

Daily tips for Playful Learning at Home – Number 9



The Question Mark Muncher!



You'd be amazed how many questions we ask children as we play and talk with them. "What colour is the car?" "Where's the doggie?" "How many fishfingers are there?"

It's fine, but children don't learn much from questions except what they already know. If we comment instead of asking a question, they learn to look at things differently. If we copy their responses and add to them, then they learn new words.

It can be hard not to ask questions – which is why today the Question Mark Muncher will help you!

What do I need?

You can do this any time you are playing or chatting with your child

This works for any age or size of group, so any family time will do too

Specific equipment:

- Don't ask any questions!

What will your child learn from this playing?

The Question Mark Muncher is great to help children learn:

- How to play together and chat
- New words & how to use them
- Extending their thinking
- How to wonder & find things out

What do we do?

Play with your child as you would usually do and chat away about what you are doing. You may feel a temptation to ask a question. **Don't!**

Instead, try a comment by, for example:

- Saying what you see the child doing
- Commenting on what they might be thinking
- Notice what they are looking at and make a remark

Pause and wait for a response. If your child responds, copy what they say and add to it and see what happens next

For example:

You: "I wonder what Teddy is wanting"

Child: "A sandwich"

You: "A tasty toasted sandwich!"

And so on

How can you take it further?

See how long you can keep a conversation going this way; try it at bath time or with a storybook

Take the Question Mark Muncher with you when you go out and about (following government guidance on social distancing etc)

Play & talk together
Be careful with too many questions

Pause and wait for your child to respond
Copy what they say and add to it