



## Activities to Encourage Imitation and Spontaneous Production of Sounds and Words

1. Direct your child's attention toward your face. Say a consonant + vowel combination several times, such as **"ma-ma-ma"** or **"da-da-da"**. Encourage her to imitate.
2. Switch from one consonant + vowel combination to another after an immediate imitation, such as **"ba-ma-ba-ma"**. Encourage your child to imitate.
3. Show your child a familiar stuffed animal, doll, or toy which has facial features. Babble familiar sounds to the toy and encourage him to do the same.
4. Use a mirror and encourage your child to babble into the mirror. Imitate the sounds you hear and encourage him to have a "conversation" with you.
5. Play a game of "Follow the Leader":
  - a) imitate a sound your child makes;
  - b) make a sound she knows and encourage her to imitate it;
  - c) make a new sound your child has not made before, such as **"ta-ta-ta"** and encourage her to imitate the new sound.

Keep the game going until your child loses interest.

6. Play gesture language games, such as "pat-a-cake", "so big", etc., with your child. They are excellent sources of language stimulation and also help to develop imitation skills.
7. To encourage both gestural and verbal imitation, pair sounds with motor actions:

▪ <b>"wow wee"</b> (show excitement)	▪ <b>"e-e-e"</b> (tickling gently)
▪ <b>"peek"</b> or <b>"boo"</b> (uncovering eyes)	▪ <b>"pat-a-cake"</b> (clapping)
▪ <b>"so-o-o big"</b> (raising arms)	▪ <b>"wheee"</b> (swinging arms or child)
▪ <b>"bye"</b> (waving)	▪ <b>"ouch"</b> (when it hurts)
▪ <b>"m-m-m good"</b> (rubbing stomach)	▪ <b>"uh-oh"</b> or <b>"oops"</b> (object falling)

Use varying intonations and inflections because the child picks these up sooner than words.
8. While playing with your child, make mechanical sounds such as a fire siren, doorbell, phone, vacuum cleaner, etc.
9. Show your child a realistic animal toy. Name the animal and make the sound the animal makes while holding the animal up by your mouth. Place the animal by the child's mouth and encourage him to imitate.
10. Thumb through a picture book and name the animals. Produce the animal sound while holding a picture of the animal up by your face.