

Learning on the Go

Waiting with children can be a frustrating time for both parent and child. Why not make it into a fun time to learn?

Most parents have played the "I Spy" game with their child. The parent might begin by saying: "I spy, with my little eye, something blue!" The child then tries to guess the blue item that the parent has spotted. "I Spy" can be varied so it is more challenging for older children--you can "spy" shapes and letters as well. Or you can try giving your child a rhyming clue; for example, a clue for "car" might be "something that rhymes with far."

Other word games can be played as well. Try starting with a word—maybe your child's name. Then take the last sound in the name and think of a word that starts with that sound. For example, start with the name "Jake." The last sound is a "k" sound, so the next word would begin with a "k" sound--perhaps "cat". The next word might be "top", and so on. This game can be made more challenging for older children by using the last letter (instead of sound) of the previous word.

Singing quietly or doing finger plays are also a great way to pass time. Try the alphabet song, "Itsy Bitsy Spider" or "Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed." And quiet games are fun—a sitting version of "Simon Says" could include such commands as "Simon says: Close your eyes," or "Simon says: Touch your elbow."

If you can change frustration and impatience into fun and playful learning, both you and your child will benefit!