

Word Wonders Activity 13: Sentence Slide

CHILDREN ARE LEARNING TO...

- Blend words into sentences
 - 18 to 24 month olds will focus on "filling in" a word (or approximation) of a familiar refrain
 - 24 to 48 month olds will focus on combining words to form simple sentences (2-4 words in length)
- Break a sentence into individual words (also known as sentence segmentation) (36 to 48 months)

ACTIVITY SUMMARY:

In this activity, children will have an opportunity to explore how individual words can be combined to form sentences and how sentences can be broken into words. Children will focus specifically on the final word in a sentence.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Book: *Dear Zoo* by Rod Campbell

For Activity 1 (Engage):

Handout 1: From the Zoo

Handout 2: Sentence Stem

- 1 piece of paper
- Cardboard box
- Optional: manila folders, glue/stapler (if you want to make images sturdier for reuse)

For Activity 2 (Expand):

Handout 3: Puppies

Handout 4: Puppy Sentence Stem

Handout 5: Puppy Clues

- 29 index cards
- Color printer

PREPARATION:

For Activity 1 (Engage):

- Print each of the animal images on **Handout 1**, shuffle them, and place them in the box.
- If you are working with children aged 30 to 48 months: Print the sentence stems from **Handout 2**. If you want to make these sturdier, glue/staple each to a manila folder cut in half. Keep these aside until needed in the game.
- On a piece of paper, write the words "FROM THE ZOO" and "WITH CARE" and tape it to the side of the box. Make sure you can easily reach into the box to pull out animal images.

For Activity 2 (Expand):

- Print **Handout 3** using a color printer. Cut out each puppy and glue/staple it to an index card.
- Print **Handout 4** and have it ready for the game.
- Print **Handout 5**. Cut out each clue and glue/staple it to an index card. Use a paperclip to keep the clues for each puppy together.
- If you are working with 18 to 30 month olds, decide which 2 puppies you will start with for the game and clip them to the matching clues. Put the remaining puppies/clues together so you can play additional rounds of the game.

Activity Instructions

EXPLORE

Share the following book and extension activity with children as an opportunity to help children begin to attend to and notice the words that make up sentences.

Book: *Dear Zoo* by Rod Campbell

As You Read:

- **Introduce the book and its key ideas.** Explain that this is a book about animals sent from the zoo, and some might make good pets, and some might not. Ask the children if they know what a zoo is (a zoo is a park where people can visit and see wild animals safely). Ask: *What kinds of animals are in a zoo? What kinds of animals do we have as pets* (a pet is an animal that you can keep with you at home)?
- **Define new words and phrases.** The word used to describe the lion ("fierce") may be new to children. Ask children what they think "fierce" might mean. A simple definition you can use is that fierce means *strong, powerful, and frightening*. Can they make a fierce expression?
- **Encourage prediction.** One animal comes in a basket. What do children think is inside? Encourage children to make a prediction. Do they see any clues in the picture?
- **Prompt children to repeat key phrases and pause for children to fill-in-the-blank.** As the zoo sends pet after pet, pause after reading the line, "They sent me an..." and then point to the illustration to see if children will say what they see ("elephant!"). Be sure to point to the word elephant on the page and repeat: *Elephant*.
- **Use pictures and text to support observation and reasoning.** Pause on the pages showing the wooden crates holding the animals. Point to the words on the crates: "With Care"—why would there be a sign like this on the animal's crate? (To remind people to be careful with the box because there's

an animal inside.) Point to and read the sign that says, "From the Zoo" on each crate: this is how we know who sent the box.

- **Identify and explore emotions.** The camel is "too grumpy." Do children ever feel grumpy (*grouchy, annoyed*)? What makes the children feel grumpy? The book says that the snake was too scary. Do children agree that the snake is scary? What makes the snake scary or not scary?
- **Make connections to children's lives.** Ask children if they would be happy to get a puppy as a pet? What do they like about puppies? For children aged 36 months and up: In this story, the zoo sent so many animals. Would the children prefer one of the other animals in the book as a pet? Which one? (Scroll through the pages to remind children of the other animals if they don't remember.)

