You can make sentences without words!

What do I need?

- The word puzzles on this web page

What do I do?

1. Can you read this sentence?
   I C U.
   I C U isn't a sentence. I C U isn't even a word. But if you say each letter out loud, you'll say a simple sentence, "I see you." Some letters in English sound just like other words. When you say C it sounds just like the words "see" and "sea."

2. Try to figure out what these sentences mean by saying each letter or number out loud. The answers are below in the blue box.
   A B S E-Z 2 C.
   K-T S B-Z.
   I M N A C-T.

Can you make up your own sentences using only letters and numbers?
3 A rebus is a kind of puzzle that adds pictures to letters and numbers to make words and sentences. As Arnold Schwarzenegger once said:

4 Can you tell what these two kids are saying to each other? Make up your own rebus puzzle and see if your friends can figure it out.
Making rebuses was an important step in the history of writing. Back in the fourth millennium B.C., in a region called Mesopotamia, the ancient Sumerians developed a system of writing with pictographs -- they drew pictures to represent things that they wanted to keep records of.

But drawing pictures to represent things is a limited way of writing. You can write only about things that you can draw -- like an ox or a bird or a fish or a plow. You can't write someone's name or write about something that you can't draw -- feelings like love or hate or confusion.

To get around this limitation, the Sumerians started using pictures to make readers think of a sound, rather than an object. For instance, you can think of the picture on the left as an eye, or you can just think of the sound that you make when you say the letter I. In Sumerian writing, a picture of a hand, for example, came to stand for the Sumerian word su, which meant "hand," but also stood for the sound "su," which could be used to make other words. Using this rebus writing made it possible to write about things that couldn't easily be pictured.

Answers:

1. I see you.
2. A bee is easy to see. Katie is busy. I am in a city.
3. I'll be back.
4. Can you come to a birthday party? Why not? It will be a delight!