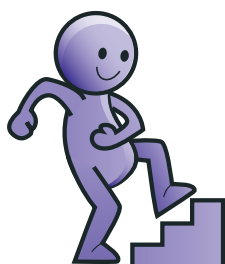


Why is this important?

Comparatives relate to the 'er' on the end of an adjective and are the grammatical form used to express that there is 'more' of something (e.g. 'more big' or 'more small' – although this is not how it is expressed in English). This signals further development of abstract concepts – those where a judgement has to be made.

What to do

- Gather together some items/toys that vary in size (e.g. two sizes of teddy, cups, pencils, books, cars).
- Put out two of the objects (e.g. two sizes of car).
- Point to the 'smaller' of the two objects first and then point to the 'bigger' one saying 'This car is big and this car is ...'
- Encourage the child to use the comparative 'bigger'.
- If the child says 'more big', explain that there is a special way of saying 'more big', e.g.
 - ★ Adult: 'This teddy is big and this teddy is'
 - ★ Child: 'More big.'
 - ★ Adult: 'Yes, more big, this teddy is *bigger*. Now you try. This teddy is'
 - ★ Child: 'Bigger.'



Step up

- Move on to other comparatives (e.g. 'smaller', 'longer', 'taller').
- Find another child who is different in height. Ask the child 'Who is bigger?'
- Line up a few children in height order. Talk about who is 'taller'/'smaller', etc. Use the comparatives in sentences (e.g. 'Jack is taller than Molly').

Step down

- Start by asking the child just to *point* to the item that is bigger.
- Look through books and talk about objects that are bigger (e.g. 'Look this tree is bigger than this one').
- Use gesture to emphasise the meaning.
- Use 'bigger' and 'not bigger' with exaggerated gesture.

