



Blank level questions

Blank Level questioning can be naturally woven into everyday activities, play experiences and routines that children already enjoy. This resource provides examples of activities alongside questions and comments that can support language development and understanding at different Blank Levels.

Alongside asking questions that match a child's current stage of language comprehension, it is equally important to model rich, meaningful language through comments and shared conversations. Comments reduce pressure to respond; support understanding and provide children with opportunities to hear and experience language in context. Examples of both questions and comments are included for each activity.

Summary of Blank levels

Level 1: Name it

Level 2: Describe it

Level 3: Think about it

Level 4: Explain it

Building or making something



Activities such as making a sandwich, building a den, or creating a craft project offer many opportunities for shared interaction, conversation, and language modelling. These experiences naturally support children to talk about actions, materials, and ideas, while also exploring concepts such as sequencing, planning and problem-solving.

	Question / instruction	Comments
Level 1	What is this?	This is the bread
	Find the butter	You found the cheese
	Find another plate like this	Knife
Level 2	Find me something to cut the bread with	The bread is soft
	What else can go in our sandwich?	You are spreading the butter
	What shape is your cucumber slice?	The cucumber is green and the tomato is red
Level 3	Put the sandwich on the board and cut it with the knife	You have made a cheese and tomato sandwich
	How are the tomato and the cucumber slices the same?	You used the knife to slice the cucumber
	What does healthy mean?	First, you washed your hands, then you made the sandwich, finally you ate the sandwich, yummy!
Level 4	Ugh! How can we tell this tomato is rotten?	I can tell you enjoyed that; you've eaten it all!
	You don't like butter, what can you do instead?	The tomato is rotten so I will have cucumber instead
	Why do we keep the butter in the fridge?	I always use a chopping board, so the knife doesn't slip and cut my fingers

Daily activities



Everyday routines provide meaningful opportunities for communication and connection. Activities such as eating lunch, shopping or getting dressed allow adults to talk about what is happening in the moment, introduce new vocabulary and support children to make links between their experiences and language.

	Question / instruction	Comments
Level 1	Show me the scarf	These are my shoes
	What is this called?	You have a hat
	Find another glove like this	Nice sunglasses!
Level 2	What does the jumper feel like?	You are wearing a blue jacket
	What is different between the cap and the beanie?	You could also wear a jumper to keep warm
	The scarf goes with the...	What else do we wear on our feet?
Level 3	Tell me how you got dressed today	The jumper and the cardigan are both soft and warm.
	You have put your socks on, what are you going to put on next?	You hold an umbrella above your head to protect you from the rain
	Find something you can wear on your legs that are not shorts	The teacher said we must wear our wellies because it is raining
Level 4	Why do we need to wear a hat when it is sunny?	You are well wrapped up, it must be cold outside
	Your friend has have forgotten their coat, what can they do?	Wear your sandals today, it is hot outside
	Why is it called a raincoat?	We will stay inside today because it is raining a lot and we do not want to get wet!

Going on an outing



Outdoor experiences such as walks, visits to the park or time in the nursery garden create rich opportunities to explore and talk about the world together. Children can notice, comment on and share what interests them, while adults model language related to people, places, sounds, actions and the natural environment.

	Question / instruction	Comments
Level 1	Go to the slide	That is the see-saw
	Find a leaf like this one	I can hear a bird
	Point to the grass	Here is the bench
Level 2	The flowers are very...	You are swinging very high
	Who is pushing the swing?	X is under the slide
	What is the ladder for?	X and Y are playing tag on the grass
Level 3	Oh no! Tell me what happened.	First, you played on the swings, then you pushed the roundabout and finally you had a drink
	Your friend has fallen over, how do they feel?	The daffodils and the tulips both have colourful petals and green leaves
	What did you do at the park?	Nature is everything around us that is not made by people. For example, trees, animals, rocks, and the sun.
Level 4	What will happen if we go too fast?	You have hurt yourself because you jumped off the roundabout when it was going very fast.
	How can we tell that X likes the slide?	Why shouldn't we climb up the slide?
	How are you going to get to the top?	Wildlife means animals that live in nature, they are wild and not our pets.

Small world play



Small world play with figures, animals, vehicles or other favourite toys provides a motivating context for communication and imagination. Adults can follow the child's interests, model language and introduce questions or comments that support vocabulary, play skills and storytelling. Many of the examples below could also be adapted for matching or lotto-style games.

	Question / instruction	Comments
Level 1	What is that?	You found the horse
	Find another one like this	Horse and pig
	What did you find?	That is another dog
Level 2	Tell me some farm animals	These are all animals
	What is the tractor for?	The horse goes with the cart as it can pull it
	Where is the sheep?	The pig has a curly tail
Level 3	Find an animal that does not live on the farm	The cow is the biggest animal, then the sheep and finally the duck is the smallest animal
	How are the goat and the cow the same?	The animals are happy because the farmer has fed them
	Put two horses in the trailer and drive the tractor to the field.	The duck is not a mammal because it has feathers
Level 4	How are you going to move the animals back to the barn?	The sheep have a woolly coat to help keep them warm and dry
	Why does the farmer use a dog to help round the sheep up?	The farmer has built this fence to stop the sheep running away!
	What will happen if the fence blows down?	Oh no the tractor has broken down; the farmer can't feed the cows on time!

Book sharing



Sharing books can be a valuable way to support language, communication and connection. Children may enjoy listening to a story, talking about the pictures, exploring favourite pages or revisiting familiar books. Whatever approach is most engaging for the child, books provide opportunities to explore a range of Blank Level questions while modelling rich and meaningful language.

	Question / instruction	Comments
Level 1	Who is this?	This is mummy owl
	Find another owl like this	Baby owls
	Show me the tree	Branch
Level 2	Find the biggest owl	Their nest is dark and cosy
	What else might live in a tree?	Mummy owl is brown and the baby owls are white
	What is happening on this page?	The owls are sitting on the branches
Level 3	Tell me another bird that is not an owl	Mummy owl has left the babies to go and look for some food
	How does Bill feel when he says, "I want my Mummy?"	Bill is the youngest and he feels scared
	What will happen next?	Owls are nocturnal, that means they only come out at nighttime
Level 4	How can we tell that the owls are worried?	They all sat on Sarah's branch because it felt safer
	Why does the mummy owl have to leave the babies?	The baby owls cannot leave the tree yet because they are not old enough to fly on their own
	Why do you think the baby owls stay together while they wait?	Mummy owl must hunt at night because it is safer for her and she can find food more easily