Talking Boxes

Going to the Park
Going to the Park Talking Box

Equipment needed:

- slide
- swing
- roundabout
- boy
- girl
- dog
- tree
- flower
- grass
- bird
- duck
- pond
- ball
- buggy

Additional equipment:

- red and green circles
- telescope e.g. kitchen roll inside
- feely bag
- Shark in the Park book
- other stories which include going to the park
- bricks
- sand in tray
Talking Box: Going to the Park
Target: Attention & Listening

**Equipment needed:** red and green circles

**Setting Off!**

Walk around singing to the tune of ‘Here we go round the Mulberry Bush’

We’re going to the park today, the park today, the park today,
We’re going to the park today,
We have to stop at the road.

Then holding up the red circle say ‘Stop . . . Look . . . Listen … Are there any cars? . . . Yes . . . Yes . . No . . . then hold up the green circle and ‘Go!’

Repeat 3 or 4 times

**Help tips:**

- If a child doesn’t stop, repeat the word and comment on the children who have stopped
- Use signs for stop, look, listen yes, no and go.
- If walking about is difficult then move feet whilst sitting or tap hands on knees.

**Extending the activity:**

Ask the children in turn if there are any cars, using their names to get attention.
Talking Box: Going to the Park
Target: Understanding language

Equipment needed: items from the box, telescope e.g. kitchen roll inside

1 key word: What will we do?

Tell the children that you are going to the park to play and you wonder what they will do. Take the slide, swing, roundabout and ball out of the box, name and talk about each one. E.g. “This is a slide . . . slide . . . you go up and down . . . whee!” using gestures. Ask the children “Where’s . . .”

Help tips:
- Repetition of instructions: “Where’s the slide?” emphasising the key word.
- Use signs and gestures if needed.
- Use 2 items initially then increase.
- If they pick up the wrong item, encourage them to “listen again” and then repeat the instruction.

2 key words: Where is it?

Tell the children to listen. Take the grass and buggy out of the box plus other appropriate items. Show them putting one of the items on the grass or on the buggy. Ask the children to put something either on the grass or on the buggy.

Help tips:
- Use the child’s name first and check that they are looking at you.
- Repeat the instruction again if they do not respond.
- If they pick up the wrong item or put it in the wrong place, encourage them to “listen again” and then repeat the instruction.
- If they are still unsure then break the instruction into 2 parts e.g. “Find the ball”. When they have found the ball then say, “Put it on the grass”.

3 key words: What can I see?

Put the items out naming them and get the telescope. Look through the telescope and tell the children there are lots of things to see at the park. Say “I see a dog. Child’s name - get the dog.” Then “I can see a dog and a tree.”
Child’s name – get the dog and the tree.” Then “I can see a dog, a tree and a swing. Child’s name – get the dog, the tree and the swing.”

**Help tips:**
- Start with just 4 items to select from and then increase as appropriate.
- If they pick up the wrong item, encourage them to “listen again” and then repeat the instruction.
- Use the child’s name first and check that they are looking at you.
- Repetition of instructions emphasising the key words.
Talking Box: Going to the Park
Target: Talking (spoken language)

Equipment: items from the box, feely bag

Playing at the Park

Take the boy and the girl and the dog from the box and name them. Choose one and name it again. Take out 2 items from the swing, slide, roundabout, and ball and name them. Tell the children what the boy/girl/dog is going to choose to do. Show how the boy/girl/dog plays on the swing/slide/roundabout or with the ball. Ask a child to choose one from boy, girl and dog to go to the park and encourage them to use their words to select. Ask the child what the boy/girl/dog will do at the park, naming again the options. Encourage them to name the item and then to do appropriate action.

Help tips:
- Repeat names of items if needed.
- Give a choice of 2 e.g. “is it a boy or a dog?”
- Use signs or gestures to support if needed.

What’s in the bag?

Place some of the items from the Talking Box in a cloth bag. As the children pass the bag round everyone sings:

Pass the bag around, pass the bag around, pass the bag around, Where will it stop?

When the song stops, the bag stops with that child. The child can take an item out of the bag and encourage naming. The other children can repeat the name as well. Repeat for each child to have a go.

Help tips:
- Don’t force children to name what it is. If they are unsure, offer them a choice e.g. Is it a duck or a buggy?

It’s story-time!
Link the things in the box with a park story such as Shark in the Park. Each time one of the items is mentioned in the story then take the item out of the box. Making **comments** about what happened in the story will encourage more language from the children than asking questions, but here are some ideas of questions you could ask about the story:

These questions are easiest…
- What is this?
- Who is this?
- Where’s the . . . ?

These questions are harder….  
- How did . . . feel?
- What will happen next?

**Why questions are the hardest!**

**Extending the activity:**  
Once you know children are familiar with a story, then encourage them to retell the story to you. Let them use the items in the box to help tell the story.
Talking Box: Going to the Park
Target: Speech and Sound Awareness

Equipment needed: items in the box, bricks, sand in tray

Let’s clap! (Syllable clapping)

Open the box. Take one of the items out of the box. Encourage the children to name e.g. dog. Show the children how you can clap the name e.g. dog (1 clap). Let each child take an item out of the box and help them clap the word. After each child has clapped the word let him/her hide the object somewhere in the room. Then when all of the children have had a turn let them go and find an item and clap the word. This will give them opportunity to practice.

Extending the activity

1. Tell the children you are going to ask them to find something in the box and that you are going to use “robot talking”. It sounds funny! Say each word how you would clap it e.g. Find the bu-ggy. When they find the item join the word together: bu-ggy makes buggy. This activity helps them learn about segmenting words into different parts.

2. Counting the number of claps (syllables) in a word: Some children will be able to count the number of claps immediately but other children will need some support. Use something visual for the children to see as you count e.g. bricks (use one brick for each syllable/clap). As the children become more confident then you can encourage them to take the bricks out as you say the word.
   - dog (1 syllable)
   - flower (2 syllables)
   - roundabout (3 syllables) etc.

Hidden in the Sand!

Hide the boy, bird, ball and buggy in the sand. Tell the children that some things have got buried in the sandpit at the park. Can they help you find them? Let each of the children find an item in the sand. Talk about what it is called e.g. bird. Say, “Listen, can you hear the sound at the beginning, “b b b”. Bird starts with a “b” sound”. Do the same with each item they find. Tell the children at the end of the activity, “All of these things start with the “b” sound “. 
Book ideas

Shark in the Park by Nick Sharratt
A Walk in the Park by Anthony Browne
Shark in the Park on a Windy Day by Nick Sharratt
A Walk in the Park by Gill Budgell
Percy the Park Keeper by Nick Butterworth

Song ideas

Five little ducks went swimming one day,
Over the hills and far away.
Mother duck said, "quack quack quack quack,"
And only four little ducks came back etc..

Teddy plays on the swing
Teddy plays on the slide
Teddy plays on the swing
And Teddy plays on the slide
And he goes
Tick - tock
Forwards and back
Round & round he goes
Tick - tock
Forwards and back
Round & round he goes