

## STRIVE FOR 5

Your child will find conversations easier when you balance questions and comments. Comments invite your child to respond with a comment or question of their own.

- Talk about and explain what you are doing
- Talk about what you notice your child doing
- Talk about what you see or have observed

Using a simple trick like 'Strive for 5' can help. When you pause to comment or question you should strive for 5 conversational turns. e.g. You may comment (1) and a child may relate this to something they have experienced; (2) you may ask a question (3) and the child may answer (4) and you may acknowledge how they felt (5).

## BOOKS & MEDIA

- Stop and talk about the show or book as you engage in it together.
- Ask questions and make comments about what you notice.
- Make connections about observations and/or story with your child's or family experiences e.g. Do you remember when we went to the beach and found a crab?
- Listen to your child's comments and questions and respond to what they say.
- Associate feelings with what you are reading or watching e.g. How did that make you feel? When have you felt that same way?

## DAILY ACTIVITIES

- Shops: Talking about shopping items is a great conversation starter. Discussions around nutrition, value, costs and measurement are great ways to expand knowledge and apply skills learnt at school in real life situations.
- Walks: Going for walks does not only promote a healthier lifestyle. It is a great communication avenue for the "reluctant talkers".
- Car Drives: Turn the radio down or up! Discuss the conversations you hear or talk about the interesting lyrics of a song.
- Places of Interest: Take you kids to the Museum, Art Gallery, beaches, sporting events, National Parks etc.



LEARNING @ HOME

# CONVERSATIONS

## IMPORTANCE OF TALK & DISCUSSION

Conversation helps children express their thoughts, get what they need, resolve conflicts, ask for help, and learn from adults and from one another.

Having conversations with your child will help their language grow in readiness for learning to read and write.

## QUESTIONS

Questions will encourage your child to think and give opinions.

Ask Open-Ended Questions and avoid questions that only require a YES or NO response.

"What do you think will happen if...?"

"I wonder why that happened?"

"Why do you think that?"

- Challenge their thinking by asking them to justify their opinions.
- Grab a jar and load it with questions to get a conversation going.

**Two monologues do not make a dialogue.**

Jeff Daly



LEARNING @ HOME

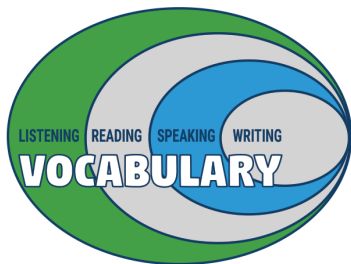
# BOOSTING VOCABULARY

POWER OF WORDS

Adult role models who engage students in meaningful talk, using rich vocabulary are key to a child's language development and overall learning.

**"A richer vocabulary does not just mean that we know more words, but that we have more complex and exact ways of talking (and thinking) about the world."**

*Vocabulary Development, S. Stahl, 1999, pg 1*



**SCRABBLE** - A classic game for learning language, use Scrabble to practice spelling and challenge your child's vocabulary.

**GUESS WHO & Pictionary** - Perfect games to develop descriptive vocabulary.

**Categories** - This is a great way for children to practise thinking under pressure and within the constraints of categories.

**Jenga** - Great for speaking practise! Tape a question to each block for children to answer.

**Celebrity Head** - Choose any word or category! Use descriptive and specific vocabulary to describe the word.

**Crossword Puzzles** - An oldie but a goodie!

Engage your child in conversations every day. If possible, include new and interesting words in your conversation.

Read to your child each day. When the book contains a new or interesting word, pause and define the word for your child. After you're done reading, engage your child in a conversation about the book.

Help build word knowledge by classifying and grouping objects or pictures while naming them.

Help build your child's understanding of language by playing verbal games and telling jokes and stories.

Encourage your child to read on his own. The more children read, the more words they encounter and learn.

## READING

There is no magical formula for learning to read. Children learn in their own time according to their own pace. There is no critical age when all children should have mastered reading. When children are learning to walk and talk, we accept different levels of progress – it is the same with learning to read and write.

**Read books together and discuss**

**Read EVERYDAY!**

**Cook or bake with a recipe**

**Get the library habit**

**Read aloud**

**Read yourself.**

**Your actions really do speak louder than your words.**

**When your kids see you reading the newspaper or curling up with a book, they will want to follow your example.**

**Give your child a list of things to find in the newspaper. Here are some ideas:**

- A real estate listing for a home with a pool
- A classified ad for a piece of antique furniture
- A picture of an athlete
- The temperature in the city where a family member lives
- Three words that begin with "w"
- A movie that is playing at a nearby theatre

**"Children are made readers in the laps of their parents."**

*Emilie Buchward*



# WRITING

- .....
- Provide many opportunities such as writing the shopping list, sending letters and cards to friends and relations, writing emails, keeping a diary, publishing personal stories, labelling photos in the family album, and leaving notes.
  - Locating writing apps such as Book Creator. Writing should be relevant and meaningful rather than writing for the sake of writing.
  - Give children opportunities to read their stories aloud (while you sit back and listen). **Listen with a focus on the message they express.** Comment on what they have done well, for example: 'I enjoyed how you used interesting words such as...' 'The character you created seems so real. I can imagine how he looks.' **Leave comments about spelling, punctuation, and grammar to another time – they are important if and when it is to be published.**
  - Draw children's attention to how writing is presented, for example, on brochures, billboards, books, and electronic media – these are models of writing for real purposes.
  - Leave notes for each other, write poems for your children, and send messages in lunch containers.
  - Play writing games, for example, one person writes the beginning, another the middle and the other the end of a family story. **Write together.**
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Look for words  
in the  
environment.

Play word  
games

Write books  
together!

**"You can make anything by writing".**

C.S Lewis