ENGAGE – ACTIVITY 1

Explain the game: *Look what I've got here!* (Point to the box you've prepared.) *This box says: "From the Zoo" and "With Care." Hmmm, I wonder what's inside... What do you think is inside?* (Take children's ideas.) *I guess we have to reach inside to find out what pet the zoo sent us!*

For children 18 to 30 months old:

Choose a child to reach in the box. When they select an animal, have them hold up the picture for their peers.

Ask children if they know the name of this animal. Some children may be able to label some of the animals. Let them share if so.

Name the animal and point to the label at the top of the page: *It's a FISH!* Prompt children to repeat the animal's name with you.

Ask children a simple question about the animal: *Have you ever seen a fish? Do fish live on the playground or in the water?*

Introduce the refrain: *The fish was too wet (point to the word "wet" at the bottom of the page). We have to send it back!*

- As you repeat with different animals, encourage children to join in chanting, "We have to send it back!"
- This is a long sentence for young toddlers—you may hear them say a word or two, instead of the whole thing.
- For animals you "send back," put these aside in a pile.

Continue inviting children to select animals from the box. Repeat the pattern above.

When a child selects the kitten or puppy: Ask: *What animal is this? Does anyone know its name?* Point to the label at the top and say it for children: *kitten*. Ask then to repeat it.

Ask: *Can we keep a kitten as a pet? Yes! The kitten is perfect! We can keep him!* (Hang or place the picture where children can see.)

Wrap-up by laying out the different animals again. Ask each child to say or point to the animal that is their favorite from all the animals sent by the zoo. If a child points, be sure to label the animal with its name ("Zebra!") and ask them to repeat it with you.

For children 30 to 48 months old:

Choose a child to reach in the box. When they select an animal, have them hold up the picture for their peers.

Ask children: *What did the zoo send us?* (Take their responses.)

Point to and say the name at the top—for example: *"Fish."* Prompt children to repeat it: *Let's all say fish.*

Point out the word at the bottom: *Should we keep the fish as our pet? Uh-oh, the fish is too wet! We'll have to send him back! Let's do the sentence slide to say it all together!*

Choose 3 children to help make the sentence. Give each child a word to hold (It was too...). Have them stand in a line with some space (about 1 to 2 feet between each one). Prompt each child to say their word: *"It was too..."*

Say: *Let's slide this sentence together!* Tell children to slide along the floor so they are right next to one another. Then have them repeat their words as a sentence: *It was too...*

Say: *We're missing the last word in our sentence!*

Add the last word: The child holding the fish/"wet" image should slide in as the last word in the sentence. Then have children say the whole sentence one more time (invite all children to join in): *"It was too wet."* Children may want to slide/repeat it once or twice more, which is fine!

Continue selecting animals/creating this sentence pattern until every child has had 1-2 turns. Make sure that all children have a chance to hold a word in the sentence and all children have a chance to choose an animal out of the box.

When a child chooses one of the "perfect" pets (the kitten or puppy), point to the animal's name and say, for example, 'kitten.' Prompt the children to say "kitten" as you point to it.

Ask: *What do you think? Should we keep the kitten?* (Take their ideas.) *Oh wait! I see some important words in a sentence! It says here, "She was perfect!" We can keep her!* (Point to the words "She was perfect" as you read them. Hang or place the kitten picture where children can see it.)

Wrap-up by asking each child to choose their favorite animal that came from the zoo today. What makes this animal their favorite?

EXPAND – ACTIVITY 2

Introduce: *We are going to play a game with puppies! Puppies are baby dogs! I am going to show you some puppies. And you have to help me find my favorite puppy! Let's play!*

For children 18 to 30 months old:

Explain: *We will use sentence clues to guess which puppy I am thinking about. I am going to read some sentence clues so you can choose the puppy I'm thinking about.*

Place 2 puppy cards on the floor or table. Give children time to look at them.

Say the opening puppy rhyme:

*I have a silly puppy,
He is such a dear!
I have a silly puppy,
Let's try to find him here!*

Place the sentence prompt on the table/floor: *My puppy has...* Point to each word on the prompt as you say it.

Insert the first clue at the end of the sentence: *A blue collar.* Say the full sentence as you point to each word: *My puppy has a blue collar.*

Ask: *Do you see a puppy with a blue collar? Where is it? Can you show me? That's my puppy!*

Say the closing rhyme:

*I have a silly puppy,
He is such a dear!*

*I have a silly puppy,
And you helped me find him here!*

(Put the puppy card aside once it's been guessed by the children.)

