

Tips for Extending Learning in Conversations

Be a good listener, showing respect and appreciation for the child's verbal and nonverbal contributions.

Use interesting language and vocabulary. Avoid baby talk. Don't worry about simplifying your language. Talk in a normal, conversational manner.

Repeat and clarify what the child says. Avoid overtly correcting the child's pronunciation and grammar. Instead, simply rephrase or reword correctly what the child said.

"When Kimberly says, "telebison" her teacher says, "Oh, you watched television last night?" Kimberly smiles and says, "Yes".

Use open ended prompts to keep the conversation going.

"Tell me more about that..." ... "Really? What happened next?" ... "What else did you see?"

Talk about topics that are interesting to the child.

"You went to the pool?" That sounds like fun!" ... "Did your dog have her puppies yet?"

Encourage conversations between children. Let children know you value their conversations with each other.

"You two were having a long conversation about soccer during snack today!"

Invite a child to join your one-to-one conversation.

"Tommy, Phillip and I are talking about our favorite kinds of ice cream. I wonder if yours are the same or different from ours."

Introduce "talking partners" into group discussion.

"Talk about this with your talking partner. Make sure you hear each other's ideas."