

Daily tips for Playful Learning at Home

Miming Mayhem

Today's idea is all about learning *how* we do things, and the different words we use to describe it

It is basically a very silly time, and a great one to do outdoors with loved ones. But some serious learning too, as it helps children grow their control over their bodies and thoughts

What do I need?

- A quiet place where you can play without worrying about looking a bit silly
- Make a short list of some common activities that your child knows how to do – jumping, walking, cleaning teeth, putting on socks, eating a biscuit, talking on the phone ...
- And think of a few ways to describe *how* we do it – slowly, quickly, sleepily, silly, grumpily ...

What will your child learn from this play?

- The words for different actions and how we describe them
- Movement and coordination as they try them out
- Paying attention as they watch what you do
- Feeling together as we copy each other
- Control of actions – stopping, starting and changing

What do we do?

First of all, check your child knows how to pretend to do the different actions – show them what to do. For example, say “I’m brushing my hair” while you mime it

Encourage them to copy you, and try out different pretend activities. Your child might have some suggestions

For some children, that will be enough. But if your child gets the idea, then you can try doing it different ways

“I’m jumping slowly – can you copy me?” Then change to quickly, or jumping like you are being silly or tired.

You can change round the activities and styles depending on how easy your child finds this. Can you walk like a lion, or a tortoise?

At some point, they might want to challenge you!

How can you take it further?

This is a great one to do outside with loved ones at a safe 2m distance – can you challenge grandparents or friends?

Gradually use more complex language and actions – use a new word several times and show what it means to help your child pick it up

Turn it into a guessing game – “am I walking quickly or slowly”. This is a bit more tricky but helps your child learn to use the words