Describe each puppy and give each child a turn to find the picture you're describing. Use the clues provided on **Handout 5** to continue this game.

If needed, model your thinking: Hmmmm, let's find a puppy with a collar. This puppy has a red collar (*point*). But I need to find a puppy with a *blue collar*. Let's look—here is a puppy with a blue collar (*point*). I found him!

Model descriptive language: After children find each puppy from your clues, take a moment to describe the picture in more detail. Use rich descriptive language to name the puppy's other features: *My puppy has...a white chest, gray fur, a red collar, pink ears, and a stubby tail.*

After each puppy is found, say the closing rhyme:

*I have a silly puppy,
He is such a dear!
I have a silly puppy,
And you helped to find him here!* (Hold up the puppy card)

Continue the game until all puppies have been found.

Wrap-up by giving children a chance to look at the puppies again. Ask: *Can you show me or tell me something about your favorite puppy?*

Repeat what the child says or points to and add a few words to create a longer sentence (Yes, *that puppy has a long, gray tail.*) Or, if a child points, use language to describe their choice: *You like the brown furry puppy with the food bowl.*

For children 36 to 48 months old:

Explain: *We will use sentence clues to guess which puppy I am trying to find. Let me know when you think you can guess my puppy!*

Place 3-4 puppy cards on the floor or table. Give children time to look at them. Talk with children about the different puppies—what they look like, what colors they are, what features they have.

Explain: I'm looking for a puppy, and I'm going to give you some sentences with clues. Are you ready?

Say the opening puppy rhyme:

*I have a silly puppy,
He is such a dear!
I have a silly puppy,
Let's try to find him here!*

Place the sentence prompt on the table/floor where children can see it: *My puppy has...* Point to each word on the prompt as you say it.

Insert the first clue at the end of the sentence: *Pink ears*. Say the full sentence as you point to each word: *My puppy has pink ears.*

Ask: *Do you see any puppies with pink ears? Where is it? Can you show me? Hmmmm. Let's listen for our next clue!*

Insert the second clue (below the first): *A red collar*. Say the full sentence and point to each word: *My puppy has a red collar.*

Ask: *Do you see any puppies with pink ears and a red collar? Where is it? Can you show me?*

Continue with the final clue (a gray body) if needed for children to find the puppy. When they have found it, say: *Yes! That's my puppy!*

Wrap-up: Point to the sentence stem and clues: *My puppy has pink ears, a red collar, and a gray body!*

Say the closing rhyme:

*I have a silly puppy,
He is such a dear!
I have a silly puppy,
And you helped to find him here!* (Hold up the puppy card)

Continue the game using the clues provided.

Once children have guessed correctly, give them a chance to describe each puppy in their own words.

Wrap-up by asking children to look at the puppies again and choose their favorite. Ask each child to point to the words in the sentence prompt and describe their favorite puppy: *My puppy has...*[child fills in]

REFLECT

Return to a gathering area with the children. To close the activity:

Observe: *We put words together to make a sentence. Today, we made sentences about animals like the zebra and gorilla. We also got sentence clues to find our puppies!*

Explain the closing activity: *Now I'll say a sentence about you, and you get to fill in the last word. Are you ready?*

Say: *[Child's name] favorite food/color/toy is...* (pause for the child to fill in). You can go first to provide a model: *Miss Destiny's favorite food is mango!*

If you are working with 18 to 30 month olds, you can pause for them to respond. If they don't yet have the vocabulary to reply, then create a sentence for them: *Carly has a red shirt/pet dog/older brother/ etc.*

MAKING MATH CONNECTIONS

When you're done with the activity, take out the cards again. Ask children to sort the puppies into two groups. Maybe it's by color. Perhaps they sort them by whether they are wearing a collar or not. Or another category that you (or they) think of.

Sorting activities help children focus on the attributes of objects, which is an early math skill.

