Colourful Semantics

What is Colourful Semantics?

Colourful Semantics is a system for colour coding sentences according to the role of different words. It can help children to break down sentences and understand the individual meaning of each word and it's role in the sentence. It can help children to better understand word order. Children can use colourful semantics to build up meaningful, well structured sentences.

Who can it be used for?

Colourful Semantics is particularly useful for children who find the following difficult
★ Ordering and sequencing their language
★ Correctly answering wh- questions
★ Constructing more complex language
★ Children who use chunks of language but don't appear to be able to use the individual words meaningfully

How do you do it?

The easiest way to figure out what colour a word is is by asking which wh question fits it. Colour code sentences and wh questions in the following way:

Who?	Orange	
What doing?	Yellow	
What?	Green	
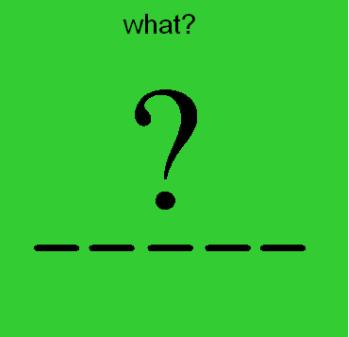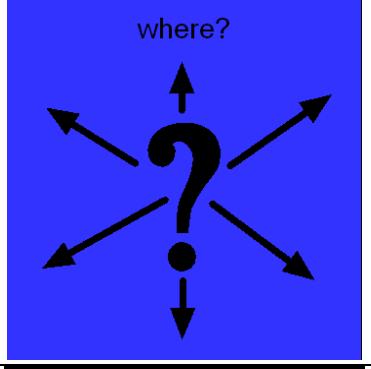
Where?	Blue	
When?	Brown	
To whom?	Pink	
What like?	Cloud	
Why?	Purple	
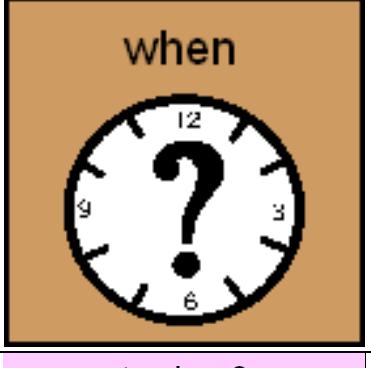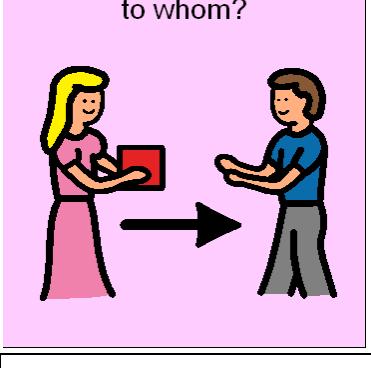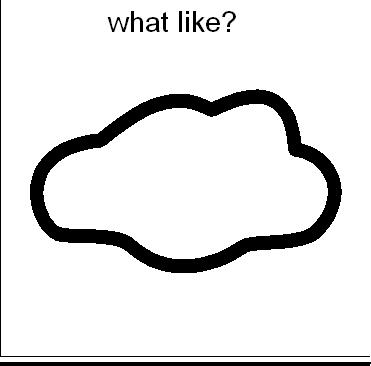
Introducing WHO at home

Books:

Look through a book your child is familiar with – ask your child who questions about the book e.g.

Who is this? Who is crying?

  ★   Model the correct name or noun if your child responds by just pointing or saying "her / she is!" – say "yes the girl!"

