

Guess what?

This exercise helps children to practise both understanding sentences and saying them. They have to listen and understand clues to work out the answer. The activity also helps them to learn about categories. Some children might need quite a lot of support with this activity at first.

Setting up

Create a set of pictures (about 12) by cutting photographs from magazines. Alternatively, use picture cards you might already have from other games.

Arrange the pictures face up. Without being seen, put a coin (or some other reward) under one of the pictures.

Explain that you are going to describe one of the pictures. The children's job is to decide which one you are talking about.



Playing the game

Let's say you have chosen a photograph of a frog. Offer the children six clues, one for each of the headings below. For example, say: 'This is what category it belongs to - it's an animal!'

Heading

The category it belongs to
 What it does
 One way of describing it
 What it's like
 What it's not like
 The letter it begins with

Clue

It's an animal
 It can jump
 It's green
 It's a bit like a toad
 It's not like a rabbit
 It begins with the letter F

Day-to-day

You can play this game anywhere, any time, without props. Play it like 'I spy', but instead start by saying, 'I'm thinking of something that lives in a zoo...' or 'I'm thinking of someone who has a baby brother...'

Taking it further

When the children are familiar with the activity, let them take turns at being 'teacher'. At first, the children might need a lot of adult help with making sure their descriptions fit the six categories, though they will develop this ability with practice.

Variation

Play the game as a quiz.

Choose a picture without telling anyone what it is. See if the children can guess correctly by asking the six questions.

1. What category does it belong to?
2. What does it do?
3. How would you describe it?
4. What is it like?
5. What is it not like?
6. What letter does it begin with?



'I gave really good clues. The others guessed what I was talking about.'