



Chat Challenge with ... String

Each week we will share a new activity for you. These are fun activities, using things already in your home, which will support speech, language and communication.

You can see demonstrations of them at: <https://youtu.be/8PddhBq-3k0>

To do this activity you will need:

- String or something similar (wool, strip of fabric, tape)

For some activities:

- Sticks or branches (lots of different types)

This chat challenge has been designed to focus on:

- increasing vocabulary
- attention and listening
- turn taking
- word categories

For younger children:

- model lots of vocabulary
- comment on what you're doing
- turn taking

For older children

- think about words that mean similar things
- word association and re-telling stories
- encourage young people to take the lead.

Address

4 Stable Yard
Middlewood Green
Stowmarket
Suffolk IP14 5HG

www.communicate-therapy.co.uk

Twitter: @COMMUNICATEslts
FB: COMMUNICATEspeechlanguagetherapy
IG: communicate_slts

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For Pre-School Children:

1. Hold the length of string at one end, and let your child run with the other end. Use 'ready, steady, GO' and 'STOP'. How far will they get? Will they stop in time?
 - You could use sticky tape instead, it makes a great sound as it comes off the roll.
2. Make some stick pictures either on the grass, or on a piece of paper.
 - Try making a picture of your face. How many eyes do you have? What colour is your hair?
3. Use your sticks for drawing in mud, sand or stones. Follow your child's lead, model words to describe the movement and markings they are making e.g. 'curly, round, straight, short, long, swirly, dots'

For children in their first years at school:

1. Make string pictures. Use different lengths of string and colours where possible (maybe use wool). Focus on describing the shapes made, or the colour/type of string used for each part.
 - Can they give you clues for you to guess what it is before it's finished?
2. Make a spider web using string and furniture in the room. Use plastic cups or similar to attach to the web, and find little toys to fit into them. Comment on where your child puts the toys e.g. 'frog in the blue cup'.
 - If you're outside, you could use plastic plant pots, or even socks from the washing line instead!

Look on the next page for activities for older children in primary and secondary school.

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For older children in primary school:

1. Make a broomstick. Have a think together about what it might look like and what you will need. You could talk about it, or even draw it.
 - Focus on descriptive words e.g. 'we will need... a long, strong stick; a pile of thin snappy twigs.
 - Imagine what the broomstick could be used for, or if it's magical, where you would ride it too. This is great to use their imaginative language and tell stories.
2. Make a spider web from sticks and string and then go for a hunt around the house or outside. Find any two items to try and balance in your web.
 - Work out how they could go together.
 - Sometimes it will be easier (e.g. 'banana' and 'rubber duck' are both yellow) than others (e.g. 'sock' and 'spoon' both live in a drawer)

For secondary school children:

1. Set up a Mission Impossible style challenge. Use string and furniture / large objects to create a 'laser web'.
 - Take it in turns to make up challenges and see who can successfully complete them without getting tangled up quickest.
 - Start with three things to complete in the challenge, then make them longer. E.g. 'touch the bench, go under the leaf, then collect the frog.'
 - You can create harder instructions by using 'before' and 'after' (e.g. before you go under the leaf, touch the bench), and/or giving them more things to remember. Build it up slowly.

There are lots of other ideas on our social media pages (see bottom banner), and another activity coming soon!

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