



Encourage conversation and imaginative play. Play make-believe with your child by pretending to talk on a toy phone, feed a stuffed animal, or have an imaginary picnic or tea party in the living room. Build on the conversation by adding details that create more interesting story lines.

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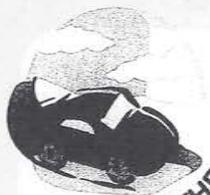
Use puppets to develop question-asking skills. Encourage your child to have puppets ask each other questions like *who?*, *what?*, *where?*, and *why?*

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Ask your child to talk about what's happening during a TV show. Name the characters and tell something about them. Describe their clothes. Talk about what they like to do.

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Encourage your child to talk on the phone to a relative or friend. This will help develop his ability to listen and answer questions.



Help your child answer and ask questions. Play a game of *20 Questions*. You think of an object, animal, or person and ask your child to ask you *yes* and *no* questions until she can guess correctly.

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Talk about your child's daily routine in preschool when you pick him up. Talk about snack time, circle time, nap time, and outdoor play. Ask him to tell you about his favorite activities and why they are favorite times.

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Encourage your child to answer questions and talk about his experience as you're driving home from a friend or relative's house.

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Visit a fire station and talk about all the objects, people, and activities that you see. Encourage your child to talk and ask the fire-fighters questions to learn more about the fire trucks and equipment.



Take advantage of naturally occurring interactions to help your child learn different language functions. Encourage your child to greet other children at the park, ask peers what they want to play with, and invite friends to play.

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Talk about community helpers. As you go about your errands, look for community helpers and discuss what they are doing. Talk about the mail carrier, police officer, crossing guard, sanitation worker, fire fighter, and ambulance driver.

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Help your child learn opposite words by talking about *clean/dirty*, *wet/dry*, *hot/cold*, *before/after*, *full/empty* as you are washing the car.

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Encourage your child to ask *what?* questions. Model a *what?* question for her. After she answers, ask her to ask you the same question. *What do you see? What is she doing? What is near the car? What's that? What do you want to do at the playground?*



Encourage your child to use three to four-word phrases. Talk about the macaroni and cheese you will make for dinner, and ask your child what ingredients are needed and the steps to follow. Elicit words and phrases such as, *We need macaroni.*

*Buy some milk. Let's get cheese. Put macaroni in the bowl. Pour milk on macaroni.*

*Put cheese on top.*

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Start a conversation with your child about healthy food. Ask *what if?* questions (*What would happen if you ate candy bars all day?*) Ask other questions (*Are vegetables healthy? What are some healthy foods? Are cookies healthy?*)

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Talk about different ways we prepare food (*bake, broil, peel, mash, squeeze, chop*). Talk about how you will prepare the food for dinner.

Participating in Conversations  
3 - 4 years

4 - 5 years