



Using longer sentences

We use **longer sentences** to give others more information. Children can tell us more about their experiences, preferences, and ideas as they learn to use **longer sentences**.

To help children use **longer sentences**, you can:

- Repeat children's sentences** and **add on words** to make them **longer**, and
- Give children a choice** using two **longer sentences**.

Play with longer sentences: Use longer sentences in your play together



Play...with cars and trucks

Play together with toy cars and trucks.

Repeat your child's sentence, and make it a little **longer**.

Child: Teddy's driving.

You: Teddy's driving **a tractor**.



At home...at mealtimes

Set the table together for dinner. Give your child two options with sentences that are a bit **longer** than your child would use.

You: Do you want **the big plate** or **the little plate**?

Do you want the **cup with black spots**, or the **cup with horses on it**?



Out and about...in the garden

Spend time in the garden or in the sandpit together.

Repeat what your child says and add some words to make it **longer**.

Child: I have a shovel.

You: You have a shovel **and a rake**.



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Read with longer sentences: Visit the library and borrow some books

Alexander's Outing by Pamela Allen

The Crocodile Who Didn't Like Water by Gemma Merino

Tiddler by Julia Donaldson

Words that help longer sentences: Use these words in your day

Longer sentences let children share more details. You can make sentences longer with:

Words for describing: *big, nice, happy, little, round, bumpy, blue, sparkly*

Phrases for describing: *that is big, who is happy, which is round, blue and sparkly*

Location words: *in, on, there, underneath, home, Grandma's, day-care*

Location phrases: *in the basket, on the blanket, over there, near day-care*

Learn about longer sentences: Ways to help language grow

When you **repeat children's sentences** and **add on words** to make sentences **longer**, you are:

- Showing you understand what they have said, and
- Showing children how their sentences can be a bit longer.

When you **give children a choice** using two **longer sentences**, you are:

- Showing two ways that a sentence might be **longer**, and
- Showing how a **longer sentence** can give more information.

Children not have to repeat sentences after you. The more often children hear sentences that are a little longer than theirs, the more likely they will understand them and begin to use **longer sentences** in their own talking.

Speech pathology key terms: sentence length/complexity, expansion, binary choice.