



Parent Take-aways Language Syntax & Morphology

WATCH FOR YOUR CHILD'S FIRST ATTEMPTS AT PUTTING TWO WORDS TOGETHER. THIS IS DEVELOPING SENTENCE STRUCTURE, IN OTHER WORDS, SYNTAX. MORPHOLOGY REFERS TO THE STRUCTURE AND CONSTRUCTION OF WORDS AND THE RULES THAT DETERMINE CHANGES IN WORD MEANING; IT'S KNOWING PLURAL FORMS AND CORRECT USE OF VERB TENSE.

The emergence of first words typically begins around 12 months of age. Syntax typically begins when a child begins to combine words in early two word utterances (ex. Daddy work) around 18-24 months.

A child needs approximately 50 words to begin to combine them into short phrases. When children begin to learn words, they learn that some words refer to objects, some to actions and others can be used as descriptors (adjectives). In the second year of life, they begin to learn pronouns, adverbs, commands, present and past tense, suffixes and prefixes.

Syntax is one of the more delayed aspects of language for children who are deaf or hard of hearing, so it is important to be aware of ways to support these skills.



- ✓ Introduce words from many different categories: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions and conjunctions.
- ✓ Use the Plus One Rule: add a word to expand the length of your child's utterance to model longer sentences. Also use correct grammar, even if it means adding more than one word. E.g. If your child says 'blue ball' you can say "The blue ball is big."
- ✓ Read books with repetition, such as: We're Going on a Bear Hunt or I Went Walking.
- ✓ Watch videos of people or objects in action and describe what is happening.
- ✓ Pay attention to the use of plurals with "s", add them whenever possible.
- ✓ Play games with "in" and "on."
- ✓ Highlight differences using "not," e.g., Mommy's eating, Daddy is not eating.
- ✓ Talk about he, she, it and they. Ex. He wants the ball, she plays with the ball, he jumps, she laughs.
- ✓ Begin to use contractions at the appropriate stage. Ex. He isn't coming with us.
- ✓ Play games with regular and irregular past tense forms (at that appropriate stage). Ex. He jumped, she ate.
- ✓ Emphasize the use of "a," "the," and "an" at the appropriate stage.