



DG10



10-15 minutes (initially)



- ❖ 'Faster, Slower, Higher, Lower' poem by Michael Berenstain



- ❖ An empty bag
- ❖ Some teddies/dolls



Help your child to build links between these ideas and real life situations. E.g. the glass of juice/bottle of milk is full, then empty; they are happy when they go out to a show or a party, sad when they are ill; the walls of a house are low when the builders start working, and high when they have finished construction.

## FASTER, SLOWER, HIGHER, LOWER



To develop dialectical thinking (the ability to recognise both sides of something and find the truth through reasoning)  
To help children to understand the concept of opposites



Read your child the poem 'Faster, Slower, Higher, Lower' by Michael Berenstain. Read it slowly and expressively, using actions wherever you can to bring the words to life. Then suggest to your child that they put on a show for some of their teddies and dolls, or other family members. Read it aloud a second time, with your child doing the actions as the 'show'.

**Play 'Say the Opposite' game:** When you say a word, your child has to say its opposite as quickly as they can (a great game for the car too). Take turns asking – get your child to think of a word from the poem and to ask you (with support if necessary). Older and more able children could try to put each opposite into a funny sentence as well.

Then play a variety of action games to emphasise the pairs of opposites:

**Play 'Walk through the Gateways':** Your child moves around the room. When you call out *high gate*, they stand upright as they pretend to walk through a high gateway. When you call out *low gate*, your child has to bend as they pretend to walk through a low gateway. You can extend the game by introducing *very high gateways* (jump) and *very low gateways* (crawl).

**Play 'High, Low':** Your child walks around in a circle. When you say *high*, they walk on tiptoes, when you say *low*, they bend. Give them instructions, varying the order, and the pace: high, high, low, high, low, low etc.

**Play 'Heavy Bag, Light Bag':** Give your child an empty bag. Ask your child to show you how they would walk if the bag was very heavy, and then ask them to show you how they would walk if the bag was very light. Practice until they have got the idea. When you call *heavy bag* they walk as though the bag is heavy; when you call *light bag* they walk as though it is light. You can extend the game by introducing *very heavy* (they put the bags on the floor) and *very light* (they hold the bags up higher).

The games can be extended/made more complicated by including several pairs of opposites. For example, your child could imitate a bike going uphill slowly and downhill quickly, allowing you to combine 'up, down' and 'quick, slow'. Another example: ask your child to imitate goods trains on their way to market with heavy loads going slowly and on their way home going quickly with light loads (heavy, light; quickly, slowly).



There are limitless possibilities! All that is required is a situation in which clear opposites (from the poem or other sources) can be singled out. You can, and should, play many versions of these games at different times or when you have a few spare minutes with your child, rather than just doing the activities above in the course of one fixed session.



Your child can understand and name opposites correctly.



KEY TO LEARNING  
@HOME



DC10

## POEM

### **FASTER, SLOWER, HIGHER, LOWER** by Michael Berenstain

Faster, slower, higher, lower.  
Bigger, smaller, shorter, taller.  
Over, under, around and through.  
Up and down, many, few.  
Open, shut, out and in.  
Top, bottom, thick and thin.  
Left, right, Yes! - No!  
Crooked, straight, Stop! - Go!  
Here, there, short, long.  
Hard, soft, weak, strong.  
Entrance, exit, Hello! - Good-bye!  
Floating, sinking, wet and dry.  
Near, far, shallow, deep.  
Noisy, quiet, awake, asleep.  
Sick, healthy, happy, sad.  
Neat, messy, good, bad.  
On, off, dark, light.  
Wide, narrow, loose, tight.  
Warm, cool, hot, cold.  
Plain, fancy, young, old.  
Blunt, sharp, smooth, rough.  
Sweet, sour, tender, tough.  
Attic, cellar, ceiling, floor.  
Huge and tiny, less and more.  
Forward, backward, flat, bumpy.  
Hero, villain, cheerful, grumpy.  
Apart, together, push and pull.  
Frozen, melted, empty, full.  
Start, finish, receive and send.  
Early, late, beginning... end.