

Do You Hear What I Hear?

LEARNING
DOMAIN:
Phonological Awareness



In this game, your child will practice listening and identifying different sounds. Listening with eyes closed helps children practice focusing attention, and naming the objects and sounds they hear promotes brain connections between auditory processing (understanding what is heard) and expressive language (speaking with words).

Materials

Objects that make different sounds. For example: bell or other small musical instrument, portable kitchen timer, piece of paper or tin foil, wooden block or other item that can be “hammered” on the floor, squeaky toy, baby rattle, etc.

Let's Play!

Gather materials for making sounds and put them into a bag or container next to you. Introduce the activity to your child by saying: **“Let’s play a listening game. Can you think of some times when we need to listen to sounds around us?”** Let your child respond. If your child can’t think of any responses, you might talk about everyday sounds that we pay attention to because they tell us something important, such as a phone ringing, a microwave timer, the whistle of a crossing guard if you walk to school, a car or truck horn honking in the street, a person calling your name, a dog barking, etc. Talk with your child about what these different sounds mean and what might happen if we ignore them. You can also talk about other sounds that we choose to listen to for enjoyment, such as music or birds singing. Continue by asking your child: **“How do we listen? What part of our bodies do we use when we listen?”** Let your child respond and affirm that ears are for listening.

Introduce the game by saying: **“Let me show you how to play. First, I’m going to close my eyes and sit very quietly so that I can listen to the sounds I hear in the room. When I close my eyes, it helps me to focus on what I hear instead of what I see.”** Close your eyes for 5–10 seconds, then open your eyes and tell your child what sounds you heard.

Continue with: **“Now it is your turn to listen. First, close your eyes. Next, sit very quietly so that you can listen to the sounds around you. When I say ‘open your eyes,’ open them, and you can tell me all of the sounds that you just heard. Ready?”**

Pick one of the objects and make a sound with it. Tell your child to open her eyes and let her tell you the sound(s) that she heard. If your child needs help naming the object and describing the sounds (e.g., “I heard a rattle shaking”), show her the object and model for her the name of the object and how to describe its sound (you might use words like “ringing,” “tapping,” “squeaking,” etc.). Continue the game several more times, making a different sound each time for your child to guess. Then let your child take a turn to choose an object to make a sound with while you close your eyes. Continue taking turns as long as your child is interested.

Tips

- It is okay if your child sees the group of objects you are using to make sounds, as long as his/her eyes are closed when you choose one and make a sound.
- If you don’t have any objects to use, you can make sounds by clapping your hands, tapping your feet, whistling, snapping your fingers, banging your hand on the floor, etc.
- For more listening sounds, record some sounds indoors and outdoors on your phone or other recording device, and play the game with these recorded sounds.