INDIVIDUALIZING THE ACTIVITY

Make it more challenging:

- In Activity 1, you can print out or cut out pictures of other animals and have children decide why the animal needs to be sent back. Write down their adjective (*too scary, tall, loud, etc.*) on an index card so they can add it to the sentence stem.
- In Activity 1, for children aged 36 to 48 months, create a game that helps them notice the words in sentences. After sharing the story, you can photocopy several pages from the book. Point to each word as you read it. Give children counters (pompoms, checkers, etc.) to place over each word. Encourage children to count the number of words in each sentence. Notice together that some sentences are longer (have more words) than others.
- In Activity 2, you can print one set of the puppies (**Handout 4**) for every 2 children. Have children play in pairs. One person describes the puppy they are thinking about for their partner using the sentence stem: *My puppy has...* After their partner correctly guesses, they switch roles and the

other child describes the puppy they have chosen.

Make it less challenging:

- In Activity 1, introduce only 3-4 animals that are familiar to children. Focus on the primary sentence stem of *It was too...* and the refrain *I sent him back!*
- In Activity 2, skip the guessing part of the game and simply put one puppy image on the table. Using the sentence stem, describe the puppy: *My puppy has a red collar.* Point to each word on the sentence stem as you say it. Choose a child to point to that part of the puppy's body. Repeat with the other clues.

MAKING CONNECTIONS ACROSS THE DAY:

- During daily routines, use sentence stems as a "game" for children to practice using longer sentences—for example, at snack time, you might say: *Damon, how does your snack taste?* You can say: *My snack tastes...* (pause and wait for a response).
- When you see sentences in the world around you, point these out to children. For example, there may be a sign as you enter the building: *Use back door for deliveries.* Notice these sentences with children and point out the words as you read them.
- When talking with children, model the "add a word" strategy. This helps children use longer and longer sentences. To do this, ask children a question and then repeat their response, but add one or two more words. For example, you might ask *Tell me about your dog.* If the child's response is: "Murphy!", you can model a longer response by saying, "Your dog's name is Murphy!"

Song: *Into the Forest*

Directions: This song is intended to be a “quiet time” song – where children can lie down on the floor and relax, take deep breaths, close eyes, and just listen and recenter themselves after more vigorous activity. Alternatively, teachers could collect pictures of the items described in the song and show them to children as they sit and listen—to spark their imaginations about words we could collect and sentences we could make if we went for a walk in the forest.

Into a beautiful forest one day
I stepped inside, wanting to play
I made lots of pictures inside of my mind
Of amazing and wonderful things I did find.

As I walked through, what did I see?
Hundreds and hundreds of wonderful things
I collected some words along the way
And I’m bringing them back here for you today.

Chorus:
I meander / Round the hills and sing with the birds.
I listen and observe, collecting up words!

Words like soft, dappled sunlight that streams through the trees
And lush the green ferns that tickle my knees.
Hushed is the word for my steps on the moss
And bubbly the word for the brook that I cross.

Words like chipmunks all skittering ‘cross crackling twigs
I sit on a rock, watching squirrels gently dig
To find hidden food that they’ve buried below
Words like acorns and walnuts just under the snow.

