Speech and Language Therapy Guide

Step-By-Step Speech Therapy Activities to Teach Speech and Language Skills At Home or In Therapy

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How to Teach a Child to Answer Where Questions

Rationale:
Children need to be able to answer a variety of questions to participate in conversation as well as classroom activities. The best way to help your child with this is to teach her one question word at a time. Once she can answer that question in a variety of different ways, you can move on to teaching other ones. Eventually you will want to mix up the types of questions you ask but for now, just stick with one. Where questions are typically the first ones I target after yes/no and “what”. This seems to be the next easiest one for kids to answer.

Age of Mastery:
A child should be able to answer a basic “where” question by pointing at the age of 2 years (For example, “Where’s the doggie?” and the child points to the dog). A child should be able to verbally answer basic where questions by 3 years (like “where are your shoes?”) and more complex where questions by 4 years (like “where do cows live?”).

Learning Steps:
1. Where’s Your Nose?
2. Where’s the Ball?
3. Where’s the Block?
4. Where’s the Shoe?
5. Where Do You Wash Your Hands?

Sample IEP Goals:
- By <Date>, Child will answer basic “where” questions about 5 different body parts by pointing to the correct body part on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Where’s your nose?”)
- By <Date>, Child will answer basic “where” questions about objects immediately present or in pictures by pointing to the object on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Where’s the ball?”)
- By <Date>, Child will answer basic “where” questions about objects immediately present by verbally stating the location of the object on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Where’s the block?” “In the barn”).
- By <Date>, Child will verbally answer “where” questions about concepts not immediately present on 4 of 5 observed opportunities on 3 consecutive data collection days (ex: “Where do you wash your hands?” “In the bathroom”).
Where Questions, Step One:
Where’s Your Nose?

Description:
This step is simple, just ask your child to show you all of his body parts. This is a pretty common game between young children and their parents but often the parents say “show me your nose”. There’s nothing wrong with that, but if you’re trying to teach your child “where” questions, ask “where’s your nose” instead.

Activities:
After you ask the question “where’s your _____?”, pause for a moment to see if your child will point to that body part. If not, point to it on your own body and see if your child will imitate you. If he still doesn’t do it, move his finger to point to the correct body part. Clap for him and get very excited, even if you had to do it for him. Try it again. Every time you ask the question, use the same prompting. First pause and see if he’ll do it on his own, then do it on yourself, then help him do it. Hopefully, after a while of you helping him, he’ll be able to do it with just the model of you pointing to your body part. Then eventually, he’ll do it on his own. This is called fading your prompts. You only provide as much prompting as he needs each time and eventually you fade until you’re not giving any prompts at all. Start by only teaching one body part at a time and keep doing this until he can point to quite a few body parts when you ask.

When to Move On:
Move on to the next step when your child can point to 5 different body parts about 80% of the time that you ask him “where’s your _____”. Make sure he can do it without any help from you.

Data Collection (Start with one body part and write it on the first line. Take data for each date that you work on that body part. When he can point to it 80% of the time, pick another body part and write it on the next line. Take data across to the right just as you did before):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body Part</th>
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Teaching Where Questions, Step One:

Where’s your nose?

Where are your eyes?

Where are your teeth?

Where are your ears?

Where is your hair?

Where is your mouth?

Where is your head?

Where is your neck?

Where is your shirt?

Where’s her nose?

Where are her eyes?

Where are her teeth?

Where are her ears?

Where is her hair?

Where is her mouth?

Where is her head?

Where is her neck?

Where is her shirt?

Extra Practice:

You can continue asking where questions to your child and having him point to what you asked about. For example, you can ask “Where’s Mommy?”, “Where’s your ball?”, or “Where’s puppy?”. You can also ask questions about pictures in books. You can ask your child “where’s the _____” and have him point to the correct picture.
Where Questions Step Two: Where’s The Ball?

Description:
Now you want to move to having your child point to an object or picture when you ask a “where” question. You can do this by asking her to point to something in the room or something in a book. Start with simple words that your child knows, like “ball”, “bubble”, or her favorite food. Use the same prompting that you did in the last step.

Activities:
First ask the question, “where’s the ____?” and then pause. If she doesn’t do it, point to the thing with your own finger and say “there it is!” If she doesn’t imitate your pointing, point her finger toward the object for her and get excited for her. Celebrate every time your child points, even if you have to help her. Keep doing this until she can point to a variety of objects without needing you to help her.

When to Move On:
Move on to the next step when your child can point to common objects about 80% of the time that you ask her “where’s the ____”. Make sure she can do it without any extra help from you.

Modifications:
If your child is having trouble with this or is easily distracted, try just placing one common object in front of your child. Say “where’s the ___” and help her point to it. Then, reward her with something she enjoys, like a favorite toy, a hug, or tickles. Keep doing this until she can point to the object on her own. Then, put two objects in front of her and keep asking her to find the first object (This is called having a distractor). Once she can do this with one object and a variety of distractors, start over with a different object. When she can correctly find both of those objects from two choices, try putting both of the familiar objects out and switch your question until she can find each of them when you ask. (Great for children with autism!) Keep introducing new objects in this way.

Data Collection (Mark if she points to the correct object/picture when you ask):

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Points to Object When Asked Where Question</td>
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Teaching Where Questions, Step Two:

Where’s the Ball?

Ask your child “where” questions about the pictures on this page. For example, you can say “where’s the ball?” and then have your child point to the ball. You may have to move your child’s hand to point to the correct object. Then, praise your child even though you had to help her. The next time, ask again and pause to see if she’ll do it on her own. Keep helping her do it until she can do it on her own.

Extra Practice:

You can continue asking where questions to your child and having her point to what you ask about. This is a great activity to do while reading books to your child. You can ask your child “where’s the _____” and have her point to the correct picture.
Where Questions, Step Three: Where’s The Block?

