Blanks Language Model

1

Naming
The child will be talking about objects/materials that they can see directly in front of them.

Describing
The child's language will relate to specific aspects of the object/material.

2

3

Think about it
Language no longer maps directly onto a picture/material. They must use their language/materials to reorganise a response.

Reasoning
The child's language demands go beyond the materials. They are using language to justify and solve problems.
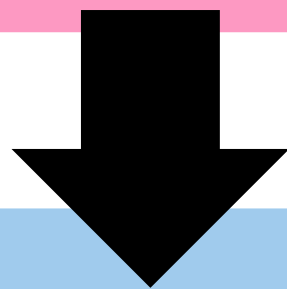
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What is the Blanks language model?

Also known as 'Blanks level of questioning', the model aims to develop children's verbal reasoning and abstract language capabilities.

The model separates questions and directions into four levels:

Level 1 & 2:
Basic questions which require <u>simple</u> and '<u>concrete</u>' responses. That is, talking about things that have context in the 'here-and-now'.
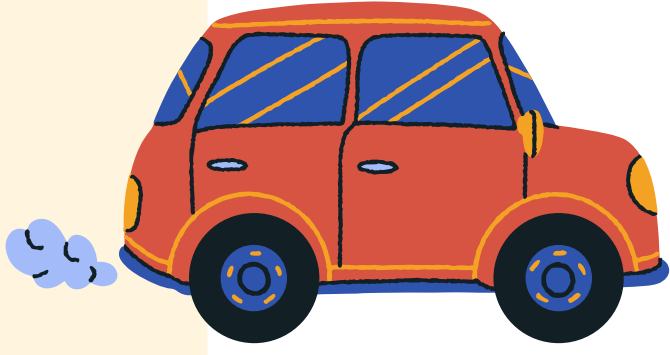
Level 3 & 4:
More <u>complex</u> questions and language that require <u>abstract</u> answers.

Why use this model?
This model helps us to make sure questions are pitched to children at the right level to support their understanding of a task. It also helps us to identify what the next level of language learning is so that we can begin to model this language.

How can you support at home?

Find out which Blanks level your child is at from your Speech and Language Therapist.
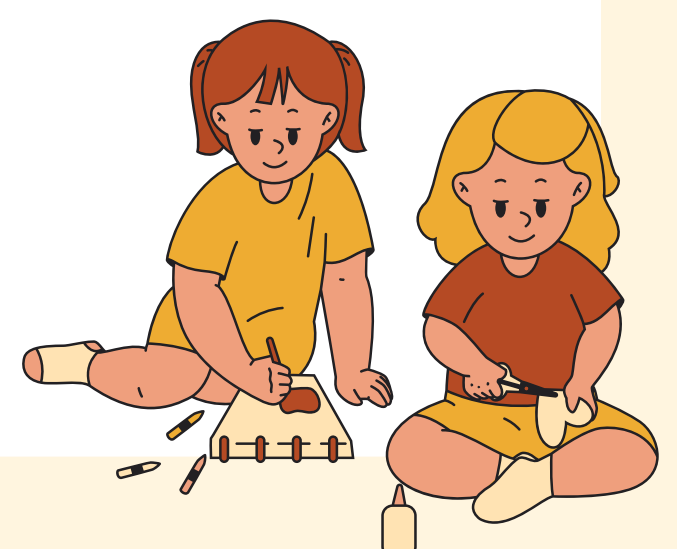
You can then use the following questions at each level to support your child during activities at home such as:

- Book reading
- While playing a game
- Watching a video
- Building something
- Doing arts and crafts
- In the car or on the train/bus
- At the dinner table.

