



SpeakEasy Sandbox #34: Valentine's Cards

Valentine's Day Card

Materials:

Pencil
Colored Paper
Scissors
Paint and Brushes

How to:

Draw a large heart on your paper and cut it out.
Paint your little one's hands and help them make a handprint on top of the heart.
Write your message on the other side together.

Pre-verbal

Activity: Make today all about your little one's hands. As you get ready for your craft, sing a song like "If You're Happy and You Know It," and show your child how you clap your hands. Depending on your child's ability, it may help to provide some gentle hand over hand support to help them clap. This will build your child's awareness and begin to associate the word "hands" with their own hands.

Vocalizer

Activity: Painting your child's hands is probably a new experience for your little one! While painting, narrate through exactly what you are doing ("Let's dip the brush in the red paint, now we paint aaaaall of your fingers...ooo that feels cold." "Aaaand stamp!"). You can also practice making fun noises while exploring the new sensory experience of squishy paint on their hands ("eee!", "wow!", "push!", "pow!").

First words

Activity: Focus on all the actions that you can do with your hands while you make your craft - paint, squeeze, push, stamp. You can sing: *This is the way we paint our hands, paint our hands, paint our hands, this is the way we paint our hands, paint paint paint* (To the tune of Mulberry Bush). As you paint your child's second hand, pause between familiar lines to encourage your child to try making a sound or using a familiar word.

Word combiner

Activity: Help your child participate as much as possible by offering choices throughout the craft. Think about how to offer your choices to include the exact phrase that your child might be able to repeat at the end of your sentence. "Do you want to use a blue paint brush or a green paint brush?". "Should we use red paint or pink paint?". "Is this card for grandma or for grandpa?"

Full sentences

Activity: Describe the craft to your child and help them think about what you will need to make your craft - *paper, scissors, paint brushes, water, and colored paint*. If they miss a few key items, give them some clues to help them think of what else might be needed (e.g. if you don't have paint brushes on your list yet, you could say "we have paint...but how will we put it onto our hands?"). Make a plan together about how you will make your Valentine.

The SpeakEasy Sandbox is a newsletter that provides the necessary tools to boost your child's language and feeding development through play. Sign up at www.speakeasycommunity.com.