

Birth to Five

This guide offers suggestions for presenting ***Language Modeling and Conversations: Asking Questions, Birth to Five***. This in-service suite is intended for a birth to five, center-based audience. It includes a PowerPoint presentation and supporting materials. Please use and adapt as needed.

Handouts for *Tips for Teachers*, *Tools for Teachers*, *Helpful Resources*, and the learning activities include versions with information that is specific to infants and toddlers.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- PowerPoint presentation (23 slides)
- Optional slide: *Say HELLO*
- Projector and audio equipment
- Learning Activities:
 - » *Learning through Meaningful Questions*
 - » *Planning Questions that Extend Conversation—Infants and Toddlers*
 - » *Planning Questions that Extend Conversation—Preschoolers*
 - » *Developing an Action Plan*
- Tips for Teachers
- Tools for Teachers
- Tools for Supervisors
- Helpful Resources
- Flip chart or similar large paper, and markers for writing participant ideas

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- This presentation focuses specifically on how to use questions to extend conversations with children, including young infants and toddlers.
- This is one in a series of in-service suites called *Language Modeling and Conversations*.
- The presentation includes examples, including video clips, of different types of questions that help children access higher-level thinking skills.
- Learning activities offer participants opportunities to discuss and practice asking different types of questions, and plan how they will apply the strategies in their own classrooms.
- This presentation includes interactive language strategies from *Language is the Key*. Presenters who have a copy of this video-based program may consider including it as part of the presentation.
- HELLO is an overarching framework that links and organizes the five in-service suites on *Language Modeling and Conversations*. HELLO is described in the optional slide at the end of this document, as well as in the *Tools for Teachers* and *Tools for Supervisors* handouts. These three documents appear in each of the five in-service suites.

The Importance of Home Language

Because language and culture are closely related, one of the primary tasks for young children is to learn their home language(s). This is an important concept to share during training. For more specific information on promoting conversations that are culturally and linguistically responsive, refer to these resources:

Revisiting and Updating the Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs Serving Children Birth to Five

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/Dual%20Language%20Learners/pdm/responsiveness/revisiting.htm>

News You Can Use: Foundations of School Readiness: Language and Literacy

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/fcp/docs/dll-strategies.pdf>

Strategies for Supporting All Dual Language Learners, from the National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/fcp/docs/dll-strategies.pdf>



SLIDE 1: ASKING QUESTIONS, BIRTH TO FIVE

Introductions:

- Begin the training by giving participants background information about yourself.
- Provide an opportunity for participants to introduce themselves (where they are working, their current role, etc.).
- Ask participants to share a funny question asked by a child.

Introduce the topic.

Asking Questions, Birth to Five focuses on encouraging children's higher-level thinking skills by using meaningful questions to engage them in longer and better-quality conversations.

Points to highlight:

- Engaging children in conversations, including young infants and toddlers, fosters their language, cognitive, and social development.
- These benefits are greatly impacted by the quality of what is said in the conversation.
- A child's ability to ask questions (including funny ones) comes from sharing in many conversations, starting from infancy, where they are asked questions and given opportunities to reply.
- For infants and toddlers, keep in mind that they can answer questions in many ways. They respond with gestures and other body movements, facial expressions, sounds, words, phrases, and sentences. Adults can also verbalize answers for children who are not yet talking.



SLIDE 2: NCQTL'S FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE EVERYDAY PRACTICE

Introduce NCQTL.

The four components of the House Framework support school readiness for all children:

- The foundation represents effective and engaging interactions and environments.
- The pillars represent research-based curricula and teaching practices and ongoing child assessment.
- The roof represents highly individualized teaching and learning.
- All components interact with each other and are essential for effective practices.

This in-service suite is part of the foundation of the House. Asking Questions extends conversations and supports engaging interactions between children and adults.



LEARNING ACTIVITY: LEARNING THROUGH MEANINGFUL QUESTIONS

In this activity, participants will find a partner in the room that they do not already know and take turns interviewing each other.

