



This guide is for presenters of the **Language Modeling and Conversations: Expansions** in-service suite. This in-service suite includes PowerPoint slides and supporting materials. Please remember to use and adapt these materials as needed for specific audiences.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Presenter PowerPoint slides (13)
- Optional slide: *Say HELLO*
- Projector and audio equipment
- Learning Activities:
 - » *Practicing Responses that Expand*
 - » *Capturing Expansions Video Activity*
 - » *Developing an Action Plan*
- Tips for Teachers
- Tools for Teachers
- Tools for Supervisors
- Helpful Resources
- Flip chart or similar paper and markers for writing participant ideas

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- The purpose of this presentation is to provide participants with strategies for extending conversations with children.
- This is one in a series of in-service suites on five *Language Modeling and Conversations*.
- Learning activities offer participants opportunities to practice and plan for *Language Modeling and Conversations* that expand on children's words.
- HELLO is an overarching framework that links and organizes the five conversation suites. HELLO is described in the optional slide at the end of this document, as well as in *Tools for Teachers* and *Tools for Supervisors*. These three documents appear in each of the five in-service suites.

NOTE

For more specific information on promoting culturally and linguistically responsive conversations with children, refer to the *Revisiting and Updating the Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs Serving Children Birth to Five* at: http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/Dual%20Language%20Learners/ecd/culture_and_diversity/manage_pub_00602a1_092305.html, and to the *Strategies for Supporting All Dual Language Learners*, a document developed by the National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness at: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/docs/dll-strategies.pdf>



SLIDE 1: EXPANSIONS

Introductions:

- Begin the training by giving participants background information on yourself.
- Provide an opportunity for participants to introduce themselves (e.g., where they are working, their current roles, etc.).
- In a small group or with the large group, ask participants to share a favorite topic they like to talk about.

Introduce the topic:

- *Expansions* focuses on building on what children say or do to create opportunities for extended conversations.
- **Highlight** two main points:
 - » Engaging children in extended conversations fosters language and cognitive development as well as social skills.
 - » The quality of what is said in the conversation greatly impacts these benefits. Hart & Risley (1995) found that both the number of words and the quality of the language children heard before their third birthday, impacted 3rd grade language and IQ test results. Quality was measured as both vocabulary (different kinds of words- nouns, adjectives, verbs) and complexity of sentences (sentences with two or more clauses, past tense verbs, or questions).

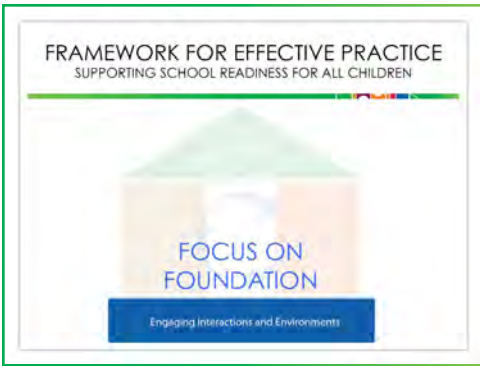
NOTE

The reference for the study cited above is:

Hart, B., & Risley, T. R. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday lives of young American children*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

See Hart & Risley (2003) listed in *Helpful Resources* for a summary of findings from this study.





SLIDE 2: FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

Review the NCQTL framework for effective practice:

- The House structure supports 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 everyday practice for all children.

This presentation fits into the *foundation* of the House.

Expansions help extend conversations and support *engaging interactions* between children and teachers in the classroom.

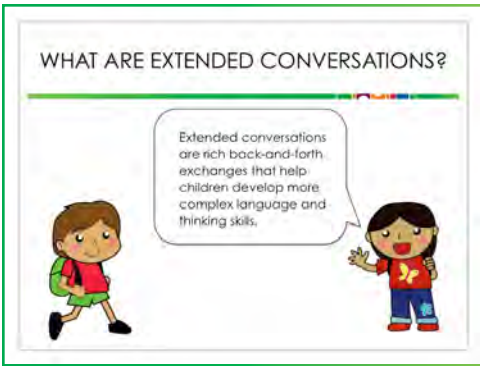


SLIDE 3: OBJECTIVES

Outline the objectives for the presentation:

- To understand how expansions create opportunities for extended conversation
- To learn how expansions promote children's language and thinking
- To identify strategies used to expand on what children say





SLIDE 4: WHAT ARE EXTENDED CONVERSATIONS?

