

Echo Clapping

Targeted skill

Young children are expected to listen to and reproduce patterns and extend them.



What to do

Remind your child about the times you worked together to create patterns and remind him or her that a pattern is something that repeats over and over. Explain that patterns can be clapped, then demonstrate by clapping this pattern: clap [pause] clap clap [long pause]; clap [pause] clap clap [long pause]; clap [pause] clap clap [long pause].

Ask your child to tell you the pattern, allowing him or her a few moments to think of a reply. The correct answer would be one clap followed by two claps.

Try another pattern: clap clap [pause] clap clap clap [long pause]; clap clap [pause] clap clap clap [long pause]; and so on. Ask your child to clap the pattern after you.

Continue with other clapping patterns. If you notice that your child is not grasping the concept of creating patterns by clapping, repeat the above patterns and provide more practice time. If your child understands how to clap patterns, try more complicated ones. Then ask your child to clap a pattern for you (or other family members) to repeat.

Extending the activity

As an extension, find sticks that can be used as drumsticks. Beat patterns on different surfaces (pots and pans, glasses, oatmeal boxes, canned vegetables).

What your child is practicing

Because patterns are a fundamental part of mathematics, it is important for your child to establish a strong foundation of recognizing and extending patterns when he or she is young. Clapping patterns is an activity that can be done virtually anywhere: driving to school, waiting in line at the grocery store, before or after a meal, in the bathtub. It only takes a minute or two, and children really like creating them and extending them into increasingly complicated forms.