HANDOUT


Distribute the *Learning through Meaningful Questions* learning activity and review the directions.

DISCUSSION

Bring the group back together. Using the wrap-up questions, ask volunteers to share their insights from this activity.



OBJECTIVES



- To understand how using questions with very young children lays a foundation for language learning and rich language experiences
- To identify the qualities of questions that extend conversations
- To learn about types of questions that strengthen conversations

EMPHASIZE



When very young children are engaged in conversations, asked questions, and given time to respond, they gain a foundation for language learning and rich language experiences.

**SLIDE 3:
OBJECTIVES**

- To understand how using questions with very young children lays a foundation for language learning and rich language experiences
- To identify the qualities of questions that extend, rather than limit, conversations
- To learn about specific types of questions that strengthen conversations and promote higher level thinking

OPTIONAL SLIDE



The optional slide, *Say HELLO*, provides a visual overview that represents the five in-service suites on *Language Modeling and Conversations*. Show this slide if you plan to present all five of these in-service suites. Presenter notes for the optional slide are provided at the end of this document.

WHAT ARE EXTENDED CONVERSATIONS?



Extended conversations are **rich, back-and-forth exchanges** that help children develop more complex language and thinking skills.

Adults take a more active role with infants and toddlers.

**SLIDE 4:
WHAT ARE EXTENDED CONVERSATIONS?**

Extended conversations are rich back-and-forth exchanges that help children develop more complex language, thinking skills, and social skills.

For infants and toddlers, adults take on a more active role: helping children take multiple turns, continuing the conversation, and ensuring that children have frequent opportunities to interact.

- **Rich exchanges:** A conversation where the adult uses a varied vocabulary and complex sentence forms, and the infant or toddler responds through facial expressions, gestures, body language, vocalizations, and increasingly complex words, phrases, and sentences

For preschool children, extended conversations are rich back-and-forth exchanges that help them develop more complex language and thinking skills.

- **Rich exchanges:** A conversation that includes a varied vocabulary and complex sentence forms

For all children, **back-and-forth-exchanges** are conversations with equal communication, verbal or non-verbal, between the child and adult (taking turns). The adult uses active listening and waits for the child to respond before continuing.



ASKING QUESTIONS

Asking children meaningful questions helps them:

- Develop communication and language skills.
- Build vocabulary.
- Focus on their own thinking and actions.
- Extend conversations.



SLIDE 5: ASKING QUESTIONS

One way to extend conversations with children is to ask them meaningful questions. Questions provide opportunities for children, including infants and toddlers, to:

- Develop communication and language skills.
- Build vocabulary.
- Begin to focus on their own thinking and actions.
- Extend conversations (engage in back-and-forth exchanges and interactions with an adult).



Length of video: Approximately 1 minute and 9 seconds

SLIDE 6: VIDEO: PLAYING WITH FLOAM CONVERSATION—TODDLERS

Introduce the video.

This video shows a teacher extending a conversation with a toddler by asking questions. Encourage participants to note how the teacher uses questions in this example.

VIDEO 

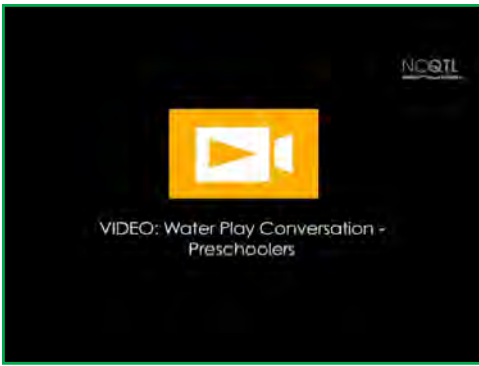
DISCUSSION 

Ask participants to share how the teacher uses questions to extend the conversation.

NOTE 

The video can be paused after each example for discussion.





Length of video: Approximately 1 minute and 40 seconds

SLIDE 7: VIDEO: WATER PLAY CONVERSATION— PRESCHOOLERS

Introduce the video.

