

18 Learning to Understand

Did you know that when children learn to speak and understand what people are saying to them, it's not just listening to people that helps them learn?

YOUR CHALLENGE: Can you match the description to the picture of some of the other things that help children learn to speak and understand people?

The matching exercise consists of five images on the left and five descriptions on the right, connected by lines:

- Image 1:** A whiteboard on a stand.
- Image 2:** A steam train with the text "Chow chow" above it.
- Image 3:** Two hands held up, palms facing each other.
- Image 4:** A pair of large, expressive eyes.
- Image 5:** A child sitting at a desk reading a book.

The descriptions on the right are:

- These can tell us what children understand when they listen to spoken languages
- This is a way for children to tell us what they want without using words
- This is a machine that shines a safe infrared light on your eyes so we can tell what you're looking at
- Onomatopoeia- a type of word that sounds like the thing you are describing
- Parents may use these to mime what they are talking about

Chiara and the Warwick Research with Kids team in the Department of Psychology study how young and very young children learn to speak and how they understand what people around them are saying.

The team hope that by understanding how the process of learning to speak and understand others usually works, they can also understand what may be different in some learners, and how to spot these differences.