



Communication, Language, and Literacy Activity for 12 to 18 Months

Understanding

These activities help children understand and be able to carry out simple directions and give them new vocabulary words.

Materials:

- None

What to do:

1. Give the child simple requests to follow in a variety of situations throughout the day. Begin with simple requests: "Come here." "Give me the toy." "Sit down." If the child doesn't understand, show the child what to do and give the child a lot of praise for completing the request.
 2. Expand to more complex requests: "Throw the ball." "Put the hat on your head." "Give the baby a hug." Always give positive reinforcement when the child responds appropriately.
 3. Introduce a synonym to increase his vocabulary. Use *squat* for *sit*, *toss* for *throw*, *hand me the toy* for *give me*, and *shove* for *push*.
 4. Make real requests of the child. You'll be surprised at how eager your child will be to help you. Create ways for the child to follow your requests. If you are making a pie, let the child retrieve the pan or the apples from the cupboard.
1. Diffuse a power struggle that results when the child refuses a request with "pretend" play. Have a puppet make the request to your child. Let the child use the puppet to ask you to do things.