This video shows a teacher asking preschool children questions and engaging them in extended conversations. Encourage participants to note how the teacher uses questions in this example.

VIDEO 

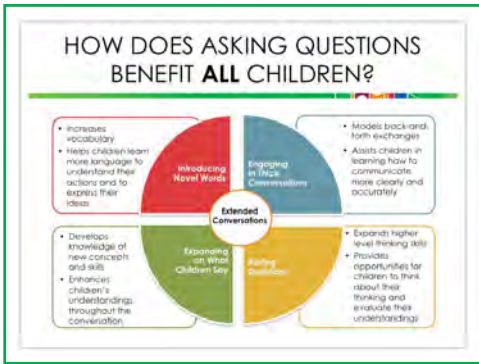
DISCUSSION 

Ask participants to share how the teacher uses questions to extend the conversation.

NOTE 

The video can be paused after each example for discussion.





SLIDE 8: HOW DOES ASKING QUESTIONS BENEFIT ALL CHILDREN?

Asking questions is one component of extended conversations. Extended conversations benefit children's:

- Language development.
- Cognitive development.
- Social and emotional development.

For all children, extended conversations:

- **Provide models** of appropriate conversation skills.
- **Support** higher-level thinking through meaningful questioning.
- **Expand** their communications and language by including new concepts and skills.
- **Increase** their receptive and expressive vocabularies by introducing new words and concepts.

The graphic on this slide illustrates the four components of extended conversations:

- Engaging in thick conversations
- Asking questions
- Expanding on what children say
- Introducing novel words

This presentation focuses on the second component, **asking children meaningful questions**.

For infants and toddlers, meaningful questions provide opportunities for them to:

- Begin to develop higher-level thinking skills.
- Begin to learn how to think about their thinking (metacognition).
- Learn how to evaluate their feelings (for example, by asking a young child, "Are you sad? Are you mad?").

For preschool children, meaningful questions provide opportunities for them to:

- Activate higher-level thinking skills.
- Think about their thinking.
- Evaluate what they understand.

NOTE

Higher-level thinking goes beyond restating facts. It includes developing connections between facts, making inferences and drawing conclusions, predicting, putting facts together in novel ways, and finding solutions to problems.

EMPHASIZE

For infants and toddlers, being asked meaningful questions helps them gain a foundation for higher-level thinking skills. Without these foundational skills, later learning may be compromised.



HOW DOES ASKING QUESTIONS BENEFIT TEACHERS?



- Provides a window into children's perspectives
- Informs teachers of children's thinking processes
- Assists with curriculum planning and assessment

SLIDE 9: HOW DOES ASKING QUESTIONS BENEFIT TEACHERS?

Asking questions:

- Provides a window into children's perspectives. As teachers observe and listen to children's responses, they gain insight into how children see and experience their world.
- Informs teachers of children's thinking processes. As teachers pose questions, observe, and actively listen to children's responses, they learn how children reason and think. Very young children's nonverbal and verbal responses provide information about their developing thinking and reasoning skills.
- Helps teachers plan curriculum and assessment. As teachers ask questions and gain insight into how children are thinking, they can use this information to individualize curriculum and plan ongoing assessment.

Additionally, meaningful questions provide opportunities for adults and children to develop positive, nurturing relationships. Strong relationships are necessary for all later learning.

QUESTIONS THAT CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

- Build on children's interests and excitement
- Request information that teachers do not already know
- Match children's language abilities
- Stimulate creative thinking
- Show a teacher's interest



SLIDE 10: QUESTIONS THAT CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

We want to use questions to extend and strengthen our conversations with children.

Questions that strengthen conversations:

- Build on children's interests and excitement.
- Request information teachers do not already know.
- Match children's language abilities.
- Stimulate creative thinking.
- Show a teacher's genuine interest in the topic.

Questions with these qualities engage children in thinking creatively and in solving problems.