The man	The lady	The girl
The boy	The baby	
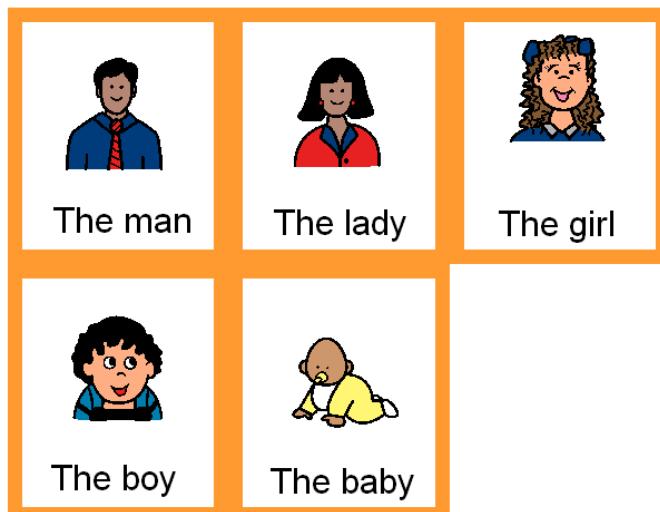
Introducing WHAT DOING at home

Simon says:
Use this game to get your child to make sentence to tell you what to do e.g.
Simon says…Mummy jump
Simon says…Mummy eat

Make teddy:
Using some soft toys and ask your child to tell you what to do with them – the instructions can be silly
e.g. Make….teddy eat dinosaur

|		
is sleeping	is running	is pointing
is laughing	is crying	is painting
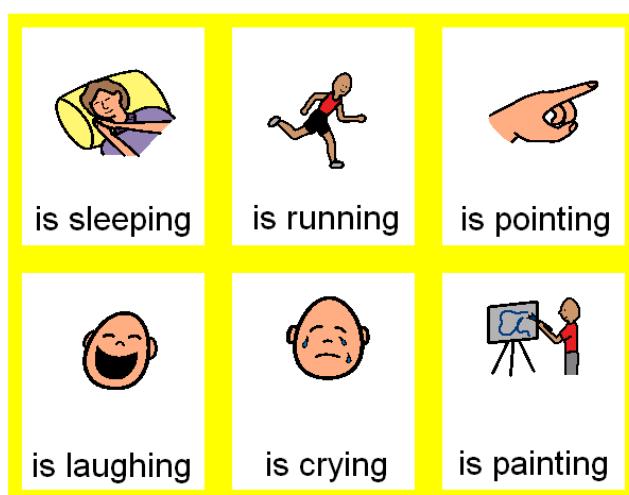
Introducing WHAT at home

Books: Look through a book your child is familiar with – ask your child <u>what</u> questions about the book e.g. <u>what</u> is the boy eating? <u>What</u> is the mum carrying?

★ Model the correct **object** word if your child does not respond, points, or says something else e.g. "she's carrying <u>a basket</u>!"

Make teddy: Using some soft toys / dolls ask your child to tell you <u>what</u> to do with them – the instructions can be silly e.g. Make….**teddy eat a** <u>pineapple</u> **or**

Adult: <u>What</u> should the doll carry to school? **Child:** <u>Her books!</u>
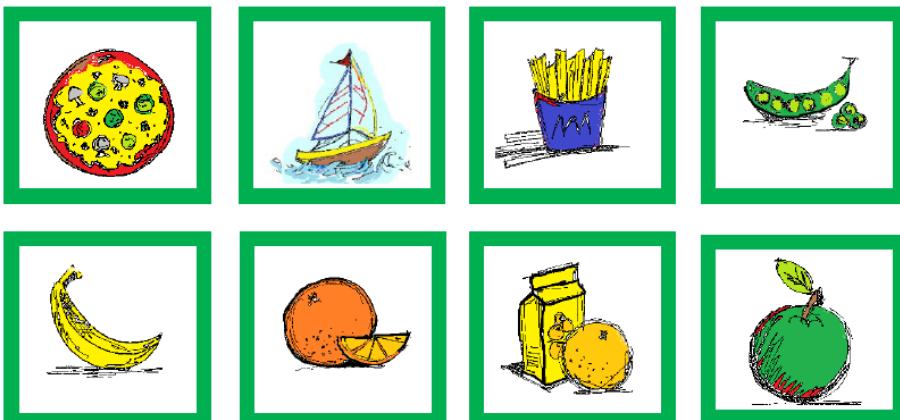
Introducing WHERE at home

Books: Look through a book your child is familiar with – ask your child <u>where</u> questions about the book, e.g. <u>where</u> is the boy going? <u>Where</u> is the cat sitting?
★ Model the correct location word if your child does not respond, points, or says something else e.g. "yes the cat is sitting <u>in the kitchen</u>!"

