

Building Vocabulary - Talking With Your Child: Ages 4-5

Talking often with your child will help her to:

- Learn to communicate with others
- Develop a large vocabulary to improve reading
- Learn about people and the world
- Learn the patterns of her native language

Ideas to try with your child:

- Speak in full sentences about what your child is doing, seeing or hearing. Use large words along with actions. Ask your child questions and respond thoughtfully.
- Sing songs or say nursery rhymes together using books, poems, or online children's videos.
- Collect objects together and talk about how they are the same and different colors, shapes, sizes and textures. Compare them using words like *rounder* or *shorter*.
- Play word games like, "I Spy With My Little Eye" (Example: I spy with my little eye something that is small and rectangular and used to text Grandma. *A cell phone.*)

If your child is struggling:

- Remember your child learns greatly by listening to your rich vocabulary as you talk together.
- Ask your child to share thoughts and feelings with you by asking questions that cannot be answered with "yes" or "no", such as, "What would happen if..." or "How did it feel when..."

Going further:

- Have your child dictate a story to you. Read it together.
- Make songs or rhymes more fun by putting your child's name into them and changing them slightly. (Example: "Jackson Johnson had a zoo, E-I-E-I-O. And in his zoo he had some bears, E-I-E-I-O. With a grrrr, grrrr, here and a grrrr, grrrr there...")

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 4-5** that parents can help improve at home.



Adapted from *WA State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, 2012*: "Use rich vocabulary, describe what you are or the child is doing, seeing, hearing." Learning About My World (Knowledge), Ages 4-5, pg. 78