WHAT ARE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR NONVERBAL CHILDREN?

- Do not have preset responses
- Adult can summarize the child's response
- Build thinking skills



SLIDE 11: WHAT ARE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR NONVERBAL CHILDREN?

Questions that encourage and help develop higher-level thinking are referred to as open-ended. When we talk with verbal children, open-ended questions can encourage multiple word responses and elaboration. They can also be used effectively with infants, and with toddlers who are not yet talking. Children who cannot yet talk can gesture, coo, or babble a response and keep the conversation going.

With nonverbal children, open-ended questions:

- Are questions that do not have a preset response.
 - » Children are free to respond through gestures, facial expressions, body movements, and sounds.
 - » The teacher does not know how the child will respond.
- Invite a response that adults can then interpret and verbalize
 - » Children can respond with facial expressions, gestures, cooing, and babbling.
 - » Teachers can put the children's nonverbal responses into words.
- Build thinking skills
 - » Children hear the sounds of language, begin to learn words and their meanings, and begin to make connections.

EMPHASIZE *

Open-ended questions provide children with opportunities to communicate and express themselves.



WHAT ARE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR VERBAL CHILDREN?

- Questions with many answers
- Require more than a one-word response
- Allow children to communicate and express their ideas, feelings, and opinions



SLIDE 12: WHAT ARE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR VERBAL CHILDREN?

With verbal children, open-ended questions:

- Are questions with many answers.
 - » Children do not have to find a single “correct” answer.
 - » The answer is not already known by the teacher.
 - » Questions go beyond simple memory tasks and restating facts.
 - » Children learn to analyze facts, make connections, and develop a deeper understanding of concepts.
- Require more than a one-word response.
 - » Children are more likely to respond using longer phrases and simple sentences.
 - » Children practice using vocabulary and sentence structure.
- Are questions that allow children to communicate their ideas, feelings, and opinions.
 - » Children can express their own original thoughts and feelings.
 - » Children can imagine a variety of possibilities.

Additionally, adult-child relationships are strengthened as adults actively observe and listen to children’s responses and show respect for children’s thoughts and ideas.



WHAT ARE CLOSE-ENDED QUESTIONS?

- Encourage a nonverbal or short response
- Often have a "correct" answer
- Limit verbal children's opportunities to express themselves and think

SLIDE 13: WHAT ARE CLOSE-ENDED QUESTIONS?

Close-ended questions:

- Typically encourage a response that is a nonverbal gesture, one word, yes or no, or a short phrase.
- Often have only one correct answer.
- Limit verbal children's opportunities to express themselves and think.

Close-ended questions, like open-ended questions, have a purpose in the classroom. They use simpler language and can help the adult extend a conversation with a young child.

They are appropriate to use with infants and with toddlers who are not yet talking. For example, when a baby is crying, an adult might ask, "Are you hungry? Are you tired? What do you need? How can I help you?" This type of monologue helps the adult be responsive to what a child may feel, need, and think. It also helps very young children feel connected to adults.


Close-ended questions can be used appropriately with verbal children, but with intention and caution. Because they typically invite a simple answer or gesture, close-ended questions do not encourage extended conversations. In fact, they can bring a conversation to a halt. Try asking a child, "Are you having fun?" Once the child responds, the conversation is over.

Teachers, therefore, need to be thoughtful in their use of close-ended questions and should match their use to the developmental stage of each child. One helpful strategy is to turn close-ended questions into a choice: Would you rather have milk or water to drink? This type of question extends non-verbal children's thinking and allows verbal children to expound on their choice.



QUESTIONS THAT STOP CONVERSATION

- Intended to test what a child knows
- Rhetorical, no response is needed
- Too simple or complex
- Close-ended examples:
 - What is this called?
 - Are you having fun?
 - Did you play in the block area?
 - That's a large tree, isn't it?
 - How are the balls the same as the oranges?



SLIDE 14: QUESTIONS THAT STOP CONVERSATION

Some questions teachers ask may actually stop conversation.

