

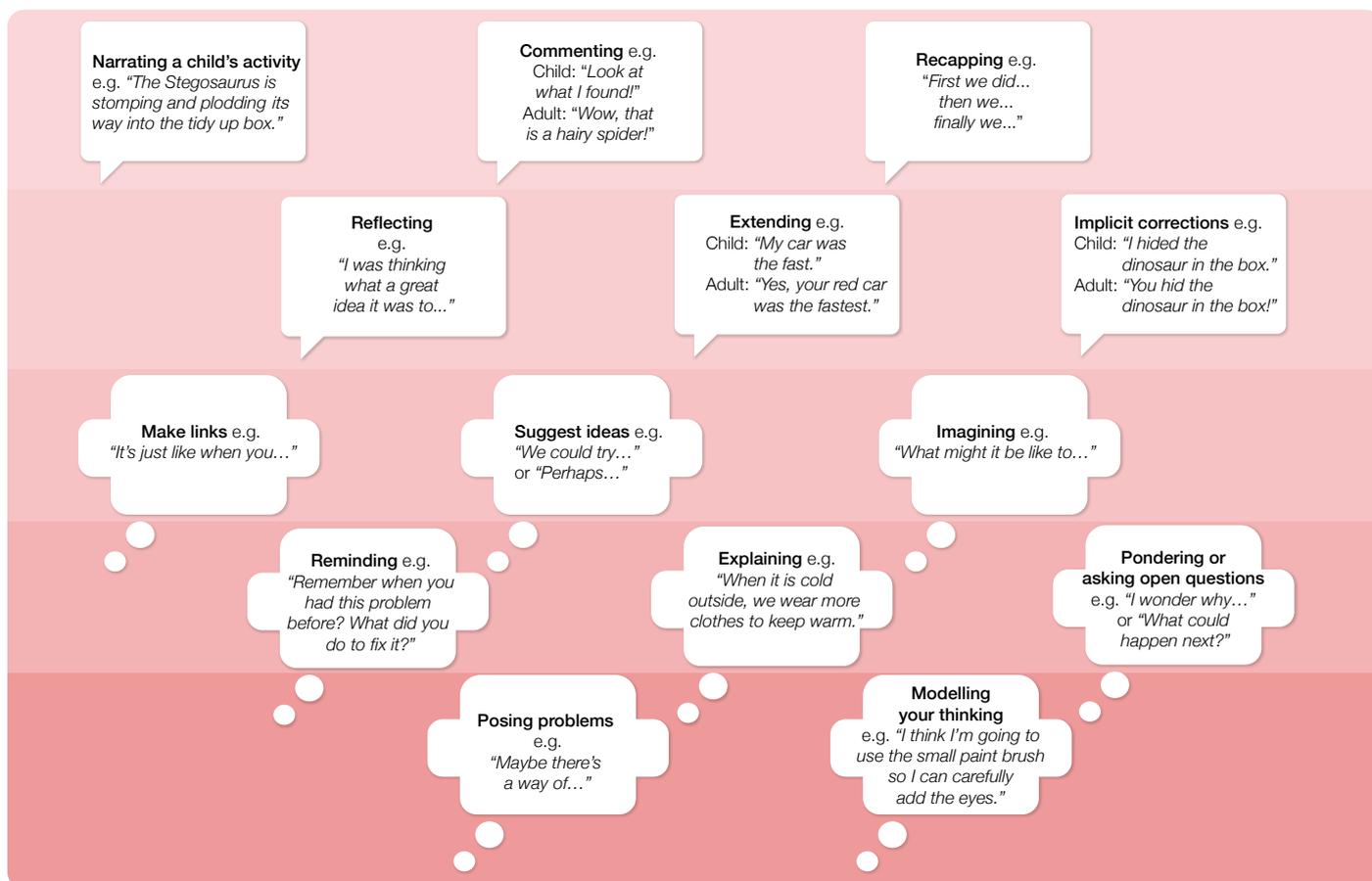
### Communication and language provide the foundations for learning, thinking, and wellbeing.

A child's core language acquisition occurs between one and four years old, with children acquiring basic phonology, syntax, and vocabulary during this period<sup>1</sup>. Evidence indicates that success in literacy relies on the secure development of language<sup>2</sup>, and that these skills are amongst the best predictors of educational success<sup>1</sup>.

### Effective environments for supporting oral language

There is evidence that the rate at which children develop language is sensitive to the amount of input they receive from the adults and peers around them, and that the quality of this input is likely to be more important than the quantity<sup>3</sup>. Ensuring all children experience effective language support requires a considered approach appropriate to the needs of individual children as well as staff training for good implementation.

Fig 1.



### How the prompts in figure 1 can be used when working with children

The number and quality of conversations children have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, using sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures. The prompts in figure 1 may support this interaction during storytelling, role play and conversations.

1. Snowling, M. J., Hulme, C., Bailey A. M., Stothard, S. E. and Lindsay, G. (2011) 'Better Communication Research Programme: Language and Literacy Attainment of Pupils During Early Years and Through KS2: Does Teacher Assessment at Five Provide a Valid Measure of Children's Current and Future Educational Attainments?', DfE Research Brief DFE-RB 172a, London: Department for Education.
2. Nation, K. (2019) 'Children's Reading Difficulties, Language, and Reflections on the Simple View of Reading', Australian Journal of Learning Difficulties, 24 (1), pp. 47-73.
3. Law, J., Charlton, J., Dockrell, J., Gascoigne, M., McKean, C. and Theakston, A. (2017) 'Early Language Development: Needs, Provision and Intervention for Preschool Children from Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Backgrounds', London: Education Endowment Foundation.