Define extended conversations: Extended conversations are rich back-and-forth exchanges that help children develop more complex language and thinking skills.

Highlight two main features of extended conversations:

- **Rich exchanges:** A conversation that includes a varied vocabulary and complex sentence forms.
- **Back-and-forth exchanges:** Conversations with equal verbal communication between the child and adult (taking turns).

OPTIONAL SLIDE PPT

Optional slide *Say HELLO*: This slide provides an overview and visual that represents the five in-service suites on *Language Modeling and Conversations*. Show this slide especially if you plan to present all five conversation suites.



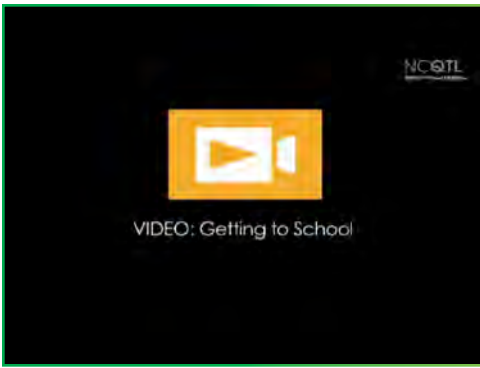
SLIDE 5: EXPANDING ON WHAT CHILDREN SAY SCAFFOLDS CONVERSATIONS

Expansions provide additional language in response to children's words to extend conversations.

- Expanding on children's words is an important way to scaffold children's language development and extend conversations.
- Expansions provide children with additional language that specifically relates to their comments or actions.
- Expansions invite children to take another turn in the conversation.

The adult can then expand on the child's response again, inviting another reply and continuing to extend the conversation.





Length of video: Approximately 37 seconds

SLIDE 6: VIDEO: GETTING TO SCHOOL

Introduce the video: Inform participants that this video shows a teacher listening to a child and then expanding on what the child says to continue the conversation. Have participants listen for and take notes on how this teacher expands on the child's topic.

VIDEO 

DISCUSSION 

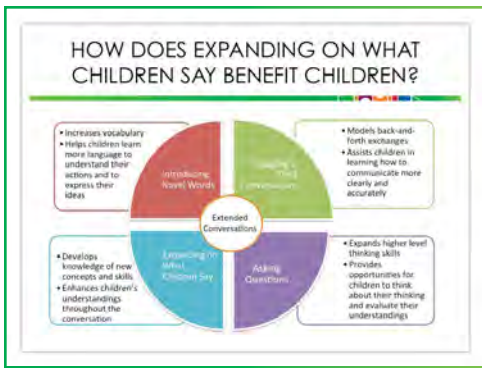
Ask participants to share how the teacher expanded on the child's words to build an extended conversation.

Some possible examples:

The child said, "She couldn't take the car." The teacher expanded by rephrasing what the child said in a more complex form, "She couldn't drive the car."

The teacher provided a summary of what the child said, "So you were in the car seat and the car was stuck in the mud."





SLIDE 7: HOW DOES EXPANDING ON WHAT CHILDREN SAY BENEFIT CHILDREN?

Extended conversations benefit children's:

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

Extended conversations:

- **Provide models** of appropriate conversation skills
- **Support** higher level thinking through meaningful questioning
- **Expand** on children's language to include new concepts and skills
- **Increase** children's vocabulary by introducing novel words.

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

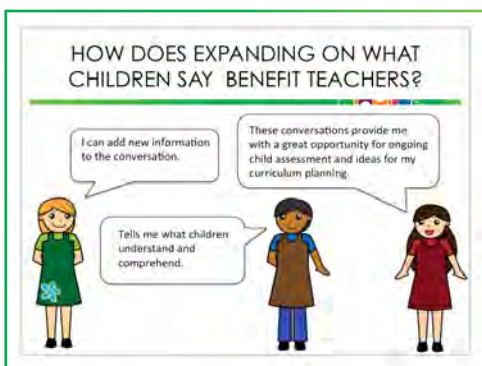
- Engaging in thick conversations
- Asking questions
- Expanding on what children say
- Introducing novel words