Questions that stop conversation:

- Are intended to test what a child knows.
- Do not require a response.
- Are too complex or too simple.

Conversation stoppers are often close-ended questions:

- They encourage a response of one-word, a short phrase, or a nod of the head.
- They have only one correct answer.
 - » A child who does not know the one correct answer may quit responding after a few failed attempts.
 - » A child who always knows the correct answer may not get enough practice in expressing ideas and thinking more creatively.
- While close-ended questions can assist a teacher in determining what a child already knows (for example, asking a child, “What color is the ball?” or “What letter is this?”) they do not encourage children to use more words to communicate or elaborate their ideas and thinking.
- Additionally, close-ended questions have the potential to project adult assumptions onto the situation.

Examples of close-ended questions that provide information but also stop conversation with verbal children are:

“What is this called?”

“What color is it?”

“Are you having fun?”

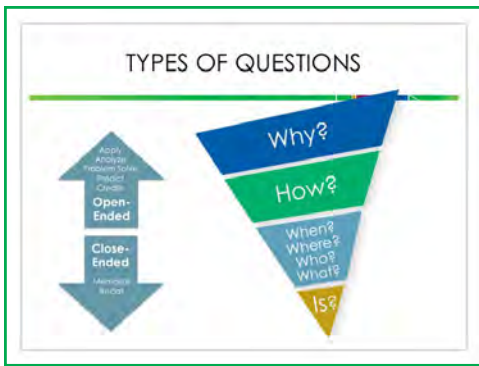
“Did you play with blocks today?”

When asking these types of questions, teachers limit opportunities for children to communicate and to use language to explain activities and ideas that are interesting to them.

NOTE

These questions aren't necessarily inappropriate; different types of questions can serve different purposes.





SLIDE 15: TYPES OF QUESTIONS

The inverted pyramid graphic displays examples of questions that can start conversations.

Open-ended questions:

- Typically begin with how and why.
- Require children use higher-level thinking skills to formulate a response.
- Require children to explain their actions, feelings, or thoughts
- Help children clarify their ideas and communicate what they understand.
- Provide children with opportunities to be creative and imagine a variety of possibilities in their responses.
- Allow children to reflect on their own thinking (metacognition).
- Allow children to make predictions, problem-solve, elaborate, think creatively, and consider why things happen.

Close-ended questions:

- Typically begin with is, what, who, where, and when.
- Provide children with the opportunity to share specific knowledge that they have.
- Help children recall facts and information they have memorized.
- Engage children in basic thinking processes, such as recalling simple facts.
- Typically require children to provide specific responses about what they know rather than about what they think.

NOTE

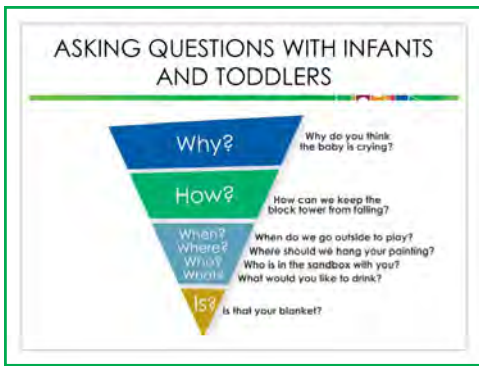
Emphasize that one type of question is not necessarily better than another type of question. It's important for teachers to match the type of question to the child's level of development.

- Each type of question serves a different purpose.
- Open-ended questions provide more opportunities for teachers and children to engage in multiple back-and-forth exchanges. Children's responses provide information about their feelings, ideas, and interests.

The questions that we ask children provide opportunities for them to engage in various types of thinking.

- Yes/no, close-ended questions are easier to answer than open-ended questions.
- Who, what, where, and when questions—which can be both close-ended and open-ended—are generally easy to answer as well.
- How and why questions—which are always open-ended—require reflection and higher level thinking.





