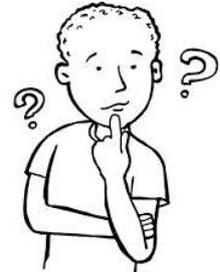


Ideas for helping word-finding difficulties



A word-finding difficulty is where a child has the vocabulary knowledge, but when he wants to use one of these words, he has difficulty retrieving it.

They may be able to tell you what the item is for (e.g. it's for putting clothes on), but not be able to "find" the word "hanger". Or, they may use one word instead of another, often from the same category, e.g. "piano" instead of "guitar".

There are many types of word finding difficulties strategies, but the main 2 are; Phonemic cueing and Semantic cueing.

Phonemic Cueing

- A phonemic cue provides a sound clue. For example, if the word the child is looking for is "chair", say "is it a ch...?" and see if they can retrieve the word once they hear the first sound.
- If they can't manage this, you can try two sounds, .e.g. for "school" you may say "sch..." or for "carrot" say "ca...".
- Other questions that can help the child build stronger connections about a new word are: *"what does it sound like?"*, *"what sound does it begin with?"*, *"How many syllables does it have?"*

Semantic Cueing

- Semantic cues help provide context about the word the child is looking for (if *you* know what it is). Tell them something about what you do with it, what it looks like where it goes, for example, "it's for hanging your clothes on..."
- Offer starter phrases to help "you put your clothes on a....." (hanger), "the day before Thursday is..." (Wednesday)
- Talk about what it looks like and it's parts "it's red... it has a stalk" (apple)
- Link it with opposites "not up but" (down)
- Combine with Phonemic cues " it's up in the sky, it's hot and orange, it's the ssss" (sun)
- Other questions that can help the child build stronger connections about a new word are: *'Where would you find it?'*, *'What is it made from?'*, *'What does it look like?'*, *'What parts does it have?'*, and *'What do you do with it?'*

There will be times when you can't guess the word they are trying to think of. Instead, you can encourage the child to tell you something about the item, such as what it is used for, what it looks like, where you would find it, another name for it (chair/seat), or what it begins with.