

Activity Three: Puzzles

Why?

- To develop attention and listening skills
- To follow adult direction
- To do an activity with another child or in a small group
- To have fun!

Who? With at least one other child – start with one and add another when you think it is appropriate and the child will be able to manage. **If it is too much, go back to just one other child.**

Where? You can play this anywhere! At home, at nursery, at school, in the park, anywhere!

Tips: Use inset puzzles (puzzles with pieces that you put in to a board rather than join together to make a picture). Noisy inset puzzles are often popular.

You need: An adult and at least two children.

Version one: Put puzzle pieces in a bag. Children take it in turns to take a piece out of the bag and put it in the puzzle. Name the pictures, e.g. “Horse!” make the noise, “Neigh!”

Version two: Offer a choice of two pieces, e.g. “Train or plane?” The child tells you what they want, e.g. “Train.” Wait for them to look at you, even if it is a fleeting look, and give the puzzle piece to them.

Variation three: Offer each child a choice of two puzzle pieces. When you all have a piece each, run around the room making the noise of the puzzle piece, e.g. “Choo choo choo” (train) “Nee nor nee nor” (fire engine) etc. After a short time, say, “Stop!” Everyone freezes. Then say, “Go!” and they run around again making the noise that goes with their puzzle piece. Do this two or three times and when you say stop, say, for example, “train in!” and the child with the train puzzle piece puts it in the puzzle, “fire engine in” etc.

Variation four: Hand a puzzle piece to one child to put in to the puzzle, say, e.g. “Train in!” then give a piece to the other child and tell them to put it in the puzzle, e.g. “Fire engine in!”

Activity Four: Pairs

Why?

- To develop attention and listening skills
- To do an activity with another child or in a small group
- To have fun!

Who? With at least one other child – start with one and add another when you think it is appropriate and the child will be able to manage. **If it is too much, go back to just one other child.**

Where? You can play this anywhere! At home, at nursery, at school, in the park, anywhere!

You need: pairs cards and a post box. An adult and at least two children.

You do:

Easiest: put three cards on the table face up so you can see the pictures. Make sure 2 of them are the same, i.e. a pair. For example, a monkey, a fish and a monkey. Choose a child to go first and ask them, “Which two are the same?” If they don’t understand, say, “Monkey and monkey? Or monkey and fish?” If the child still can’t find a pair, you say, “Monkey and monkey are the same!” and give the pair to the child to post. Then put out three more cards for the next child and so on.

Harder: Put out at least four cards face down and take it in turns to turn over two cards to find a pair and post them.

Hardest: Put several cards face down and take it in turns to find a pair and post them.