Useful links for further information

- Video examples: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-EFnokgHW4
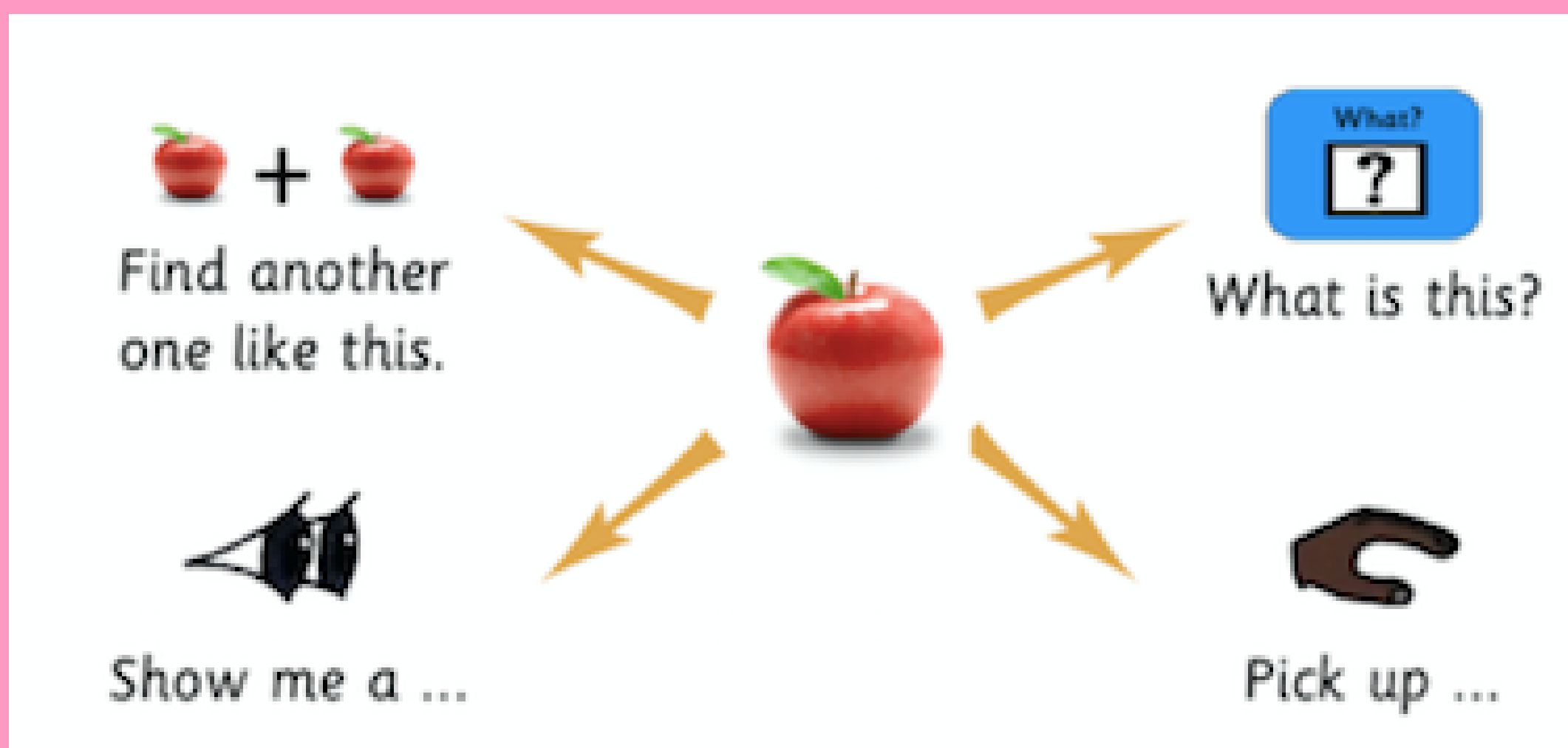- NHS: https://childspeechbedfordshire.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Introduction-to-Blank-levels.docx

1

Naming

The child will be talking about objects/materials that they can see directly in front of them.

