

Activities to Develop Vocabulary/Word Finding Skills

New Vocabulary

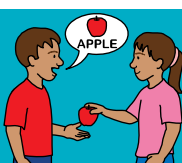
When learning new words it is important to attach as much information about the word as possible. This ensures that the word is stored securely and can be retrieved easily. The attributes table below indicates the different aspects of words to focus on.

Example One: Violin

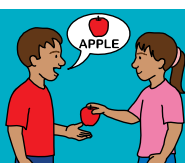
What is it made of?	Wood
What shape and size is it?	Small guitar, narrow at one end
What sound does it start with?	V
Where would you find it?	In the music room
What colour is it?	Brown
What does it feel like?	Hard and smooth
What is it a type of?	Instrument
What do you do with it?	Play a tune

Example Two: Orange

What is it made of?	Pips, flesh, skin
What shape and size is it?	Circular
What sound does it start with?	O
Where would you find it?	In the kitchen
What colour is it?	Orange
What does it feel like?	Hard and smooth
What is it a type of?	Fruit
What do you do with it?	Eat it

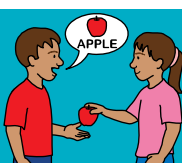
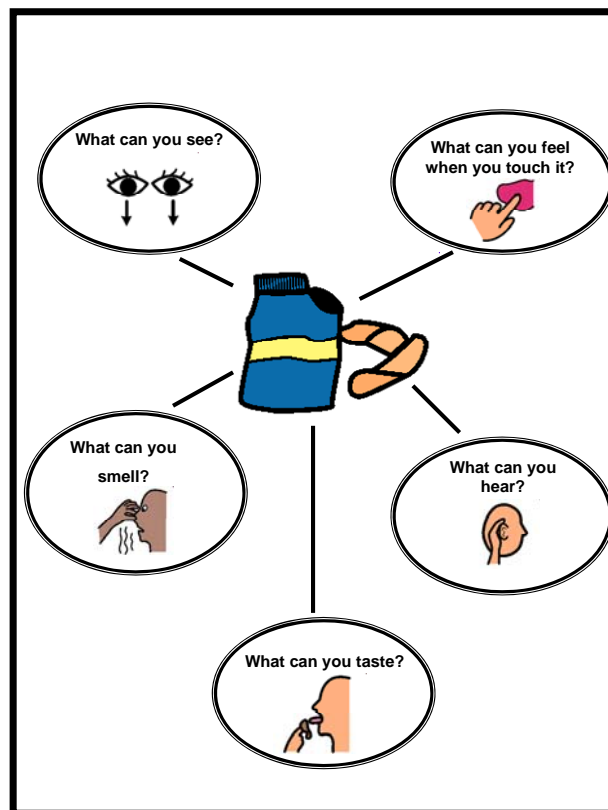


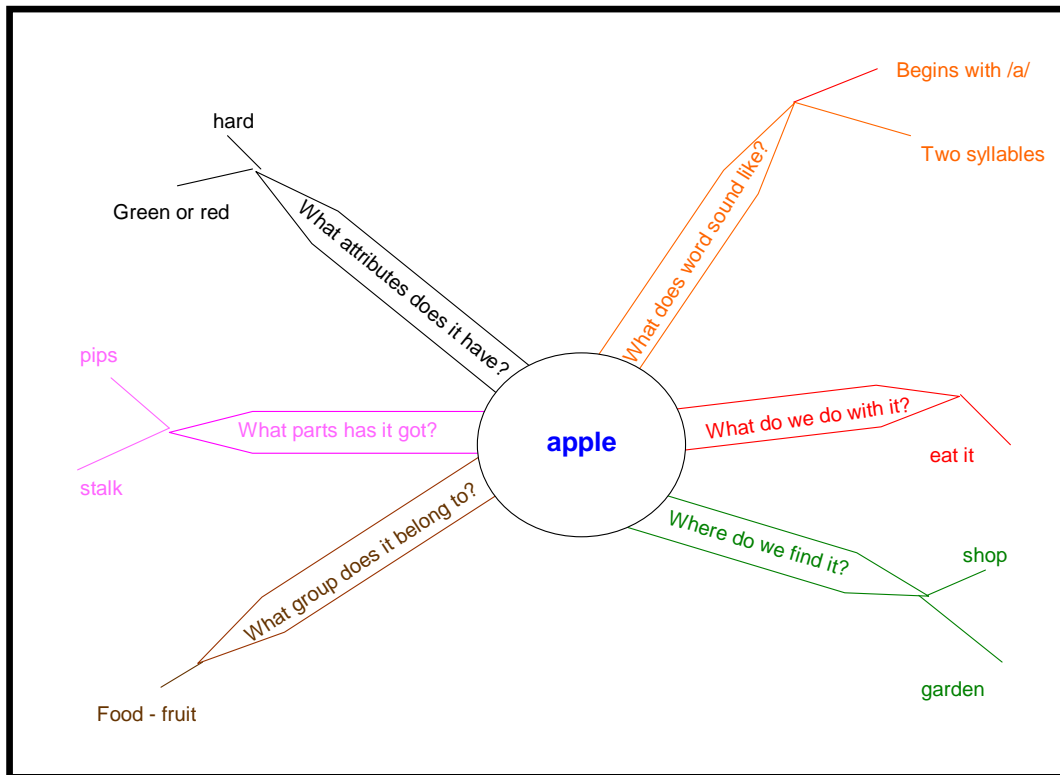
<p>What is it made of?</p> 	<p>What shape and size is it?</p> 
<p>What sound does it start with?</p> 	<p>Where would you find it?</p> 
<p>What colour is it?</p> 	<p>What does it feel like?</p> 
<p>What is it a type of?</p> 	<p>What do you do with it?</p> 



