

Oral Language Activities

Children need opportunities to learn and practice their language and communication skills. What children learn from listening and talking will help with their ability to read and write. The most important thing that you can do to build language is to talk with your child every day and read and sing together. Below you will find some other tips and ideas to help your child build and practice their language skills at home.

Tips for Families

- Everything you do, talk about what you see. Keep the conversation going by asking questions, making comments, and inviting children to think and share their ideas.
- Sing songs and recite rhymes and poems with your child.
- Point out and describe the meaning of words you and your child discover in books and other places, then model using the words in conversation.
- It is important for children to develop language skills in their home language. Continue to talk to and read to your child in their home language. When they have the opportunity to hear and speak English, young children will learn how to express thoughts and ideas in English.
- Simple board games can help children practice language and social skills. Talking about the game as you play encourages this. For example, “Whose turn is it?” “Can I have the dice?”

Activities and Resources

Walk and Talk Activity

Take a walk or sit on the porch with your child. Talk to your child about the things you see and hear. Asking “What” and “Why” questions can enhance your child’s language skills. Give your child time (at least 5-10 seconds) to come up with a response to your question.

Try these questions and/or come up with questions of your own:

- Where do you think those birds go at night time?
- If we’re really quiet, what do you hear?
- Why do you think some of the flowers are open and some are closed?

Books that Encourage Language Development

Read or listen to a book online with your child. Talk to your child about the illustrations and what’s happening in the story. Asking “What” and “Why” questions can enhance your child’s language skills. Give your child time (at least 5-10 seconds) to come up with a response to your question.

“Is Your Mama a Llama?” by Deborah Guarino [English](#) [Spanish](#)

“The Runaway Bunny” by Margaret Wise Brown [English](#) [Spanish](#)

“Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale” by John Steptoe [English](#) [Spanish](#)

“Where the Wild Things Are” by Maurice Sendak [English](#) [Spanish](#)