

Birth to  
Five

## CONVERSATION PRACTICE VIGNETTES— INFANTS AND TODDLERS

**Directions:** Work in small groups to practice engaging in “thick” conversations. Have one group member volunteer to take the perspective of the teacher while other members take the perspective of either infants or toddlers. Any group member without a designated role will act as an observer. If groups are doing multiple vignettes, rotate the roles of teacher and children. Based on assigned vignettes, role-play a “thick” extended conversation and then respond to the discussion questions below.

### **Vignette 1: One teacher with one infant**

The teacher is quietly sitting in a rocking chair with an infant in her lap. Across their laps, a large boardbook about what typically happens during a baby’s day is open and the teacher is reading the book aloud. The infant grabs at a page and attempts to turn it.

- How can the teacher respond to the child and begin a “thick” conversation?
- How could the teacher use the book to connect to the child’s interests and/or experiences?

### **Vignette 2: One teacher with two toddlers**

It is outdoor time and the class is enjoying a sunny spring morning on the outdoor play space. Two children are looking very intently on the ground where the edge of the pavement meets up with the damp grass. A teacher approaches the children. One child, pointing to the line of ants traveling across the edge of the pavement, exclaims, “Bugs!”

- How can the teacher respond to encourage a “thick,” extended conversation with both children?
- How can the teacher use the child’s observation as a teachable moment?

### **Vignette 3: One teacher and three infants**

Three infants are sitting on the floor along with a teacher. Two of the children are engaged in poking and pushing toys. The teacher is commenting on their actions and asking questions. The infant who is further away and has been watching the others explore the toys reaches for a nearby cord and pulls one of the toys toward her.

- What thinking skill does the infant use to get the toy near her?
- How can the teacher make use of this thinking skill to develop a “thick” conversation?
- How can the teacher include all of the children in the conversation?

### **Vignette 4: One teacher and four toddlers**

The teacher is at a table with four children wearing smocks. As the children dip sponge shapes into trays of water, one child glances at the window, points at the falling snow, and yells out “Look—it snow!” All the children run to the window for a closer look.

- How can the teacher begin a “thick” conversation with this group of children?
- How can the teacher build on the children’s excitement, while bringing the group back to water play?
- How might the teacher tie the snow into water-related experiences?



For more information, contact us at: [NCQTL@UW.EDU](mailto:NCQTL@UW.EDU) or 877-731-0764

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