

5 Teacher Talk Strategies

- **Extended conversations** – teacher directed conversations that last for at least two to five turn exchanges between teacher and child. This strategy is a very effective language builder because they provide input to the child and the opportunity for prolonged practice using oral language.
- **Cognitively challenging conversations** – conversations between adult and child that scaffold a child’s current knowledge for the purpose of elevating his language to the next level. Cognitively challenging conversations must be aligned with the child’s developmental needs and can include involving them in explanations, personal narrative, pretend, analysis, and the sharing of opinions and ideas.
- **Conversations with contextualized and decontextualized language** – conversations between adult and child that use situational and temporal vocabulary to allow children to explore new words and new ideas for possibilities. These conversations allow adults to share their own speculations as they introduce and model new words and ideas.
- **Conversations that include rare words** – conversations between adults and children that introduce unfamiliar and “juicy” vocabulary to children. This is a key way to support definitional vocabulary, one of the key components for reading success. Rare words enrich the language environment by helping children explore the meanings of the words, describing their meaning, letting the child experiment with the meaning through language play, and by using contextual clues to glean meaning.
- **Conversations that include pretend language** – the language of children as they move from reality to the realm of imagination in their play. Allows children to think beyond the “here and now” and to imagine and consider new possibilities and fantasies.

4 Components of Family Literacy

- Interactive activities between parents and their children
- Parents as the primary teacher for their children
- Parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency and financial literacy.
- Age-appropriate education