

TEA PARTY BARRIER GAME

Barrier games are a great way to help develop a child's communication skills including: listening, oral language, sentence structure, understanding concepts, social skills and turn taking.

Barrier games are set up with 2 people (a speaker and a listener), a barrier (e.g. a large book or piece of cardboard) between the two people so that you can't see what the other person is doing and 2 identical matching sets of materials (e.g. pictures, Lego, playdough, stickers, paper and coloured pencils/textas/crayons, real objects or toys).

Below are some instructions about how to play a barrier game using some provided pictures:

Tea Party Game

1. Cut out the pictures and laminate them so that the activity is durable.
2. Give each person a copy of the teddy and the doll and the individual object pictures.
3. Check that the child knows what all of the pictures are.
4. Tell the child you are going to play a game to help them practice being a 'good listener'. Explain to the child that you are going to make a picture and that you want the child to make their picture look exactly the same as yours by listening carefully to what they need to do.
5. Place a 'barrier' between the 2 people using a large book or a piece of cardboard and explain to the child that this is in place so that they can't see what your picture looks like and they need to do really good listening to make their picture the same.
6. Create your own picture by placing the object pictures on the teddy and doll pictures.
7. Give clear instructions to the child about how to put their pictures in the same place as yours (e.g. give the doll a blue plate; give the teddy a red cup). Make sure you give the child enough time to carry out the instruction before giving the next instruction.
8. When you have finished the picture take away the barrier and compare the child's picture with your picture. Discuss with the child what they got right and tell them that they got it correct because they did really good listening. Encourage your child to correct any pictures that may have been put in the incorrect place by giving them the instruction again.

9. Play the game again and this time tell the child that it's their turn to do the talking and that you are going to do 'good listening' and try and make your picture look the same as theirs.

10. Put the barrier up again and ask the child to give you an instruction. If the child's instruction is not clear (e.g. give this to teddy), you may need to give them some additional cues so that they provide all of the necessary information (e.g. I've found teddy but I don't know what to give him).

11. Once the child has finished, take the barrier away and discuss the picture. Explain to the child that you got your picture right because they did well at telling you what to do and that you listened carefully to make the picture the same. Talk about any pictures that might be in the incorrect position and model the correct instruction (e.g. Whoops! I needed to give doll the red cup).

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