

How to Teach the Concepts of Today, Yesterday, and Tomorrow



YESterday,
before night came,
I played with
blocks.
YES, I did!

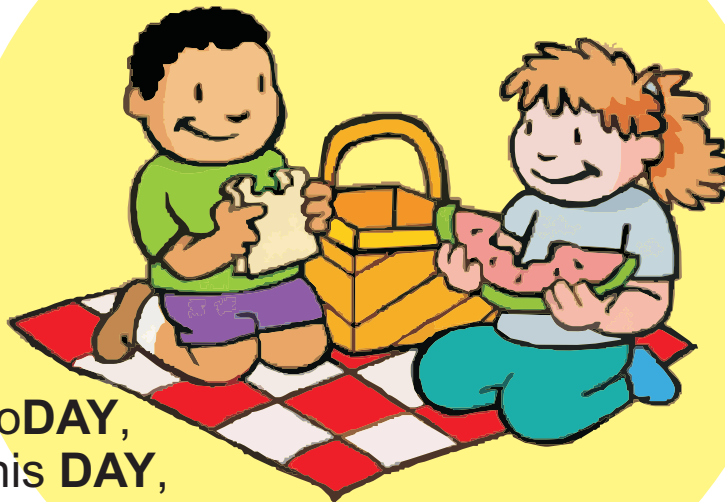
I slept last night



I will sleep tonight



TOmmorrow,
after I get up,
I'm going **TO**
throw snowballs.
I'm going TO!



ToDAY,
this **DAY**,
I'm at a picnic
Right Now!

How to teach the concepts of yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

When teaching these concepts to young children, it helps to be as visual and tangible as possible. Until a child has learned first hand what the passing of time entails, saying “Tomorrow we will go outside and throw snowballs” means very little.

1. Use the visual.

Tell your child that the boy and girl are on a picnic today, right now.

Point out the clothes the boy is wearing. Talk through what you do at the end of the day. You brush your teeth after dinner, etc., and then you get tucked into bed to sleep. When you wake up in the morning, you put on different clothes (point out the clothes the boy is wearing and remark that they are clean clothes, not the ones he wore before he slept at night.) Everything that tomorrow will contain has not happened yet. It comes right after you wake up from tonight’s sleep!

Go back to the picnic scene. Point out the night time circle that says “I slept last night.” Then draw attention to the circle for yesterday in which the boy is playing with blocks and say, “Yesterday, I played with blocks. I already did that. I wore brown pants and a green shirt. They got kinda dirty, so when I was getting ready for bed, I put those clothes in the dirty clothes basket.

Review: point to the yesterday scene and say “On that day, I played with blocks. I already played with blocks. Then I went to bed and slept. I got up this morning and put on a green shirt and purple shorts and today, I had a picnic!

Tonight I am going to get into my pjs and brush my teeth and go to sleep.

Tomorrow when I get out of bed, I want to wear an orange shirt and green pants and play in the snow. I haven’t done it yet, but I will do it tomorrow after I wake up!”

2. Act it out.

Practice over time reviewing the three terms. Instead of throwing the play clothes into the hamper, lay them on a chair until your child gets up in the morning. When he dresses the next morning, say “Today you can wear these clean clothes. Yesterday you wore those. They are dirty, so we need to wash them.” Talk about what your child did yesterday, and even let him draw a picture of what he did. Later in the day, have your child pick some clothes to wear tomorrow. He will be wearing what he wore TODAY. Point to the dirty clothes he already wore YESTERDAY, and then identify the clean clothes he is going to wear TOMORROW.

Use terms consistently for each time frame. “I already did” goes well with “yesterday”. “I’m going to” goes well with “tomorrow.” “I am...” goes well with today.