Description:
For this activity, you will need two locations and a block (or other small object). Your two locations can be toy locations like a barn and a house, or real locations like the couch and the floor. Just make sure your child knows what these things are called. You may need to teach your child what they are called before you start this activity.

Activities:
Take the block and place it in one of these locations. Ask your child “where’s the block?”. Your child should answer “on the ____” with the correct location. At first, you will need to help your child with this. Start by asking the question and pausing. If he doesn’t answer, point to or tap the correct location. If he still doesn’t answer, say “on the...” and pause again. If he’s not able to give the answer after that, provide him with the full response (“on the couch”) and then have him imitate you. Each time you ask the question, use the prompts as described above, pausing after each one. Hopefully, he will need fewer of those prompts as you go along. As usual, celebrate for him when he gets one, even if you need to help him.

When to Move On:
Move on to the next step when your child can verbally answer the question with two location choices about 80% of the time. Make sure he can do it without any extra help from you.

Data Collection:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Says Location from Two Choices after Where Question</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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Teaching Where Questions, Step Three:

Where’s the Block?

Place a small object (like a coin or block) on top of one of these two pictures. Then, ask your child “Where’s the ___?” Help your child answer with either “the house” or “the barn”. Keep doing this until your child can answer on his own.

Extra Practice:

You can continue asking where questions about the location of objects in your house. Take turns putting objects in or on various locations. Then, practice asking “where is the ___?” and answering with “in/on the ______!”
Where Questions, Step Four:
Where’s The Shoe?

Description:
This activity is much like the last activity though your child will have more than two options. You will start with one object and move it around the room. Then, you will ask your child where it is.

Activities:
Choose one object and place it in a location that your child can see and ask your child “where’s the shoe (or whatever object you choose)?”. Help your child give you a verbal description of where that object is. It might be on the chair, on the floor, in the kitchen, down the stairs, etc. You could also place it in different rooms in the house and have him answer with the room that it is in. Use the following prompts to help your child answer the questions and fade back as you are able to (use as few prompts each time as your child requires to get the correct answer, hopefully she will need fewer prompts as you go along):

1. Ask the question and pause
2. Point to the location of the object and pause
3. Start the response but pause before the location word (such as “on the...”)
4. Give your child the whole answer and have her imitate it back to you

Keep doing this until she can answer where questions about a variety of things that are immediately present. You can also ask questions about actions that she or others are doing. You can ask questions like “where are you washing your hands?” or “where is daddy going?”

When to Move On:
Move on to the next step when your child can verbally answer a “where” question about things that are immediately present about 80% of the time. Make sure she can do it without any extra help from you.

Data Collection (Mark if she says the correct location when you ask her a where question, make sure she’s not just saying “over there” for every one):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Where Questions about Things Immediately Present</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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Teaching Where Questions, Step Four:

Where’s the Shoe?

Your child is working on answering “where” questions about the location of objects. Try these activities at home to practice helping your child answer these questions.

Choose one object and place it in a location that your child can see and ask your child “where’s the shoe (or whatever object you choose)?”. Help your child give you a verbal description of where that object is. It might be on the chair, on the floor, in the kitchen, down the stairs, etc. You could also place it in different rooms in the house and have her answer with the room that it is in. Use the following prompts and fade back as you are able to:

1. Ask the question and pause
2. Point to the location of the object and pause
3. Start the response but pause before the location word (such as “on the…”)
4. Give your child the whole answer and have her imitate it back to you

Keep doing this until she can answer where questions about a variety of things that are immediately present. You can also ask questions about actions that she or others are doing. You can ask questions like “where are you washing your hands?” or “where is daddy going?”
Where Questions, Step Five:
Where Do You Wash Your Hands?

**Description:**
Now it’s time to start asking questions about more abstract concepts, such as things that are not immediately present.

**Activities:**
Start asking questions like “where do you wash your hands?” or “where do you eat dinner?”. It may be helpful at first to provide your child with choices. You can offer verbal choices, like “where do you eat dinner? At the table or in the bathtub?”. You could also provide your child with picture choices. You could take pictures of various places around your house and show him two or more choices when you ask the question. You can also use the pictures from the worksheets that accompany this section.

**When to Move On:**
When your child can answer a variety of “where” questions, including those about things that aren’t immediately in front of him, with about 80% accuracy, we consider it to be mastered. Once your child can do this, keep monitoring his ability to answer those “where” questions but change your focus to teaching him other questions like “who” or “when” or move on to another skill entirely if your child was only struggling with “where” questions.

**Modifications:**
If your child is having trouble with this step, try starting with some easier “where” questions about things that aren’t present. For example, you could say “where is Grandma” or “where is Dad” if he knows that Grandma is usually at her house or Dad is at work. You could also incorporate toys or topics your child enjoys. For example, if your child loves animals, start with questions about where the animals live or try questions about where vehicles go if he loves things that move.

**Data Collection (Mark if he can say a location to answer a “where” question about something he can’t immediately see):**

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<tr>
<td>Answer Where Questions about NOT Immediately Present</td>
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Learning Where Questions, Step Five:

Abstract Where Questions

Put this paper in a plastic sheet protector and then ask your child the “where” questions. Have your child verbally answer the question and then draw a line with a dry erase marker between the question and the answer. If your child is doing really well, you can cover up the answers when you ask each question.

Where do your shoes go?

at the table

Where does the bus take you?
on your feet

Where do you eat dinner?
in the oven

Where do you bake cookies?
in a swimming pool

Where do you swim?
to school

Extra Practice:

Continue to ask your child “where” questions about concepts that are not present. The more you ask these questions, the better your child will get at answering them!