CRITICAL ELEMENTS SCAVENGER HUNT

USING PLAY TO TARGET USE OF MULTIPLE CRITICAL ELEMENTS

THINK ABOUT . . .
Critical elements are pieces of information, presented auditorily, that a child must hold in their working (short term) memory. A child is given a set of materials (small or large, based on the child’s abilities), and asked to listen for which piece(s) to choose. For example, for a new listener, I might put out a heart sticker and a flower sticker, and give the direction, “Put on the flower sticker.” That represents one critical element from a set of two choices. For a more advanced listener, I might have a set of hearts, flowers, and stars of all different colors and sizes. For this child, I would ask, “Put on the large purple star,” which represents three critical elements (size, color, shape) from a large set.

MATERIALS NEEDED:
• Anything in your house! 😊

PREPARATION:
1- It might be easiest to come up with a few directions before starting the activity, to make sure your directions are clear to the child.
2- E.g., locate items in your cupboard/in the room and use list below to come up with 1-2 critical elements to describe the item.

VOCABULARY:
• Colors
• Shapes
• Prepositions
• Size words
• New locations
• Ordinal/Temporal

*See Below for examples

HELPFUL TIPS:
Basic concepts include, but are not limited to (in rough order of difficulty):
• Color (if applicable, be sure to expand beyond primary and secondary colors to include new vocabulary like lavender, teal, magenta, etc.)
• Size (again if applicable, use giant, tiny, large instead of just big vs. small)
• Shape (yet again, an opportunity to expand to more complex shape-related vocabulary)
• Specific locations (toy bin, pantry, fridge, cupboard, other house locations, etc.)
• Prepositions (ask the child to look for items over, under, beside, between, below, etc.)
• Letters on the item (find and object with the letter *______)
• Ordinal/Temporal (giving multi-part directions using words like first, second, last or before/after)

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