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Children learn language naturally through play and active exploration. A wide variety of toys and games will encourage learning and help to develop skills in language understanding, oral expression, and social language use. The following suggestions will be helpful in choosing appropriate toys to target various language skills while keeping your child engaged. Approximate ages and skill levels have been provided to help guide your choices. Many items can be purchased at toy stores or through the catalogues and websites listed. Ask your speech therapist for help in deciding which games or toys are recommended for your child.

## Toys and Games to Develop Speech and Language Skills

### **Infant and Toddler**

Pop Up Toys (e.g. Playskool Busy Pop Up Pals)  
Shape Sorters  
Fisher Price Laugh and Learn Shop and Learn Walker:  
Fisher Price Learning Letters Mailbox  
Fisher Price Laugh and Learn Learning Puppy  
Fisher Price Amazing Animals Press & Go Animal Parade:  
Fisher Price Laugh and Learn Cookie Shape Surprise  
Playskool Explore N Grow Busy Ball Popper  
Melissa & Doug Talking Puzzles (Toddler)  
Leapfrog Shapes and Sharing Picnic Basket  
Leapfrog Cook and Play Potsy

### **Skills Promoted**

cause-effect  
colors, shapes, language concepts  
colors, shapes, numbers  
letters, numbers, opposites, first words, greetings  
body parts  
cause and effect  
colors, shapes, numbers, cause and effect  
cause and effect  
early vocabulary (numbers, letters, shapes, etc.)  
vocabulary, language concepts  
vocabulary, language concepts

### **Early Childhood**

Animal Scramble Game  
Cariboo  
Feel and Find Game  
Fisher Price Laugh and Learn Say Please Tea Set  
Fisher Price Little People Play Sets (school,farm,airport etc.)  
Hide & Seek Safari (monkey or tiger with wand)  
Kids on Stage Game  
Legos and Lego Kits  
Let's Get Dressed Building Blocks

listening Skills, colors  
memory, categorization, language concepts, articulation  
descriptors (colors, size, shape)  
social language (requesting, turn-taking, asking questions)  
pretend play, vocabulary  
location, concepts, turn-taking  
non-verbal communication, turn-taking, role-play  
early language concepts (colors, size, top/bottom, next to, clothing/seasons vocabulary, basic concepts (top/bottom, first/last, etc)  
early language concepts (colors, size, shape)  
vocabulary, sound production, turn-taking  
body parts, clothing vocabulary, colors  
size, color, shapes, action words  
language concepts, expressive language  
vocabulary, language concepts, articulation  
vocabulary, categorization  
matching, problem solving, turn taking

Magnatiles  
Memory Game  
Mr. Potato Head  
Play dough sets  
Sequence Sandwich Shop game  
Zingo game  
S'Match game  
Uno games

**Pretend Play Objects by (Melissa and Doug):**

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Doll houses, Doll furniture, Horse/Stables Castles         | pretend play |
| Food Sets  | pretend play |
| Magnetic dress up play sets                                | pretend play |
| Puppets and Theater  | pretend play |
| Role Play Sets (train engineer, chef, construction worker) | pretend play |

**Additional Pretend Play (targeting pretend play and functional use of objects)**

Cars/ Trucks and accessories  
 Doctor/ Vet Kits  
 Dolls and accessories  
 Doll houses  
 Kitchen Set with Food  
 Weebles Weebly Wobbly Tree House

**School Age**

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Apples to Apples Kids Edition    | comparing and contrasting                     |
| Context Clues Pirate Treasure    | inferencing, problem- solving                 |
| Following Directions Taxi Driver | following directions                          |
| Friendship Island                | social skills, language                       |
| Jeepers Peepers                  | word retrieval, vocabulary                    |
| Scavenger Hunt for Kids          | vocabulary, word retrieval, language concepts |
| Smart Mouth                      | articulation, word retrieval                  |
| 3D Labyrinth                     | problem solving                               |
| Too Much, Too Little, Just Right | social skills, nonverbal communication        |
| Verbal Volley                    | vocabulary, word retrieval                    |

**Adolescent:**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Diary of Whimpy Kid                            | language processing, problem solving                                |
| Dinner Games                                   | pragmatics, expressive formulation                                  |
| 5 Second Rule                                  | word retrieval, articulation  |
| Scattogories                                   | categorization, vocabulary  |
| Taboo  | word retrieval, memory  |
| Don't Say It!                                  | word retrieval, providing descriptors                               |
| Guess Who and Guess Where Games                | providing descriptors, asking and answering questions               |
| Hide & Seek Safari (monkey or tiger with wand) | location concepts, turn-taking                                      |
| I Spy Games (board and computer)               | Sound production, vocabulary  |
| Kids on Stage Game                             | Nonverbal communication, turn-taking, role-play                     |
| Lego's and Lego Kits                           | Early language concepts (colors, size, top/bottom next to etc.)     |
| Mad Gab Game                                   | Auditory processing/discrimination                                  |
| Magnatiles                                     | Language concepts (color, size, shape)                              |
| Mystery Garden Game                            | Turn-taking, vocabulary/word retrieval, describing, social language |
| Race to the Roof Game                          | Turn-taking, vocabulary/word retrieval, describing, social language |

