

Scaffolding Language through Play Reflection Chart for Practitioners

The chart below can be used to reflect on adult-child interactions through play. It can support practitioners to evaluate what language scaffolding strategies they are using effectively, and which strategies could be developed.

This chart can be used by peers to evaluate interactions through play by observing each other – try to note down specific examples and identify strengths as well as areas to develop. You could also record sessions and reflect on the videos [make sure you have the necessary permissions in place beforehand].

Language Scaffolding Strategy	Strategy observed ✓	Examples / notes:
Respond to all communication attempts		
Make comments and declarative phrases about what a child is playing with [ratio of comments to questions around 4:1]: 'It's time to...' 'Here's the...'		
Use lots of intonation when you talk, especially when saying phrases: 'Wow! It's a...'		
Repetition of phrases 'It's a...' 'I love...' 'Look! A...'		
Silence, pausing and processing time		
Wait, watch and wonder before joining in		
Use other types of communication if appropriate e.g. core symbol boards, Makaton signs		
Keep your sentences short and adapt the language to the children's needs		
Avoid asking too many questions		
Ponder: 'I wonder...'		
Use of first person : 'I'm jumping!' 'Making a cake!'		
Show up as a co-player and offer invitations for play / roleplay: 'Can I have a cup of tea please?'		
Extending phrases and expanding sentences		
Labelling objects and pictures to teach new words		