Take teddy: Using some soft toys or a doll's house, ask your child to tell you <u>where</u> to put things – the instructions can be silly e.g.
**Adult:** <u>Where</u> shall I put teddy? **Child:** <u>on the toilet</u>!
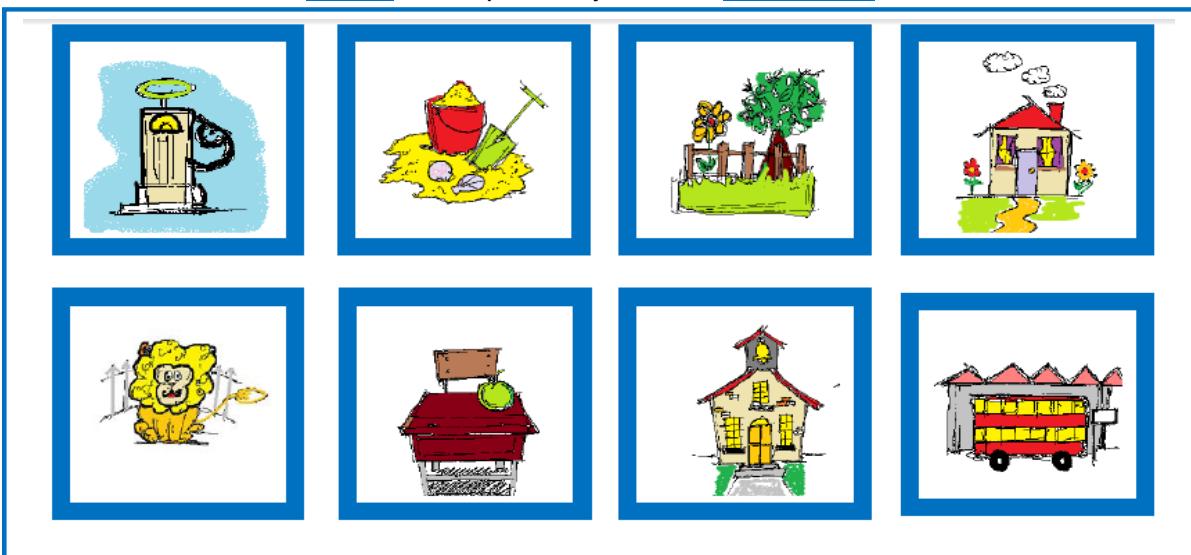
Introducing WHEN at home

Books: Look through a book your child is familiar with – ask your child <u>when</u> questions about the book, e.g. <u>when</u> did the boy wake up? <u>When</u> did the girl go to bed?
- ★ Model the correct time word if your child does not respond, points, or says something else e.g. "yes, the boy woke up <u>in the morning</u>!"

today	tomorrow	yesterday
in the afternoon	in the evening	at night
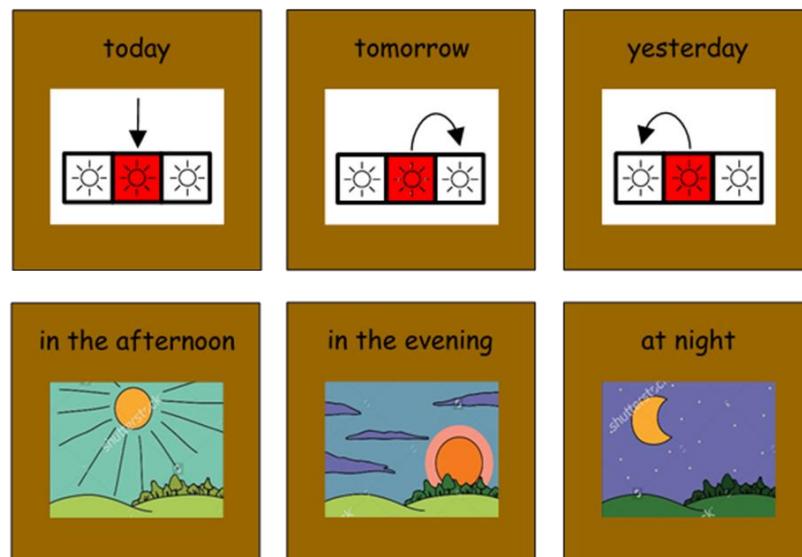
Introducing WHAT LIKE at home

Around the house: Look at things around your house with your child – ask them <u>what like</u> questions about different items, e.g. <u>what</u> is this toy <u>like</u>?
- ★ Model the correct <u>what like</u> word if your child does not respond, points, or says something else e.g. "yes, it's <u>shiny</u>!"