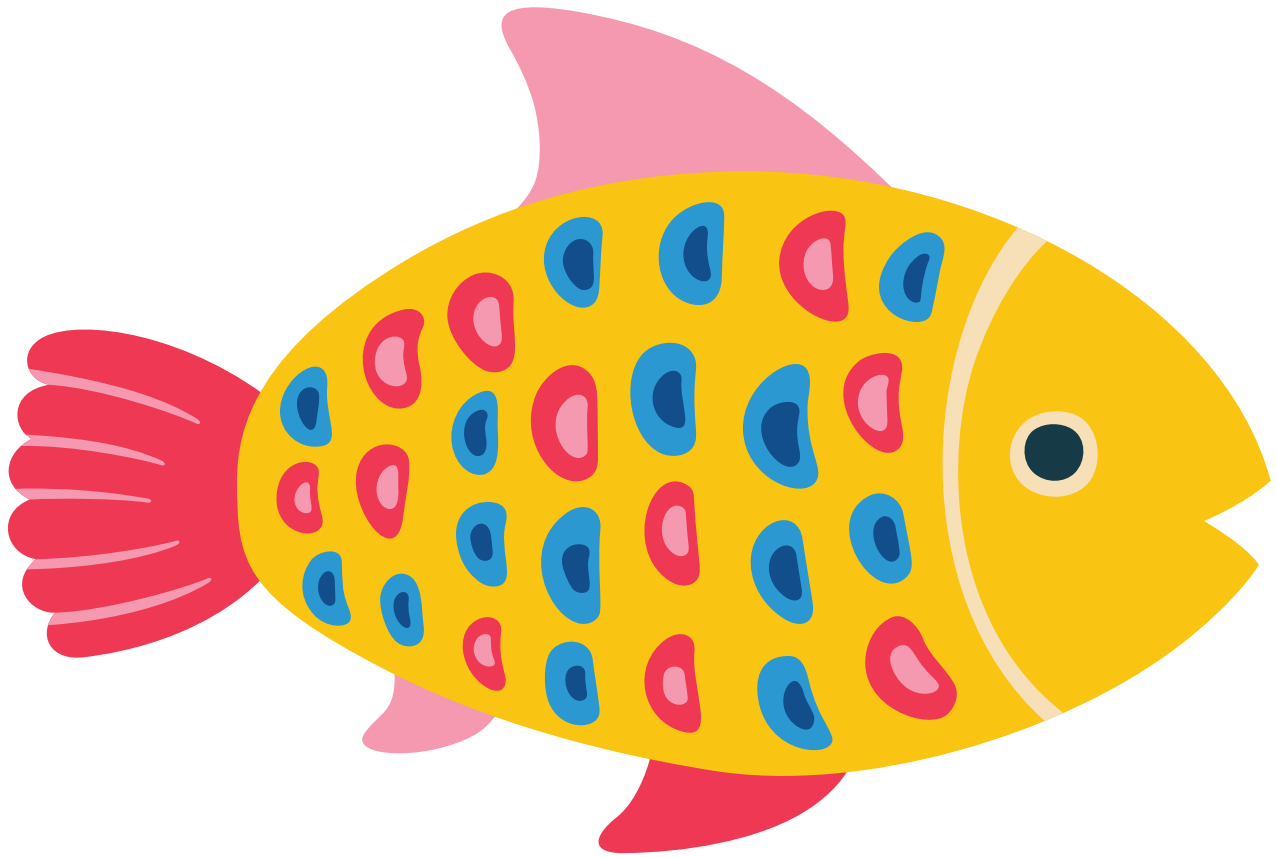
Chorus:
I meander round the hills and sing with the birds.
I listen and observe, collecting up words!

Words like mushrooms all clustered like stools made for ants,
who march in a line as if off to a dance.
Words like frogs in a pond, hopping over and over
And mice playing games in a soft patch of clover.

Last, I collect words like clear waterfall
And shimmering secret; the best words of all!
I smile at the woods as I go on my way
Grateful for words I’ve collected today!

Chorus:
I collected some words along the way
And I’ve brought them back here to share with you today. (up to Sol)
And I’ve brought them back here to share with you today. (down to Do)

Fish



wet.

Kangaroo



jumpy.

Zebra



stripey.

Turtle



slow.

Ladybug



tiny.

Gorilla



huge.

Sheep



fluffy.

Kitten



She was perfect.

Puppy



He was perfect.

