

Putting Words Together: 24-36 months

Combining 3 and 4 words together helps your child:

- Better explain things he sees or has done
- Increase his conversation skills
- Tell you about activities he has done during the day

Ideas to try with your child:

- After you have done a fun activity such as swimming or building a snowman, help your child tell you about what happened: “I went swimming,” “I build a snowman.” (Grammar does not have to be correct at this age. Combining words together is the goal.)
- Ask your child about specific parts of his day: “Tell me what you did during art time at child care,” or “Tell me where you and grandma went shopping.”
- When reading books, help him combine words. For example, if he says “truck” you say: “The big truck is fast.” If he says “eating” you say: “The princess is eating.” Prompt your child to repeat your phrase.
- Use books like the *Napping House* by Audrey Wood or *Rosie’s Walk* by Pat Hutchins for descriptive words and actions.

If your child is struggling:

- Extend your child’s language. If your child says “jump” you say “I jump.” Prompt him to repeat what you have said.
- Label actions and nouns together: (boy eating, girl reading, baby crying).
- Look at patterned books such as *Go Dog Go* by PD Eastman or *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* by Bill Martin to help your child learn to combine words.
- Help your child learn nursery rhymes and songs such as “Humpty Dumpty” or “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.”

Going further:

- Begin to teach your child to say complete sentences. When he says “me jump” have him repeat, “I am jumping.”
- Help your child combine words together by sequencing activities such as brushing his teeth (“I get the toothbrush; I put water on it; I brush.”) You say the phrases and have your child repeat, later have your child tell you in his own words.

The WA State Department of Early Learning and the Richland School District believes that parents, families, and caregivers are young children’s best teachers. This resource guide, part of *Strong Foundations for School: Resource Guides for Parents of Young Children*, highlights a key developmental skill for **children ages 24-36 months** that parents can help improve at home.



Adapted from *WA State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, 2012*: “Use three- or four-word sentences with a noun and verb” *Communicating, Ages-16-36 months*, pg. 48