

Friendly Faces: Fun & Functional Format for Language Learning

Jeanette Smoot, MS, CCC-SLP, LSLIS Cert. AVEEd

Tessa Maughan, B.S.

Grace Hallock, B.S.



Emma Eccles Jones College of Education & Human Services
Sound Beginnings
 UtahStateUniversity®



Young children learn best in play-based scenarios. Among our favorite materials at Sound Beginnings are "Friendly Faces", due to their durability and adaptability. The "silly factor" of these intentionally oversized images of family and friends increases appeal among preschool and kindergarten students. Lamination and Velcro backing ensure they can be used over and over in individual therapy and small-group settings. Best of all, it is easy to pivot between auditory memory, receptive and expressive language, and early literacy learning objectives. By increasing engagement and flexibility within therapy sessions, these tools align with EHD principles of accessible, developmentally appropriate, and effective early intervention.

INCLUSION/EXCLUSION & QUANTITY CONCEPTS (Receptive or Expressive)

- "Put everyone EXCEPT _____ wants a marshmallow."
- "Show me the ONLY person WITHOUT a _____."
- "Kai wants a Halloween costume, BUT NOT a ghost."
- "Sam was to be EITHER Spiderman OR Batman."
- "SOME of them like grapes and THE REST want apples."

NEGATION

- "Who has NO _____?"
- "Sofia wants a vehicle WITHOUT _____."
- "NEITHER of them want _____ on their pizzas."
- "_____ DOESN'T like sprinkles."

SEQUENCING (Receptive or Expressive)

- "FIRST put mom on the bus, THEN dad, and LAST sister."
- "Tony wants to slide, THEN get on the swing."
- "Kenan put on his _____ costume BEFORE Maya put on her _____ costume."
- "Ava has to wait to hop into her hot air balloon until AFTER Alex gets into his".



PRONOUNS AND POSSESSIVES (Receptive or Expressive)

- "SHE wants to _____ and HE wants to _____."
- "WE are all _____-ing."
- "_____ is THEIRS, not OURS."
- "Give the _____ to HIM."
- "The _____ is for HER."
- "MY car is green. YOURS is red."
- "Jack's car is last in line."

SPATIAL CONCEPTS (Receptive or Expressive)

- "Put Tia's car BEHIND yours."
- "Put Leo and Jill NEXT TO each other."
- "Jose is IN FRONT of _____."
- "Park the blue car BETWEEN the _____ and the _____ ones."
- "Andy's rocket is the FARTHEST away from the green one."
- Fly _____'s rocket AROUND the _____ and the _____."



VERB TENSES (Expressive)

- "Hannah is riding/rides/rode/will ride her bike."
- "Derek is flying/flies/ flew/will fly the airplane."
- "Mateo is watering/waters/watered/ will water all the pretty flowers."
- "Billy is cleaning/cleans/cleaned/will clean up the toys."
- "_____ 's car was hit by _____ 's car".
- _____ is being followed by _____."

NOUN-VERB AGREEMENT (Expressive)

- "The girl wants a cookie."
- "They both want ice cream."
- "All the children are singing."
- "He is spraying the building."
- "They are riding the bus."
- "We love puzzles."

CRITICAL ELEMENT RECALL: Combinations of vocabulary concepts above could be "stacked" into more complex auditory recall tasks. For example, **Person + Preposition** = an instruction with 2 critical elements that sounds like, "Sarah is UNDER the spaceship." Or **Object + Adjective + Possessive** = a task with 3 critical elements that sounds like, "The small, blue envelope goes in her mailbox." Or **Agent + Action X2** = a direction with 4 critical elements such as, "Kayla is swinging and Emily is riding a bike." Remember there must be a choice for the element to be critical. It is also important to be mindful of dwindling set sizes (e.g. there's only one of that size/type/color left). As options are removed, the memory demand decreases.

