



The Boost Your Toddler Needs To Master Common Words

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The first smile...check, first steps...check, eating solid foods...check; parents constantly monitor developmental milestones. But what's the approach when milestones prove to be a challenge to reach?

Is your toddler showing difficulty grasping their first common words? You may notice your child points to or uses gestures to communicate. If your toddler refers to his belongings with indefinite terms like "give me this" or "I want that", it may be time to hone in on [word retrieval](#) skills.

Kids Academy offers resources to immerse your toddler with new words. To start, we can zoom in on what words your toddler should be expected to know. Let's explore some fun strategies parents can implement to unveil their curious little chatterboxes.



What Words Should My Toddler Know?

The bank of words at your toddler's disposal should be increasing at a rapid speed. We're talking exponential growth. Think about it, your toddler's vocabulary of 50 words at the age of three should skyrocket to over 300.

Children at this stage have been developing their receptive vocabulary since birth. This means, from the time they could hear voices in the womb until now, they have been listening and making meaning of what they hear.

Their expressive vocabulary, or ability to produce words and sentences, is still in the primitive stages. The ability to express themselves will come with modeling from adults, repetition, and practice.

Check out this breakdown by age:

Ages 1-2	Ages 2-3	Ages 3-4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• mama• dada• eat• stop• go• yes• no• ball	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I want to play.• Throw me the ball.• I am hungry/sleepy/hot/cold.• Give me the toy.• Pick me up.• I miss my mom.• I need help.• I can do it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can I go outside to ride my bike?• It is sunny today, so I want to wear my sunglasses.• My friend is sad, but I hugged her.• I can hop like a frog and wiggle like a worm.



Word Games and Activities Your Toddler May Enjoy

Dramatic Play:

Playing pretend is a fun way for your toddler to show what they see as they observe you in the house. A cook set will allow them to identify the names of food and dishes. They can sort the items into categories and name the objects.

I Spy:

Choose an item in the room and name the color or another descriptive word. Use the phrase: I spy something _____. Have your toddler try to guess the item.

Categories:

Head outdoors and use sidewalk chalk to write lists of items in the same category. For example, you can use the categories foods, clothing, colors, animals, and transportation. Encourage your toddler to add words to each category.

Memory:

Use or make a set of vocabulary flashcards. The set should have pairs of identical cards (two ducks, two bananas, and two balls). Place all the cards face down and encourage

your child to make a match. Remind your child to say the name of the item on the card each time he looks at a new card.

Field Trips:

Visit the zoo, an aquarium, or your grocery store. Play games like I Spy or simply ask your child to

describe what he sees.

How to Use this Chapter

The resources in this unit are perfect for extending your child's learning.

Sort Common Objects:

Your child can practice categorizing objects according to their functions. Other sorts include farm animals and finding what does not belong in a group.


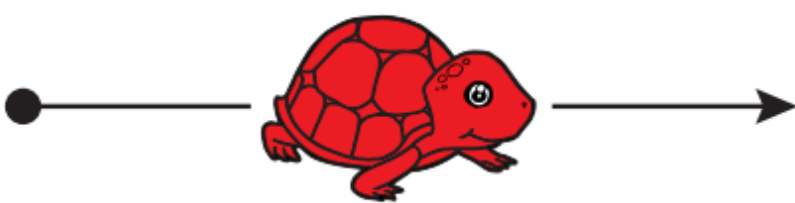





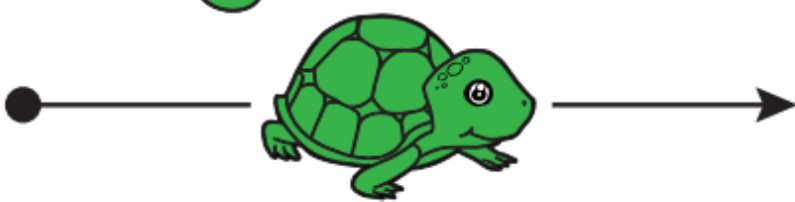


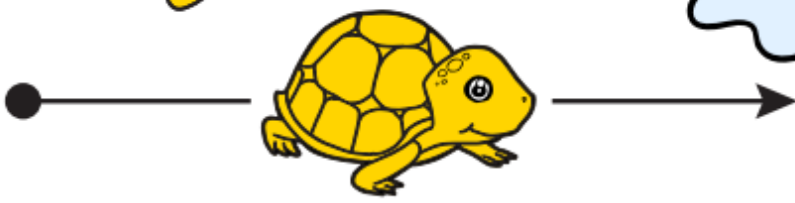



Color Words:

These resources can be used to help your child practice their colors. Enrich the learning by asking additional questions: Can you name another green animal? Which animal is slow, the turtle or the rabbit?

The Slow Turtles

Help the turtles finish coloring the words. Use the same colors. Start from the letter on the left.

	<p>red</p> 	
	<p>blue</p> 	
	<p>green</p> 	
	<p>yellow</p> 	

Relating Frequently Occurring Verbs and Adjectives to Their Opposites:

Words pairs like hot-cold, open-close, fast-slow are frequently used. The activities in this lesson will help your toddler identify opposites.



Real-Life Connections:

Your toddler is building independence and learning to operate in the real world. These activities give your toddler the tools needed to express themselves.

Name Those Clothes!

Help William the weatherman draw a line from each word to its matching picture.



t-shirt



jacket



boots



flip
flops



hat



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Shades of Meaning:

Use these activities to show your child more specific words to use to express verbs with similar meanings.



If you're worried about your toddler's lack of speech, remember that it is normal for some kids to be late talkers. This is not the time to stress grammar, sentence structure, and syntax. These skills will mature over time. Instead, use this time to pour as many sophisticated words as you can into your child's world.

In time, you should start to see more precise word choice, varied, complex sentence types; questions, commands, and exclamations are sprinkled into conversations.

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References:

1. <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/comm-2-to-3.html>
2. https://www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/fact_sheets/Wordfinding_difficulties/

