

Making sounds



This is a great way to get children to play around with sounds, which is vital for the development of both speaking and listening skills.

Getting ready

What you need for this activity are lots of different ways of making sounds. You can produce your own noise-makers (with the help of the children!) using household items. For example, make a shaker by filling an empty bottle or tube with rice or dried beans. Plastic bowls make great drums and saucepan lids function as excellent cymbals. Toy shops are full of inexpensive noise-making instruments, like rattles, bells, whistles, and so on.

Three ways to play

Songs and stories

Ask the children to make noises in songs and stories whenever certain characters or actions are mentioned. For instance, tell them that every time the Wolf is mentioned in Little Red Riding Hood, they must make a sound with the shaker. Every time Jack climbs the beanstalk, they must bang a saucepan lid. Tasks like these encourage children to listen extra carefully.

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To play this variation, you need to have two of each instrument. Sit at a table, opposite a child. Give them the same set of instruments as you have. Put a barrier on the table between the two of you – a large book, for example. For the game to work, you need to make sounds without them being able to see which instrument you are using.

Make a sound. For instance, shake a rattle. Ask the children to make the same sound. To make it more challenging, create a sequence of sounds (bang, rattle, shake) and ask them to make the same sounds in the same order.

Drums

Play a pattern of beats on a drum (plastic bowl) and get the children to repeat the pattern on their own drum (dum dee dum dum dum). To make this a little harder, use more than one instrument. For example, play a pattern on the saucepan lid and then a different pattern on the shaker. Ask the children to copy both the rhythms and the sounds.



'I can hear which sounds are the same and which are different.'