

# Act It Out, Simon Says, and the like!

Activities where we say something and our child acts it out can be so fun, especially if you happen to have a budding thespian! Like the other activities, these are completely adjustable to language level.

In these activities, you can say something that is then acted out by your child. This can be carried out with single words, short vignettes, or whole short stories! It is a good opportunity to explore many parts of language. Here are some examples using a range of language levels.

## Act It Out

Have a container with cards in it. Each card will have a word that will be read aloud by the adult. To make it fun, you have an empty bottle, sit down with each other, spin the bottle, and whoever the bottle points to is the person who will act out what is read from the card!

For very early language, you could have just a single word read aloud, for example, an animal (monkey, dog, bird, etc.) or a verb (jump, clap, blow, etc.).

For phrase-level language, cards could contain things like "touch a doorknob," "roll the ball," "hug Lassie," and the like. You can likely see how easily complexity can be added. You would elaborate the phrase. For example, "Touch every doorknob," "touch every door in the kitchen," "roll the smallest ball," and the like.

For more sophisticated language levels, you can carry out a bit of family theatre. This can be fun though a bit of work. This can be a regular fun activity for a "family night." You can either read or tell your own made-up short story and then act it out. If there are a couple of roles in the story for people to play, it can make it all the more fun. Classics like "Three Billygoats Gruff" or "Little Miss Muffit" work well. There is repetition both in action and language in many of the classics. If you read from a storybook, be on guard. Many "childrens'" storybooks are loaded with sophisticated language, so be careful. Look at the text. Is it a lot of reading? If so, you are better to find something less wordy or make up your own story! It could be as simple as,

*"One day, mommy was babysitting a monkey from the zoo. It was a very smart monkey. The monkey followed mommy around. Finally, mommy said, "Mr. Monkey, please help me set the table for dinner." Mr. monkey immediately helped. He put out plates. He put out cups. But, instead of a spoon and a fork, he put a banana at each plate!"*

## Simon Says

This game is nearly a duplicate of **Act It Out** (above), with a few exceptions.

- Simon Says has to do with actions, so you are always saying some kind of verb or verb phrase.
- It doesn't lend itself to short stories.
- And, finally, the fun mischief-maker of listening and monitoring for the all-important phrase, "Simon says . . .".

## Grocery Store

Setting up a little grocery store and telling your child what you need them to buy can be a fun activity and (again) adjustable to language. It is also an excellent opportunity to explore all those modifying words (little, big, soft, cold, sweet, tiny, etc.). Play money, pretending to check out, and even pretending to fix or eat the purchases afterward is just more fun!

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Again, and you may tire of reading this, these activities are to be enjoyable! Often, when we have put effort into something and find our child is not motivated, it can feel defeating. Take heart. Once you land on the activity, your child enjoys it all becomes easier and worth it. Parents are the absolute best at this. No matter how unusual or unique, if it's an activity your child is motivated by and joins, you have succeeded!