

LANGUAGE

HALLOWEEN COSTUMES, PRONOUNS, AND PLAY-DOH

THINK ABOUT . . .

Learning pronouns like *he*, *she*, *they*, and *it* is an important part of your child's language development—and Halloween makes it extra fun! During this season of costumes and creativity, you can use playful activities to teach these important words in natural, exciting ways. Try using this Halloween-themed Play-Doh smash mat picturing so many different kids dressed in costumes. As your child smashes the Play-Doh on each picture, talk about who they see: *He is a pirate!* *She is a witch!* *They are astronauts!* This hands-on activity helps kids learn to match the right pronoun to the person—and builds their ability to talk about the world around them!



ACTIVITY:

- 1- **Introduce the activity:** Show your child the smash mat and say, "Let's play a Halloween game with Play-Doh! We're going to talk about who we see and smash the pictures!"
- 2- **Pick a picture:** Have your child choose a picture on the mat.
- 3- **Talk about it:** Ask, "Who is that?" Then model the correct pronoun and costume. After your child begins to understand have them try to create their own sentence without a model. Target sentence examples:
 - *He is a vampire! She is a ballerina!*
 - *They are zombies!* (for groups or ambiguous costumes)
 - *It is a ghost!* (for objects or non-human characters)
- 4- **Smash it!** Invite your child to roll a small ball of Play-Doh and smash it right on top of the picture as they say the sentence.
- 5- **Keep it going:** Repeat with each picture, encouraging your child to use the pronouns themselves. Mix it up with silly voices or let them make up short stories about each costume!
- 6- **Extension idea:** After smashing all the pictures, ask your child to tell you about their favorite costume using pronouns: "*She is my favorite because she's a cat!*" The game can continue at the costume store or by making an experience book of your child and other family members, friends, or school mates dressed up in costume.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Halloween Pronoun Smash Mat Printable
- Clear page protector or lamination sheet
- Play-Doh

PREPARATION:

- 1- Print out the Halloween Pronoun Smash Mat file
- 2- Put each page in a clear page protector or laminate each page

VOCABULARY:

- | | |
|------------|---------------|
| • He | • Superhero |
| • She | • Bat |
| • They | • Cat |
| • It | • Alien |
| • Smash | • Princess |
| • Push | • Astronaut |
| • Fairy | • Policewoman |
| • Pirate | • Hotdog |
| • Witch | • Ghost |
| • Pumpkin | • Strawberry |
| • Skeleton | • Artist |
| • Dinosaur | • Firefighter |
| • Unicorn | • Pizza |

HELPFUL TIPS:

- A sentence strip is provided at the end of the document if it helps cue your child to include the correct words.
- The first smash mat available on the document only targets "he" and "she". As you child gains understanding introduce them to the second smash mat that targets the additional pronouns of "they" and "it".
- Sabotage can be a fun way for your child to correct your mistake! Try to use sabotage with the costumes first until the concept of pronouns is strong. Once your child has a strong understanding of pronouns you can use sabotage with those as well!
- After the whole mat is completed have your child make their own Halloween costume/creature out of the Play-Doh collected on the smash mat.

Special thanks to graduate students in the Listening and Spoken Language Deaf Education graduate training program at Utah State University. These pages can be reproduced for educational purposes.