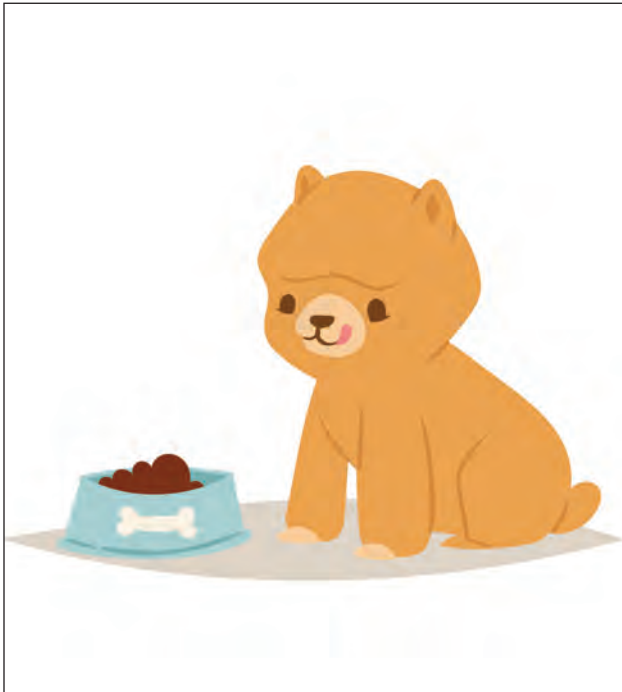
Handout 2: Sentence Stem

It

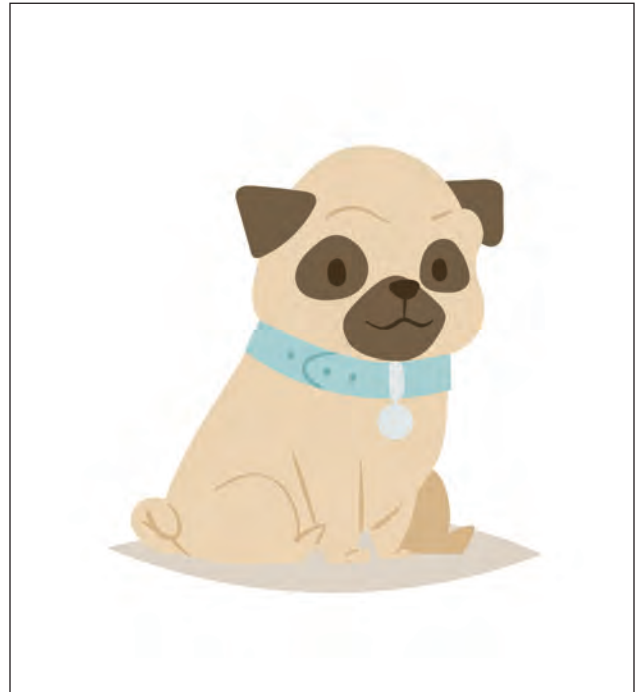
was

too

Handout 3: Puppies



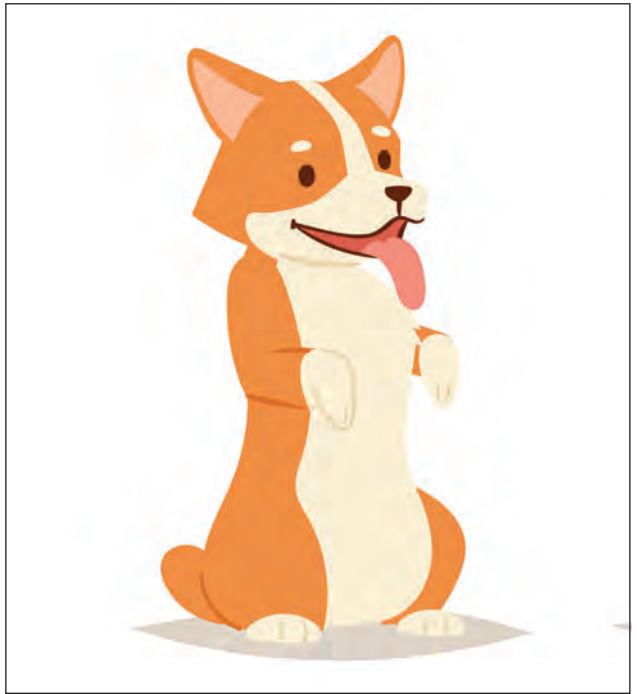
Blue food bowl, brown fur



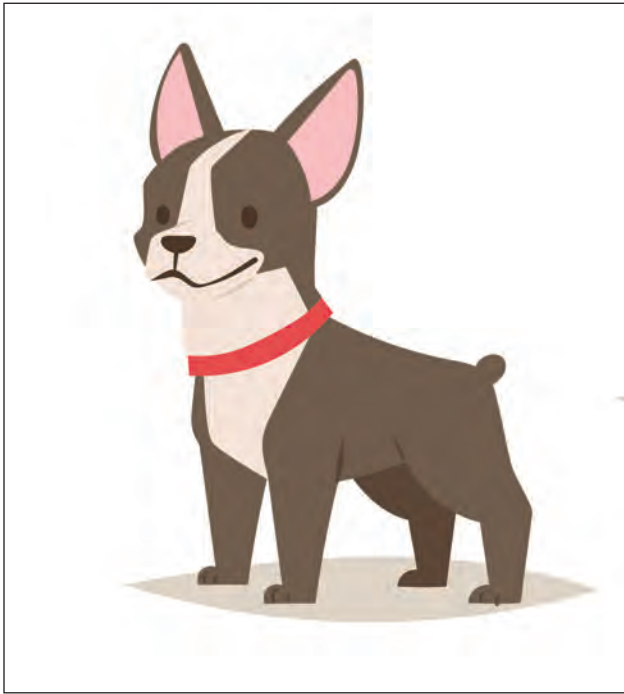
Blue collar, dark brown pointy ears



Bone in his mouth, floppy ears



Long pink tongue, white chest/belly,
paws up in the air



Red collar, pink ears, stubby tail



White fur and black spots



Purple collar, pink tongue, brown fur



A tall body, gray fur, pointy ears, long tail

My puppy has

Handout 5: Puppy Clues

PUPPY 1 CLUES

brown fur.

a food bowl.

PUPPY 2 CLUES

pointy ears.

a blue collar.

PUPPY 3 CLUES

a bone in his mouth.

floppy ears.

PUPPY 4 CLUES

a long pink tongue.

a white chest and belly.

his paws in the air.

PUPPY 5 CLUES

a **red** collar.

pink ears.

a stubby tail.

PUPPY 6 CLUES

white fur.

black spots.

PUPPY 7 CLUES

a **purple** collar.

a **pink** tongue.

brown fur.

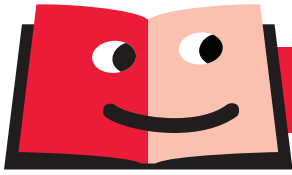
PUPPY 8 CLUES

a tall body.

gray fur.

pointy ears.

a long tail.



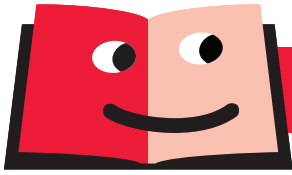
Growing Sentences

This week, children learned that words make up sentences. They also practiced making sentences. There are lots of ways to help children notice and build longer and longer sentences as they add more words to their vocabulary.

Here are some ways to help at home:

- **Notice sentences in the world around you.** When you're at the grocery store, you might see a sign that says: "Please return carts here." Point to each word as you read it to your child.
- **Point to the words in books you read to your child.** Encourage your little one to fill in a final word in the sentence or finish a rhyme or repeated phrase in the story. This early form of "reading" builds their confidence and is an important early literacy skill.
