Institute of Education Sciences

FAMILY AND CAREGIVER ACTIVITY

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Supporting Young English Learners by Guessing an Object

Regional Educational Laboratories West, Northwest, Northeast & Islands

From the National Center for Education Evaluation at IES

Families and caregivers, you play an important role in your child's language learning. Children can learn new words every day and build their vocabulary by using descriptive language. When playing this game you and your child will use language to describe and guess hidden household items.

Keep in mind:

- You and your child can use your home language or English, whichever is strongest for you.
- Learning new words in your home language will also help your child with English.
- Enjoy this time with your child. Learning together is fun!

Why teach words that describe?

Talking and writing using descriptive words helps children build their vocabulary.

Let's play the guessing game!

Learning Goal: Children will learn and practice descriptive words

Grades: Kindergarten–3rd grade

Suggested Materials: Any objects around the home, paper and crayons, pencils, or markers

Follow the steps below. See the back for additional language supports.

Step 1: Help your child **gather up to 5 objects** from around the home.

Step 2: Use the chart on the back to **help your child describe each object.** Practice many different descriptive words and try new words. Suggest more difficult words like *enormous* instead of *big*.
Help your child learn the new descriptive words. Define the word, use it to describe the object, provide other examples. Ask your child if the word can be used to describe each of the objects. Encourage your child to use the descriptive words they just learned as you play the game.

Step 3: You and your child each select 5 more objects and hide them under something like a towel, box, or bag so your partner can't see them.

Step 4: Have your child select an object and ask them questions to get more detail about the object. Example: *How big is the object?* See the questions on the back of the page for ideas. **Then guess** what the object is.



Step 5: Now it is **your turn to select an object and model using many descriptive words.** and your child will ask questions and guess.

Step 6: Repeat steps 4 and 5 until you both have guessed all of the objects.

Step 7: Have your child **draw, write, or talk about** one of the objects.



This activity sheet helps families and caregivers carry out recommended practices described in the What Works Clearinghouse educator's practice guide, *Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School.* You can view the full guide here: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/19