### **Computer Problem Solving Games** (promote inferencing, predicting, providing solutions, etc.)

- Freddi Fish Series (ages 3-8)
- Putt-Putt Series (ages 3-8)
- Spy Fox Series (ages 3-8)
- Scooby Doo Series (e.g. Jinx at the Sphinx, Showdown in Ghost Town, etc.)

## **Books Promoting Language & Sound Development**

### **Author and Title:**

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Alborough, Jez             | Hide and Seek  |
| Binkow, Howard             | Howard B. Wigglebottom Learns to Listen (listening skills)   |
| Boynton, Sandra            | Blue Hat, Green Hat-<br>Doggies<br>Moo, Baa, Lalala<br>What's Wrong Little Pookie?                         |
| Brown, Lauri Krasny        | How to Be A Friend: A Guide to Making Friends (friendship skills)  |
| Burrows, Laurie            | Simon's Hook (handling teasing)  |
| Carle, Eric                | Do You Want to Be My Friend?<br>From Head to Toe<br>The Very Hungry Caterpillar<br>The Very Lonely Firefly |
| Carlson, Nancy             | How to Lose All Your Friends (friendship skills)   |
| Cook, Julia                | My Mouth is a Volcano  |
| Discovery Toys Exclusive   | Plum Island (problem solving)  |
| Dr. Seuss                  | Fox in Socks<br>Hop on Pop<br>Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You?<br>The ABC Book<br>There's a Wocket in My Pocket |
| Eastman, P.D.              | Are You My Mother?<br>Big Dog, Little Dog<br>Red Stop! Green, Go!  |
| Hale, Natalie              | Oh Brother! Growing Up With a Special Needs Sibling  |
| Kindersley, Dorling        | Copy Cat Animals<br>Copy Cat Faces   |
| Martin, Bill               | Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you see?<br>Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What do you hear?                      |
| Mayer, Mercer              | I was So Mad   |
| Miller, Margaret           | Baby Faces   |
| Most, Bernard              | Cock-A-Doodle Moo!<br>Moo-Ha<br>Oink-Ha  |
| Parrish, Peggy (or Herman) | Any in the Amelia Bedelia series (abstract language development)   |
| Peete, Holly Robinson      | My Brother Charlie (growing up with special needs sibling)   |
| Stover, JoAnn              | They Didn't Use Their Heads (reasoning)  |
| Wolff, F. & Savitz, H.M.   | Is a Worry Worrying You? (dealing with anxiety)  |

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Below is a list of the catalogue resources sited on this list. Other Resources for choosing toys and therapeutic activities can be found in the Parent Resource Box at South Shore Therapies. There you can find a more complete listing of companies providing therapeutic activities to support intervention.

**Discovery Toys** (877)875-9471 [www.discoverytoysinc.com](http://www.discoverytoysinc.com)

Toys are designed to target specific developmental skills. Website is separated by age and target skill.

“We believe children grow to their fullest potential when parents are involved in play. To forge this special bond each of our products is carefully conceived to deliver maximum interactivity and fun-building the foundation for future learning success and achievement.” –Discovery Toys Website

**Janelle Publications** (800) 888-8834 [www.janellepublications.com](http://www.janellepublications.com)

Creative Speech and Language materials are broken down by category/target skill. Includes games, software, and various other resources

**Melissa and Doug** (800) 718-5365 [www.melissaanddoug.com](http://www.melissaanddoug.com)

Excellent quality toys, puzzles, and pretend play items from infant to school-age

“From puzzles to puppets, plush to play food, magnetic activities, music and more, Melissa & Doug is one of the leading designers and manufacturers of education toys and children’s products.” – Melissa and Doug Website

**Natural Learning Concepts** (800) 823-3430 [www.nlconcepts.com](http://www.nlconcepts.com)

Website containing loads of educational toys a wide variety of categories. Fair prices for quality items, along with many free articles, downloads, interviews, and other resources. Frequent sales.

**Super Duper Inc** (800) 277-8737 [www.superduperinc.com](http://www.superduperinc.com)

Fun learning materials for children with special needs. Free shipping. Can be broken down by target skill.