IES Institute of Education Sciences

FAMILY AND CAREGIVER ACTIVITY

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Supporting Young English Learners Through Asking and Answering Questions About an Informational Text

Regional Educational Laboratories West, Northwest, Northeast & Islands

From the National Center for Education Evaluation at IES

Families and caregivers, you play an important role in your child's language learning. Children can strengthen their language every day by asking and answering questions about a topic or an informational text. In this activity you will ask your child to talk about what they read, hear, or know about a topic or an informational text.

Keep in mind:

- You and your child can use your home language or English, whichever is strongest for you.
- Asking and answering questions in your home language will also help your child with English.
- Enjoy this time with your child. Learning together is fun!

Why ask and answer questions about a topic or informational text?

Asking and answering questions about a topic or informational text allows children to strengthen their language.

Let's get started!

Follow the steps below. ***See the back for informational text ideas and additional language supports.***

Learning Goal: Children will strengthen their oral language skills

Grades: Kindergarten–3rd grade

Materials: A topic or informational text that you would like to share with your child; paper and crayons, pencils, or markers



Step 1: Share or **read** an informational text with your child, such as animals, food, or something they're learning about or are interested in.



Step 2: Ask questions before, during, and after reading the informational text.

- Help your child "**stretch their language**." If your child answers your question with one word, ask them to add more to their answer. You can model this for them.
- **Ask surface- and deeper-level questions.** Surface-level questions help your child recall what they read in the text. Example: *What was the text about?* Deeper-level questions help your child to think more about the text and put ideas together. Example: *What is most interesting about this text? Why?*



Step 3: Encourage your child to **draw or write** about the topic.

This activity sheet helps families and caregivers carry out recommended practices described in the What Works Clearinghouse educator's practice guide, *Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School.* You can view the full guide here: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/19