



Encouraging Conversation

I Wonder Why . . . ?

Beginner: Narrate your daily tasks as you complete them.

[Tip]: “I’m putting on your socks. Next let’s put your shirt over your head and stick your arms through.”

Intermediate: Ask questions about things you do together and encourage answers to be given in full sentences.

[Tip]: Talk about what you are doing today, tomorrow, and what you did yesterday.

Experienced: Ask questions that encourage creative thinking and imagination in order to answer. Try to avoid “yes” and “no” answers!

[Tip]: Why do cats have whiskers? Why do we have to brush our teeth? Why is there a light in the fridge?

Why is this important? Encouraging participation in conversations can help grow vocabulary.

Reference: Song, S., Su, M., Kang, C., Liu, H., Zhang, Y., McBride-Chang, C., Tardif, T., LI, H., Liang, W., Zhang, Z., & Shu, H. (2014). Tracing children’s vocabulary development from preschool through the school-age years: An 8-year longitudinal study. *Developmental Science*, 18(1), 119-131. doi: 10.1111/desc.12190