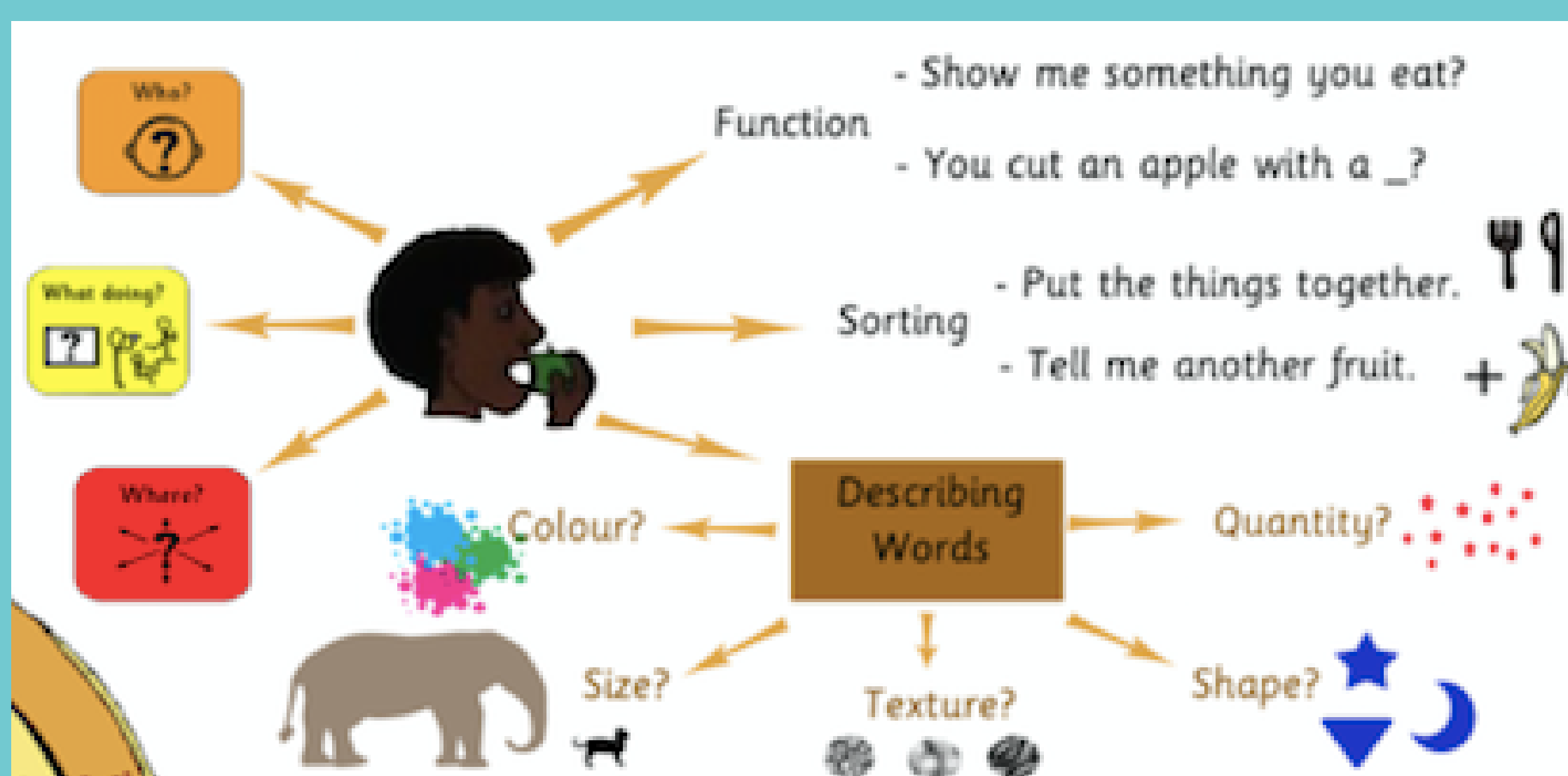| Type of Question/Task	Example
Point to an object	*"Point to the banana"* *"Show me the tree"* *"Give me the red one"*
Find a matching object	*"Find another one that is like this"*
Name an object	*"What's this?"*

2

Describing

The child's language will relate to specific aspects of the object/material.