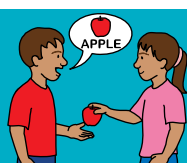
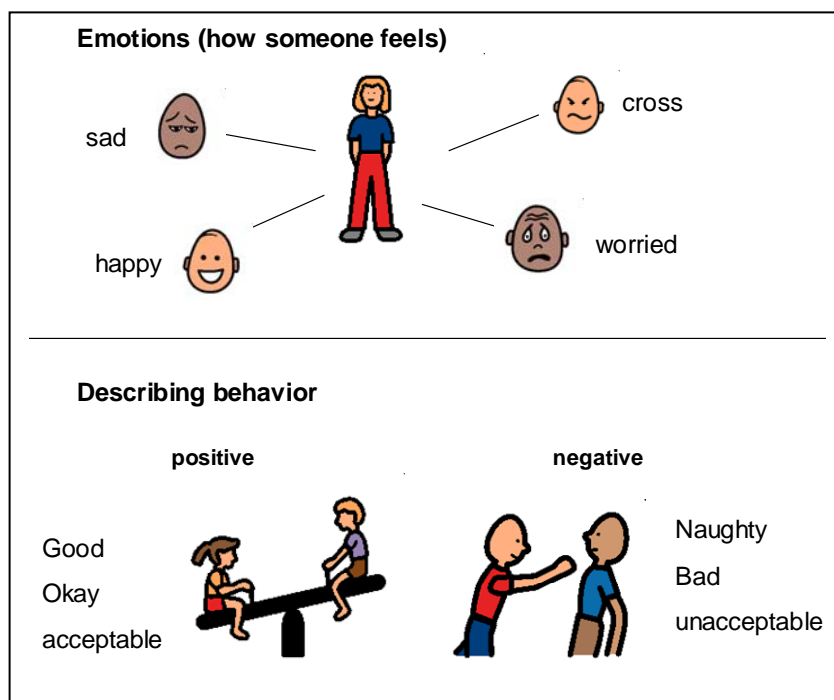
A mind map is another tool that can be used to encourage children to think about different aspects of words (see examples below). These can be used in two ways:

1. The child is given the word in the middle and has to think of attributes.
2. The child could be given the attributes and have to guess the word in the middle.





In addition to the physical characteristics described in the previous mind maps, the child also needs to be encouraged to think about more abstract concepts, such as emotions and behaviour.



Ask the child to think of five words that might describe how someone feels.

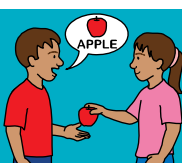


- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

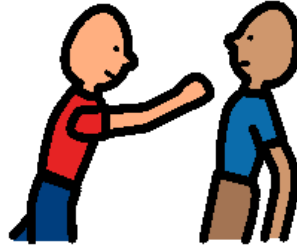
Ask the child to think of five words that might describe the physical characteristics of an apple (what you can see, hear, smell, touch, taste)



- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

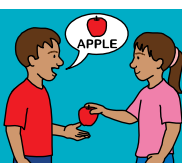


Ask the child to think of five words that might describe a person's behaviour

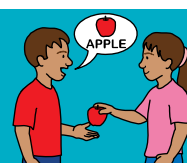
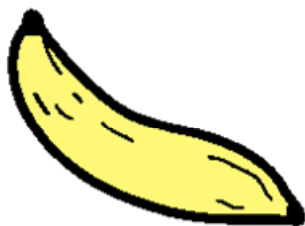


- 1)
- 2)
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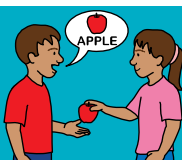
The following activities can be used to help the child become familiar with thinking about attributes of words. Please work through them and answer the questions at the top of the page.