My family: Look at pictures of your family with your child – ask them <u>what like</u> questions about different people, e.g. <u>what</u> is mummy's hair <u>like</u>?
- ★ Model the correct <u>what like</u> word if your child does not respond, points, or says something else e.g. "yes, it's <u>brown</u>!"

old	young	snowy
cold	worried	stormy
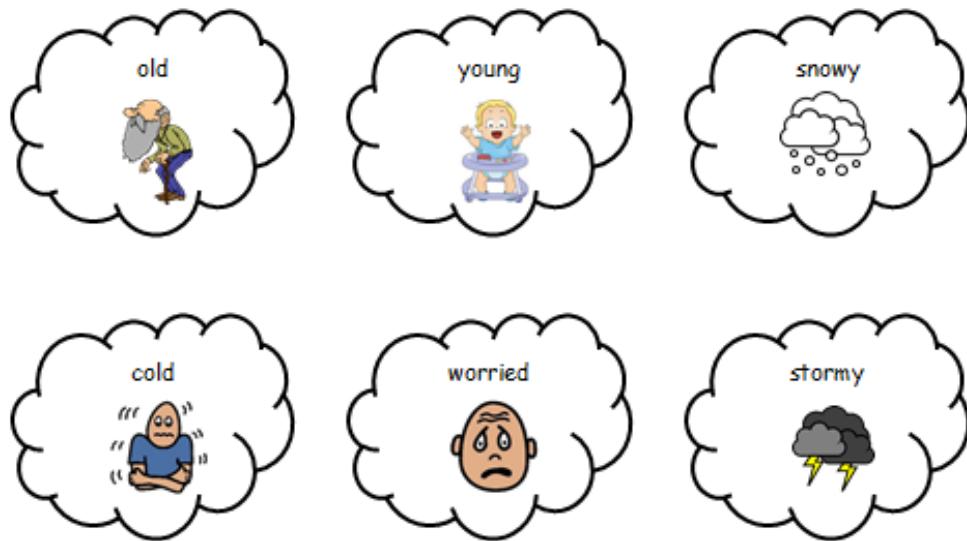
Introducing TO WHOM at home

Following instructions: Practise giving and following instructions with your child – ask your child to whom questions about the instructions, e.g. who did I give the book to?
- ★ Model the correct phrase if your child does not respond, points, or says something else e.g. "yes, I gave it to mummy!"

Introducing WHY at home

Books: Look through a book your child is familiar with – ask your child why questions about the story, e.g. why was Daddy Bear cross with Goldilocks?
- ★ Model the correct answer if your child does not respond, points, or says something else e.g. "yes, Daddy Bear was cross because Goldilocks ate his porridge"

More Activities for Home

Hide and seek:
Play hide and seek to practice who, what doing where. Ask your child to make a sentence to tell you where to hide. For example –
- ★ Mummy hiding in the kitchen
- ★ Daddy sitting in the bedroom

Building sentences using pictures:
Use the attached symbols and photographs to build the correct sentences to describe what is happening in the picture.

Written language expanding and repairing:
If the child tends to jumble up words in their written language try providing them with structure by drawing with coloured pens in their book. For example –
- ★ If your child writes: *mummy daddy car work*, use colours to show them how to make their sentence complete: mummy and daddy drive to work

Encourage your child to make their sentences more complex with colourful semantics prompts. For example –
- ★ If your child writes: *I went swimming*, use colours to show them how to add more details: I went swimming at the beach

Supporting reading comprehension:
Photocopy pages from a book and ask the child to underline the 'who' words and the 'what doing' words etc. Try colour coding the questions to help the child to understand them.

Use the coloured cue cards to help your child to construct the sentences