SLIDE 16: ASKING QUESTIONS WITH INFANTS AND TODDLERS

Teachers need to be familiar with different types of questions and choose the most appropriate question for the child and the situation.

Here are examples of different types of questions adults might ask infants and toddlers.

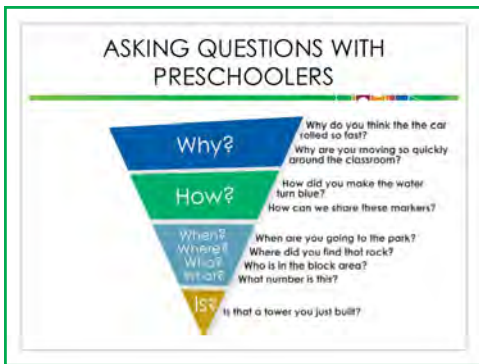
- Why** Why do you think the baby is crying?
- How** How can we keep the block tower from falling?
- When** When do we go outside to play?
- Where** Where should we hang your painting?
- Who** Who is in the sandbox with you?
- What** What would you like to drink?
- Is** Is that your blanket?

DISCUSSION

Ask participants to share examples of questions they use with infants and toddlers.

- Do they tend to use more close- or open-ended questions or a mix of both?
- Does their choice of question depend on the child's age and stage of development?
- Do they use different types of questions with talkers and non-talkers?





SLIDE 17: ASKING QUESTIONS WITH PRESCHOOLERS

Remember to match a question to a child's ability to verbalize a response.

Here are examples of different types of questions adults might ask preschoolers.

- Why** Why do you think the car rolled so fast?
Why are you moving so quickly around the classroom?
- How** How did you make the water turn blue?
How can we share these markers?
- When** When are you going to the park?
- Where** Where did you find that rock?
- Who** Who is in the block area?
- What** What number is this?
- Is** Is that a tower you just built?

DISCUSSION

Ask participants to share examples of questions they use with preschoolers.

- Do they tend to use more close- or open-ended questions or a mix of both?
- How do they decide what types of questions to ask?
- Do they use different types of questions with different children (a child whose home language(s) is not English, a child who has a language delay)?





LEARNING ACTIVITY:

PLANNING QUESTIONS THAT EXTEND CONVERSATION

In this learning activity, participants work individually or with a partner to modify questions in order to stimulate extended conversations with children. In formulating questions, participants should indicate whether they are modifying questions for young infants, older infants, toddlers, or preschoolers.

HANDOUT

Distribute either the *Planning Questions that Extend Conversation—Infants and Toddlers*, or the preschool version, *Planning Questions that Extend Conversation—Preschoolers* to each participant according to the ages of the children they work with.

Review the directions and give participants time to discuss the questions.

DISCUSSION

- Ask for volunteers to share example questions.
- Discuss with the large group how each example might stimulate an extended conversation.
- Hear an example from each of the six questions.

ASKING MEANINGFUL QUESTIONS

Ask children what they are doing.

- What do you see, feel, hear?
- What are you working on?

Ask children to connect learning to their own lives.

- Where have we seen this before?
- What does this remind you of?

Ask children to make predictions.

- What do you think will happen next?

Ask children to explain or solve a problem.

- Why do you think the block tower fell down?
- How can we bring all of these balls outside?

SLIDE 18: ASKING MEANINGFUL QUESTIONS

For questions to be successful in extending conversation, the questions need to be meaningful and interesting to children.

For children of any age:

Ask children what they are doing.

- Children become more aware of their actions when they communicate what they are engaged in.

Ask children to connect learning to their own lives.

- These connections help children think beyond the classroom context and apply their learning to another environment.

