

Ways parents and teachers can invite richer talk



Ask questions with more than one possible answer.

Try, “What do you think is happening?”
“What makes you think that?” or “How are these two ideas connected?”



Wait for the child to think.

A pause can feel long to an adult. Give the learner time to form an answer before repeating the question or answering it yourself.



Build on the child's words.

If a child says, “The plant is droopy,” respond, “Yes, it is wilting because it has lost water.” This confirms the idea while adding useful language.



Return to important words.

Use a new word in more than one setting. Compare examples and nonexamples, act it out, draw it, or ask the child to use it in a new sentence.



Connect talk with text.

Ask the child to point to the part that supports an answer, retell an event in order, or explain how a word changes the meaning of the sentence.



Welcome every language the child knows.

Children can discuss an idea in the language that lets them think most fully, then connect that meaning with the English word or printed form being taught.