

Even when you think your child is already speaking well, there are always opportunities to extend their ideas and communicate more substantially. Why not try these **what if...** questions around the dinner table or in the car?

What if you woke up one morning in a country where no-one spoke English and you only had the clothes you went to bed in?

What if you could be famous but poor forever, would you do it?

What if you had the chance to change something in history, what difference would it make?

What if you could say a sentence the whole world could hear, what would you say and what would be the effect?

What if gravity was slowly disappearing?

What if the sun was half as big?

What if you had three wishes, what would you wish for?

What if you had a time machine, would you go back or forwards?

What if you played 'animal, vegetable or mineral' and got stuck as the 'thing' you chose?

Next term, there will be a **SEN Coffee Morning**

- ◆ Meet other parents
- ◆ Share advice
- ◆ Swap strategies/resources
- ◆ Build up a support network
- ◆ Get general advice on SEN needs



Please look out for further information.

FURTHER ADVICE AND CONTACT DETAILS

SENCo – Mrs Sarah Palmer: spalmer@pembridge.hereford.sch.uk

SEN Governor – Mr Steve Ingham: office@pembridge.hereford.sch.uk

Independent help and support can be found by contacting the Parent Partnership Service:

sendias@herefordshire.gov.uk 01432 260955

PEMBRIDGE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

INSPIRING **LEARNING** THROUGH FAITH AND VALUES **TOGETHER** Spring Term 2020

Welcome to our termly *Learning Together* - a newsletter which offers some suggestions, thoughts and ways into exploring some of the common difficulties children are faced with as they travel along their learning journey. As a result of parent requests, and our own discussions in school, we hope that *Learning Together* will help provide a bank of resources to use at home to help all our children to succeed.

Our focus this term:

Getting Children Talking



It's a powerful thought but one which shows just how important our modelling of vocabulary and sentences can be. It also links so easily to their well-being. In school, some children talk confidently but others need more strategies to help them feel at ease to share their ideas and thoughts. In this edition, we look at the challenges we face in language development and some of the ways we encourage children to talk.



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Why Talk?

- It's a fundamental life skill—without language and communication, children can't learn and make friends.
- It's linked to children's achievements and a strong predictor of later academic success.
- More than a third of children are not secure in language by the end of their Reception year (ICAN.org).
- 10% of children have long-term and persistent communication difficulties (ICAN.org).
- Most child with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities will have some form of speech, language and communication difficulties.
- Children need language to develop the necessary emotional and social skills for success in life.
- Children with poor language development at 5 years are at a substantial risk of low achievement at 7 and beyond.
- Research also suggest that two thirds of 7-14 year olds with behaviour problems have poor language skills.
- Employers report poor communication skills in their new recruits.



Language Difficulties

Children with language difficulties may have problems with **expressive** language (spoken words, articulation, word-finding, vocabulary, confusions over letter/sound order etc.) or with **receptive** language (understanding, recall etc.) or both.

These are the sorts of strategies we use in school and can easily be transferred to home:

- We make sure children sit where there are fewest distractions such as away from an opening door or TV/ computer screen.
- We double-check children's grasp of important instructions. We simplify, break down or summarise what we expect. Directions are broken down into steps (one thing at a time, if necessary) and we check their understanding of key words and phrases.
- When something new is introduced, we often link the spoken with the written form **and** with pictures or concrete materials. We often have lists of topic-specific words for each class on the school's website.
- Even if children are skilled at de-coding text in reading, they should still be asked questions (what, how, which, when, who) to support their comprehension so that they understand the meaning of the words they read.
- Encouraging children to put into their own words, what has been said, taught or read develops their understanding and auditory (from listening) memory. It can also extend how many words they speak in a sentence.
- Some children with language difficulties may also have problems with time concepts and sequencing. Today, yesterday, tomorrow, what happens next may need explaining. Some children may be unprepared so we may use visual timetables.
- Children need to know that it is alright to ask for help, even if they are not sure how to phrase their questions. We may agree a visual sign from them so that we know if they are confused.

Words such as **before**, **after**, **if**, **except** may be difficult to understand. You might need to demonstrate the meanings of these words e.g. We have lunch after breakfast. We are all going swimming except Mummy.

Memory games: ask the child to gather up some items from a different room, "Bring me a biscuit, a can of coke and a pen" and follow directions such as "Touch your nose, clap your hands and count to ten".

Some children need help to learn to adapt their speech to suit different situations. Involve the child in games where negotiation and co-operation skills are required. Practise turn-taking and conversational skills.

Listening is just as important in language development. Try games which use true/false statements, missing words and "silly sentences" – the child must listen carefully to decide/spot the mistake.