



Chat Challenge with ... Blocks

Each week we will share a new activity for you. These are fun activities, using things already in your home, which will support speech, language and communication.

You can see demonstrations and photos of them via this link: <https://youtu.be/woursIUzIDY>

To do this activity you will need:

- Any number of children for any age range. It will develop communication in any child.
- Any type of building blocks e.g. wooden blocks, Lego, Duplo or even just tupperware boxes and yoghurt pots.

This chat challenge has been designed to focus on:

- increasing vocabulary
- understanding language
- turn taking
- problem solving
- telling stories

Try to using the suggestions lots of times in the activity as repetition really helps.

For younger children:

- Watch: see how they want to play
- Comment: be a voice-over for what they are doing.

For older children

- Use words that are more complicated, and talk about what they mean.
- After the activity, see if they can retell what they did.

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For Pre-School Children:

For our youngest children, working on taking turns can be so helpful for their communication skills. Take in turns to build the tower by placing a container/brick on.

Whilst you're playing, see how often you can use these words:

- short phrases such as 'My turn, your turn, all fall down'
- verbs (action words) such as 'look, build, crash, wobble
- positional language (saying where things are) such as 'on' and 'off'
- words such as 'more, again, high, bigger, top, bottom, colours.

For children in their first years at school:

This activity can help their concept vocabulary (words that we use to describe things). Have challenges to see who can build the biggest / most impressive tower?

See whether you can talk about:

- describing your towers and using words that mean the same thing: huge/massive/gigantic, skinny/thin
- concepts: tallest/biggest, colours, shapes of bricks
- predict and problem solve: How many do you think we'll stack before it falls? Why do we put the largest box at the bottom?

Look on the next page for activities for older children in primary and secondary school.

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For older children in primary school:

Barrier games can be really fun and helpful for older children:

1. Share out identical sets of bricks (not too many to start). Talk about the shape, colour and size of them all so that you have shared understanding.
2. Place a barrier between you (like a chopping board), so you can't see each others' bricks.
3. One person is the 'designer', and the other is the 'builder'. The designer tells the builder what to do e.g. "put the red brick on top of the blue brick".
4. Start with simple towers, then you can make it harder.
5. Remove the barrier and see if you've made the same thing!

For secondary school children:

You can introduce even more creativity. Try using the barrier game but with more complex models and instructions.

You could also problem solve making something new together, or perhaps re-build an old Lego set, chatting as you go.

To support sequencing and story telling, either use these apps, or take your own photos as you go along, and make a story book / instructions manual:

- Lego Movie Maker App (free)
- Toontastic 3D App (free)

There are lots of other ideas on our social media pages (see bottom banner), and another activity coming soon!

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