

A Guide to Language Learning

Ways to practice language skills at the WNC Nature Center!



Here are some ideas to keep kids curious and while expanding their communication skills:

1. Use **“I wonder...”** to prompt imagination and inferencing skills.
 - For example, “I wonder what animals are in the pen,” “I wonder what the goats like to eat,” or “I wonder what that goat’s horn feels like ...” If they need some ideas feel free to suggest them to get them started. “Do you think it’s hard or soft?”

1

**TRY USING “I
WONDER....”**

2

**LEAD WITH
YOUR
LANGUAGE**

3

PLAY “I SPY”



Count with your little one how many animals they see!



Talk about what the animals are doing with action words!
Eating? Playing?
Sleeping?



Make up silly stories about the animals!

2. **Leading with your language** creates curiosity and exposes them to new vocabulary and different ways to put words together. Tell your child which animal is your favorite, and why you think that animal is great.

- For example, “I love the curly fur on the sheep, it looks so soft. ” You can ask your child to make up a name for their favorite animal, imagine where they sleep and what they like to do.



3. Use “I Spy” to introduce and review basic concepts to find at the petting zoo. Basic concepts are words that help us think and describe the world.

- Size words (big, little). For example, “Do you see the little bird? Where is the big bear?”
- Location words (on top, under, next to, in between). For example, “I spy a big donkey over there. Where is the little donkey?”
- Time words (first, next, last). For example, “Where do you want to go first? Where should we go next?”

LITTLE ONE WITH LOTS OF ENERGY? GET THEM MOVING!

- How does a goat jump? Show me 5 goat jumps!
- I wonder how a donkey runs with 4 legs, can you do it? Donkey run from the fence to me!
- A bird can fly with their wings, can you? Fly a circle around me!
- Can you make a face like the sheep make? What about a happy sheep face? A silly sheep face?
- Feel free to be creative and make up your own!

