

The Use of Candyland in Speech Therapy

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One go to game that I always have handy is Candy Land. Not only is it a great reinforcement, but it can also be used to target a wide variety of speech, language, and social skills. Candy Land is great for working on identifying and labeling colors and counting, but what else can you target with the game? Let's take a look!



Language Skills:

Any time you have the opportunity to model language for your child you are helping to increase their vocabulary. You may be thinking my kid already knows their colors but think about all the other language you are using while playing. "move forward 4 spaces", "go back", "my turn/your turn", "skip a turn", "I got a double blue" "you are ahead of me." Candy Land also provides a way to work on following directions. Within the game you have to follow the directions to draw a card, count the squares, move your gingerbread man. However, you can easily modify the rules to have your child do something silly like draw a card and then hop on one foot to get in some additional practice while still keeping your child engaged. You can also target 'wh' questions such as "what color did you draw?", "how many did you move?" "who is winning?" and "where did you move to?"

Social Skills:

Any time you play a game you are automatically targeting a wide variety of social skills. Structured games like Candy Land are a great way to teach my turn and your turn. You can also work on social and emotional regulation around losing and the importance of being a good sport. Modeling social language around winning and losing is important for your child's social development!

Speech Sounds:

Targeting speech sounds may involve you getting a little more creative! Maybe you will luck out and the sound your child is working on is embedded in the game, but if you are not that lucky there are still plenty of ways to modify the game. Ask your SLP for a word list of your child's target sounds and every time you draw a card you have to practice one word before moving your gingerbread man. If you are feeling really creative, you can even write words or tape pictures to the cards so it seems like part of the game to your child. If your child is working on multiple sounds, you could assign a color to each sound to get a wider variety of practice in!