10 noticing games

For home and the car · Shoshin Kids · Free to print

At home

1. I spy a colour

“I spy something… yellow.” Try colours instead of letters. For a two-year-old, point while you say it. For an older child, try “something soft” or “something round”.

2. What can you hear?

Close your eyes together and count to five quietly. What did you hear? A fridge, a bird, a car, a sibling. Take turns naming one sound each.

3. Find three

“Can you find three round things?” Then three blue things, three soft things, three things smaller than your hand. Point to them together; there’s no need to fetch anything.

4. What’s changed?

Put four toys in a row. They close their eyes, you move one (or hide it under a cushion). What’s different? Then swap: they hide, you guess, and you get it wrong sometimes.

5. Shadow hunt

On a sunny day, or with a torch in the evening, look for shadows. Whose shadow is that? Can you make yours big? Can the teddy have one too?

In the car

These are for a grown-up in the passenger seat to play with a child in the back. The driver keeps their attention on the road.

6. Spot the colour

Pick a colour each. Every time you see a car of your colour, say it out loud. No winning needed. Just noticing.

7. What will we see next?

Guess together: a dog? A bus? A tree with no leaves? Say when you spot it. Silly guesses are part of the fun.

8. Count to the next stop

“How many red things before we stop?” Count together. Younger children can say “another one!” instead of numbers.

9. What sound could it make?

Name what you pass and make its sound: a bus goes *brmm*, a cow goes *moo*, a bridge goes… whatever they decide a bridge says.

10. A window story

Start a story with something you can see: “Once there was a yellow lorry…” They add the next bit, then you. It doesn’t have to make sense. It usually won’t.