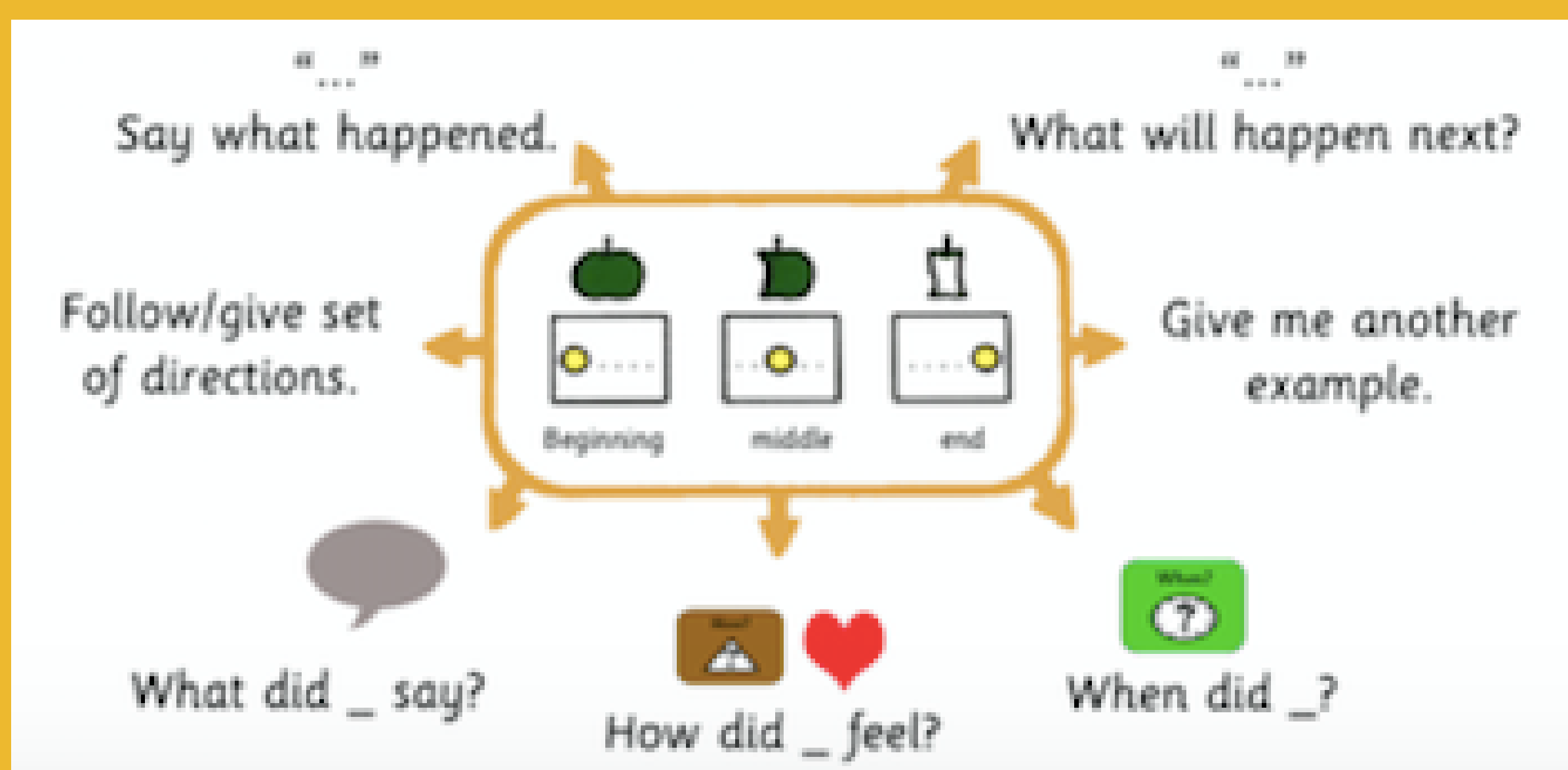| Type of Question/Task	Example"
Find an object by attribution/description	"Pass me the yellow fruit" "which fruit is large and prickly?"
Find an object by function	"What can you use to peel the orange?"
Give an example within a category	"What other fruit would you like?"
Answering: Who? What? Where? After information or a picture is provided.	"Who is eating?" "what is he eating?" "Where is he eating it?"
Answering "What is happening?	"What is ____ doing?"

3

Think about it

Language no longer maps directly onto a picture/material. They must use their language/materials to reorganise a response.

Type od Question/Task	Example
Teel a story or re-tell an event	*"What happened?"*
State what a character might state	*"What is ___ saying?"*
State what a character might think	*"What might they be thinking?"*
State how a character might feel	*"How is ___ feeling?"*
Answering when?	*"When did it happen?"*
Summarize an event	
Predict what will happen next	*"What will happen next?"*
Follow a set of directions	*"Please put your book away, get your Chromebook, bring it back to your desk and open up X programme"*
Define a word	*"What does healthy mean?"*

4

Reasoning

Language no longer maps directly onto a picture/material. They must use their language/materials to reorganise a response.

Type of question/Task	Example
Solve a problem	"Why is it better to eat an apple for break and not a chocolate bar?"
Solve a problem from another person's point of view	"Sally and James both want the apple but there is only one left in the bowl. What could they do?"
Justify a decision or prediction	"Why did you choose the apple instead of the chocolate bar?"
Identify the cause pf an event	"Why are Sally and James arguing?"
Explain why something cannot be done	"Why don't we eat orange peels?"
Make an inference from an observation	(Point to empty fruit bowl) "Do you think people here like fruit?"