For older infants, toddlers, and preschoolers:

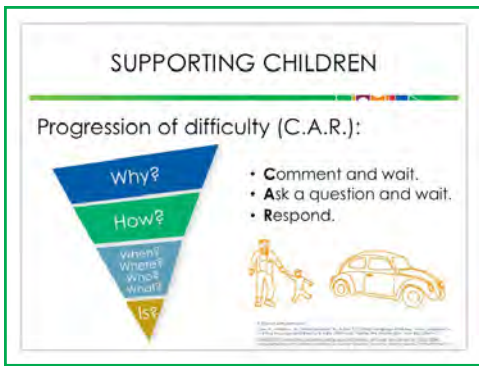
Ask children to make predictions.

- These questions promote higher-level thinking, and encourage children to think beyond the present and anticipate what might happen next.

Ask children to explain something or solve a problem (why and how questions).

- Asking children why and how questions gives them opportunities to communicate their thinking process and share their opinions.





SLIDE 19: SUPPORTING CHILDREN

It takes time for children to learn how to understand and respond to different types of questions. To review:

- Close-ended yes or no questions, which sometimes start with “is,” are the easiest for young children to respond to.
- Next are questions that ask children what, who, where, and when.
- How and why questions are more difficult for children to answer. (While challenging, these questions lead to some of the greatest cognitive benefits by accessing higher level thinking skills.)

NOTE

Young children are more successful in giving appropriate answers (in gestures, facial expressions, vocalizations, or words) to questions that refer to people, objects, and events in their immediate environment.

Tips for how to support children in conversations (scaffolding):

- Assess the difficulty of questions for each child, considering the child’s age and language development.
- If a child becomes frustrated because a question is too complex, repair the communication breakdown by rephrasing, using different words, and simplifying the question.
- Be patient. Match children’s pace. Watch for, or listen intently, to children’s responses. Pausing after asking a question gives children time to process (and think) before responding.
- When asking young infants questions, use your body language, tone, and facial expressions to animate the question. Slow down your speech so that the infant can follow you.
- Remember the three steps from *Language is the Key*: **C.A.R.**
 - » **C**omment on what the child is doing or saying and wait.
 - » **A**sk a question that invites the child to take another turn in the conversation and wait.
 - » **R**espond by adding a little more.

It’s essential to carefully match levels of language and cognitive complexity of questions to each child. Communication may break down when it is too difficult for the child to respond.

NOTE

Questions are a great strategy for extending a conversation, but they’re not the only strategy.

DISCUSSION

Encourage participants to discuss how they might use different strategies to extend a conversation with a child whose home language(s) is not English.

EMPHASIZE

Carefully match language and cognitive complexity of questions to individual children.





Length of video: Approximately 3 minutes and 55 seconds

SLIDE 20: VIDEO: QUESTIONS TO EXTEND CONVERSATIONS WITH INFANTS AND TODDLERS

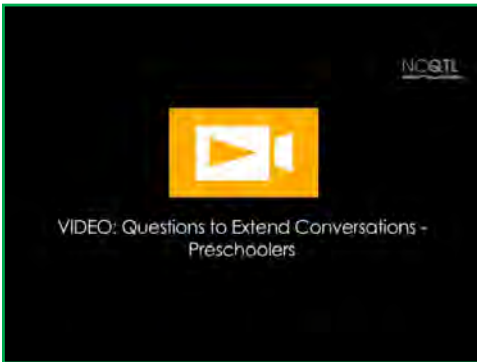
Introduce the video.

This video provides examples of teachers posing meaningful questions to infants and toddlers. Have participants take note of the content and different kinds of questions that extend the conversation.

VIDEO 

DISCUSSION 

Ask participants to share their thoughts on the type and content of questions the teachers asked.



Length of video: Approximately 1 minute and 53 seconds

SLIDE 21: VIDEO: QUESTIONS TO EXTEND CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESCHOOLERS

Introduce the video.

This video provides many examples of teachers posing meaningful questions to children. Have participants take note of the variety of questions that elicit meaningful conversations between teachers and children.

VIDEO 

DISCUSSION 

Ask participants to share their thoughts on the type and content of questions the teachers asked.



