How to develop:

Your child's ability to form sentences

Focus

This focuses on the child's ability to join different types of words/different parts of a sentence together in the right order.

Strategies

- **Build opportunities into everyday moments** – using what the child sees, does, hears everyday.
- **Use visual support** - gesture, objects, photographs, symbols.
- **Colourful Semantics** is a system for colour coding sentences according to the role of different words in the sentence. It can help children to with word order in sentences. It can also help children to understand 'wh-' questions (see "how to" guide for "wh" questions).

Activities

Action pictures:
Use picture cards or picture books of people doing actions (verbs) or photos of the children doing different things. The children take turns describing what they see the people doing in the picture. To encourage the children to develop their language further add an extra word/s e.g. if the child says *"eating apple"*, the adult says *"yes, the man is eating the apple"*.

You could make this game more fun by doing one of the following:

- Placing pictures under a puzzle piece and completing the puzzle.
- Placing pictures under skittles and children take it in turns to throw a ball to knock a skittle down.
- Hiding the pictures around the room and finding them before describing them.

Colourful semantics

Use colourful semantic visuals and colour coding to support the child to join words together in the right order:

S = Subject – Orange

V = Verb – Yellow

O = Object – Green

L = Location – Red

T = Time – Brown

A = Adjective – Blue

S	V	O			
S	V	O	L		
S	V	O	L	T	
S	V	O	L	T	A



Reference Sources

The use of activities with colour coding and question word prompts in this "how to guide" and other sections of this resource is based on the work of Alison Bryan, SLT (Colourful Semantics) and Becky Shanks, SLT (Narrative Therapy)...

- 'Colourful semantics: thematic role therapy' by Alison Bryan, in Language Disorders in Children and Adults, ed. Chiat, Law & Marshall, 1997, Whurr.
- 'Speaking and Listening Through Narrative', Black Sheep Press, based on the work of Becky Shanks and further developed in collaboration with Helen Rippon.