- **Model longer sentences as children grow.** Young toddlers often use one or two words as a whole sentence: "*Mommy go*" or "*want milk*." You can help your child build longer sentences and learn more words by repeating their statement using a slightly longer phrase: "*Yes, Mommy is going to work*" or "*You want more milk in the bowl!*"





Solo para familias

Formación de oraciones

Esta semana, los niños aprendieron que las palabras forman oraciones y practicaron cómo crearlas. Hay muchas maneras de ayudar a los niños a notar las oraciones y a construir oraciones cada vez más largas a medida que añaden más palabras a su vocabulario.

A continuación algunas maneras de ayudar en casa:

- **Observe las oraciones en el mundo que le rodea.** Cuando esté en el supermercado, puede que vea un anuncio que diga: "Por favor, devuelva los carros aquí". Señale cada palabra mientras se la lee a su hijo.
- **Señale las palabras de los libros que le lee a su hijo.** Anime a su pequeño a escribir la última palabra de la oración o a terminar una rima o frase repetida de la historia. Esta forma temprana de "lectura" refuerza su confianza y es una habilidad importante para el aprendizaje temprano de la lectura.
- **Ponga como ejemplo oraciones más largas a medida que los niños crecen.** Los niños pequeños suelen utilizar una o dos palabras como si fuesen una oración completa: "Mamá ir" o "querer leche". Puede ayudar a su hijo a construir oraciones más largas y a aprender más palabras repitiendo lo que dice utilizando una oración un poco más larga: "Sí, mamá va a trabajar" o "¡Quieres un vaso de leche!".