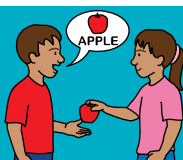
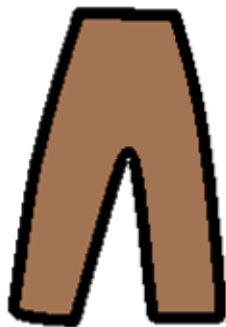
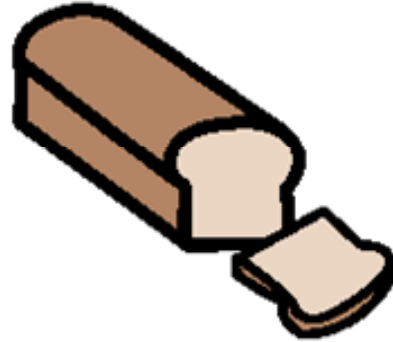
What do we do with it?



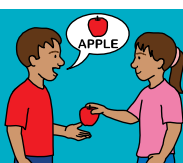
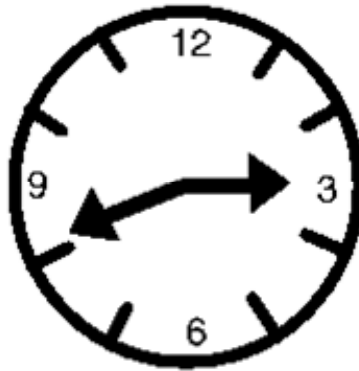
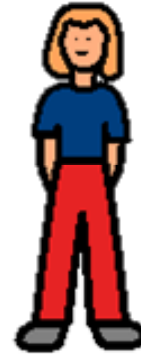
Where do we find it?



What group of words does it belong to?

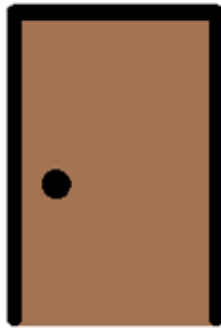


What parts has it got?

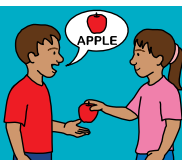


What does the word sound like?

What is the beginning sound?



How many syllables in the word?



Further Vocabulary Activities

Category Naming: Give three or four items belonging to the same category (e.g. drum, flute, guitar and piano) and then ask the child to identify the category. You can then reverse this naming game and give the category first, then have the child name three or four items belonging to that category. To make this activity more challenging you ask the child to name as many items as possible in one minute. Write down their answers and try to *beat* their previous score each time you practice.

Antonyms: Naming opposites. Choose a word and try to come up with the opposite of that word.

Synonyms: Naming words that have the same, or almost the same meaning. This activity tends to be more difficult than naming opposites. However, it is a great practice tool for strengthening word retrieval skills. For more of a challenge, try to name **two** synonyms for each word.

Fill in the Blank: Say a familiar phrase and leave the last word out. Try to supply the missing word. When phrases become mastered you can move on to sentences.

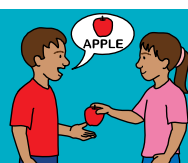
Similarities: Choose two words within a category and describe how they are the same. For example: *How are a car and a bus the same?* This activity encourages the child to think about word associations. This cognitive ability can be used as a strategy to aid in word retrieval.

Differences: This activity tends to be more challenging than describing similarities between words. Using the same example as above: *How are a car and a bus different?* This exercise encourages the child to remember specific details that make similar objects different from one another.

Odd one out game: The child is presented with three or four items and one of the pictures / object / written words is from a different category. The child must identify the odd one out and discuss why. Encourage the child to use category words e.g. banana, apple, cherry and carrots we would like the child to identify that the first three are types of fruit and carrots are a type of vegetable.

Sorting games: Cut up pictures relating to two different categories e.g. fruit and vegetables. The child then sorts the pictures into the correct category.

Word association games: The child is given a word and has to think of an associated word. For example: pilot goes with....(plane), taxi goes with.....(driver).





Sentence completion: for example “a banana is something you eat, lemonade is something you..... (drink), a duck lives in a pond, a horse lives in a.....(stable).

