

Cumbria County Council

Chat Play Share

Rhymes and songs

Nellie the Elephant

Nellie the Elephant packed her trunk and said goodbye to the circus, off she went with a trumpety-trump, trump trump, trump.

Nellie the Elephant packed her trunk and trundled back to the jungle, off she went with a trumpety-trump, trump trump, trump.

Birth – 2 years



Hold your child's hands as they face you sitting on your knee. Jiggle them up and down as you sing 'trumpety-trump, trump, trump'. Sing the song a couple of times, start slowly and get quicker each time you sing it.

Put a long sock or tights over your hand to make a trunk. Each time you sing the song, use your 'trunk' to tickle your child to 'trumpety-trump...' See if they start to anticipate you tickling them.

2-3 years



Pretend to be elephants stomping around the room, using your arm as a trunk. Give your child instructions to follow and see if they can think of an action and if possible, a sound to go with these. For example, fast, slow, noisy elephant, sleeping elephant, squirting water. Younger children may need you to model the sounds/actions first. What does your child do if you suggest something an elephant wouldn't do? Dancing elephant?

3-4 years



The saying 'Elephants never forget' highlights that elephants are thought to have very good memories. Share this fact with your child and spend time talking to them about things they remember. If you mention particular places, people or events, can they tell you something they remember? Model words connected to the past if your child still finds this tricky. Give your child time to think and respond without stepping in with more words yourself.

Chat Play Share...Other ideas you could try....

Share a story together about elephants and chat about the pictures and story. Examples of stories:

- How the Elephant got his Trunk by Anna Milbourne
- Five Minutes' Peace by Jill Murphy
- Elmer by David McKee
- My friend Harry by Kim Lewis
- Bashi, Elephant Baby by Theresa Radcliffe
- Don't think about Purple Elephants by Susan Whelan and Gwyneth Jones
- The Elephant and the Bad Baby by Elfrida Vipont

Some children prefer to look at non-fiction books. Find a book about elephants and look at it together. Ask your child some simple questions about where they think elephants live, what they eat, how big they are etc. then look in the book for more information.

Talk to your child about a 'trunk' being another name for a suitcase or box to put special things in as well as being an elephant's trunk. With older children think of other words which could be used for a trunk (suitcase, holdall, luggage, chest etc). Ask your child to help you to pack a suitcase/bag for a day out or trip away. Can they follow your instructions to find particular items? Can they name items they think you should include? Chat about where you will be going and include new words linked to the event/activity if you can.

If your child enjoys collecting items, go on a scavenger hunt outside. Challenge them to find a variety of items to put in their bag. With younger children you could ask for specific things such as a dandelion, a fir cone, a feather. Older children could be asked to find something soft, a yellow item, something starting with a particular letter sound or a particular number of items etc.



As we know elephants have good memories. Teach your child to play 'Kim's game' to help develop their attention and memory skills. Place some objects on a tray or just out on the floor. Let your child look at them and then cover them up. Without them seeing, remove an item. Can they work out what is missing? Gradually increase the number of items or use several items which look similar.