SUMMARY

- Use questions to extend conversations.
- Focus questions on children's interests.
- Match language level and cognitive complexity of questions to each child.
- Ask questions that involve thinking skills:
 - Explain or solve a problem
 - Connect learning to children's lives
 - Make predictions
- Rephrase and simplify if a question is too hard.

SLIDE 22: SUMMARY

Now it's your turn to take what you have learned back to your classroom.

- Use questions to extend conversations.
- Focus questions on children's interests.
- Match the language level and cognitive complexity of questions to each child.
- Ask questions that engage and involve children's thinking skills:
 - » Explain or solve a problem
 - » Connect learning to children's lives
 - » Make predictions

Support children when a question is too hard by rephrasing the question or simplifying the language to make it more specific and concrete.

HANDOUT

Based on participant roles, distribute and review these handouts. Some handouts have more than one version, listed below.

- *Tips for Teachers* (young infant, older infant and toddler, and preschool versions): These tip sheets include simple, straightforward suggestions and reminders for how to build extended conversations.
- *Tools for Supervisors*: This is a guide to help supervisors focus and give feedback on conversations in classrooms. It provides several essential elements to capture extended conversations. Note: this tool corresponds with the five NCQTL conversation suites.
- *Tools for Teachers*: This visual supports teaching and learning by providing teachers with a visual reminder.
- *Helpful Resources*: (infant/toddler version and preschool version): These two handouts list additional resources for engaging children in conversations.





LEARNING ACTIVITY:

DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

This learning activity provides an opportunity for participants to plan how they can integrate this content into their classrooms.

HANDOUT

Distribute the *Developing an Action Plan* learning activity to each participant.

Set up the activity:

- This handout is designed to help participants plan opportunities to engage in extended conversations with children. Ask participants to identify the ages of the children they work with and how the children communicate (e.g., gestures, facial expressions, babbling and other vocalizations, words, phrases, sentences).
- Use the first column to select a time of day and location that is appropriate for engaging in an extended conversation with a child or small group of children.
- Use the second column to outline the topic of conversation and how this topic fits with a child's life or interests.
- Use the third column to brainstorm meaningful questions that promote language development and thinking based on the conversation topic.

Participants can work alone or in small groups. Encourage them to think about daily experiences, activities, and routines, and how conversations might be extended during those times.

Participants who work with infants and toddlers may consider daily routine times such as diapering, dressing/undressing, and meals.

Participants who work with preschoolers may also consider activities in classroom learning centers such as dramatic play, art, science, and blocks.

Have them organize into small groups and share their action plans. If time allows, bring the large group back together and have several volunteers share their plans.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



NOTE 

If you are training in a classroom, provide time for participants to go to areas of the room and use materials as they plan their conversation possibilities.



SLIDE 23: CLOSING

Provide participants with NCQTL and EHS NRC contact information, and encourage them to visit the websites for additional resources.



OPTIONAL SLIDE: SAY HELLO

Note: This slide outlines the series of five in-service suites on Language Modeling and Conversations. The recommended placement for this overview slide is after Slide 3.

Asking Questions is one in a series of five in-service suites focused on engaging children in conversations. These five suites can easily be remembered by the phrase “Say **HELLO**.” This progression begins with teachers **H**aving conversations with children and then **E**xtending these conversations into thick verbal exchanges. Three strategies then outline how to create thick verbal exchanges: **L**isten and ask questions, **L**isten and expand, and **O**ffer new words. This in-service suite is focused on basic strategies for promoting conversations with children.

The five HELLO in-service suites include:

Have conversations.

- In-service suite: *Language Modeling and Conversations: Engaging Children in Conversations*

Extend into thick.

- In-service suite: *Language Modeling and Conversations: Thick and Thin Conversations*

Listen and ask questions.

- In-service suite: *Language Modeling and Conversations: Asking Questions*

Listen and expand.

- In-service suite: *Language Modeling and Conversations: Expansions*

Offer new words.

- In-service suite: *Language Modeling and Conversations: Novel Words*