This presentation focuses on the third component, **expanding on what children say**. Expanding on children's words in conversations:

- Develops children's knowledge of new concepts and skills
- Enhances and deepens children's understandings throughout the conversation

EMPHASIZE *

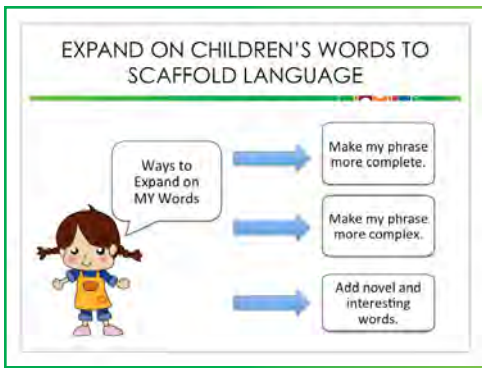
Expansions help children learn new concepts and build deeper understandings.



SLIDE 8: HOW DOES EXPANDING ON WHAT CHILDREN SAY BENEFIT TEACHERS?

- Teachers can add new information to the conversation, increasing opportunities for teachable moments.
- Teachers gain a deeper understanding of what children know.
- Teachers can use extended conversations to gather information for ongoing child assessment and curriculum planning.





EMPHASIZE *

Keep the conversation going by building on what children say.

SLIDE 9: EXPAND ON CHILDREN'S WORDS TO SCAFFOLD LANGUAGE

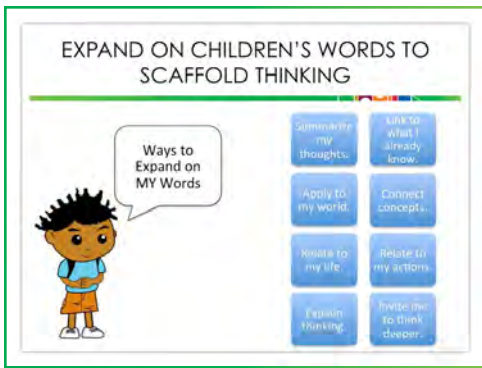
Expanding by adding more language to a child's words keeps the conversation going.

Expansions provide teachers with the opportunity to model and introduce more complex language. Teachers can expand on children's words in several key ways. They can:

- Make children's phrases more complete by adding more words to make a longer sentence.
Example:
Child: "There's a spider."
Teacher: "It is a spider with eight legs."
- Make children's phrases more complex by rephrasing what children say in a slightly more complex form. This approach provides a model for how to correctly form complex sentences.
Example:
Child: "There's a spider there."
Teacher: "There is a spider over in the corner under the sink."
- Increase vocabulary by adding novel and interesting words that build on children's comments.
Example:
Child: "There's a spider."
Teacher: "It is a spider, an arachnid."

Using these three simple strategies, teachers can extend conversations with children while scaffolding language skills and cognitive development.





SLIDE 10: EXPAND ON CHILDREN'S WORDS TO SCAFFOLD THINKING

Expanding on children's words by adding new information scaffolds children's thinking and provides new information that can be used to extend the conversation.

There are several ways to expand on children's words to promote thinking:

- **Summarize thoughts:** Build on children's comments and actions by highlighting key points related to what they've said or done.
- **Link to prior knowledge:** Add to children's comments by incorporating prior class activities or children's actions into the current conversation.
- **Apply to children's world:** Assist children in making connections to experiences beyond the classroom.
- **Connect concepts:** Build on children's words to help them explore relationships between concepts.
- **Relate to children's lives:** Connect children's comments with their own personal experiences (at home, with family members, outside school activities).
- **Relate to children's actions:** Use children's comments to help them reflect on their current actions (what they are doing).
- **Explain thinking:** Expand on children's comments and actions by describing how to think through the situation (self-talk).
- **Invite children to think deeper:** Expand on children's comments by asking open-ended questions that support higher level thinking.

These expansion strategies provide opportunities to extend conversations with children while also stimulating their thinking and learning.





LEARNING ACTIVITY: PRACTICING RESPONSES THAT EXPAND

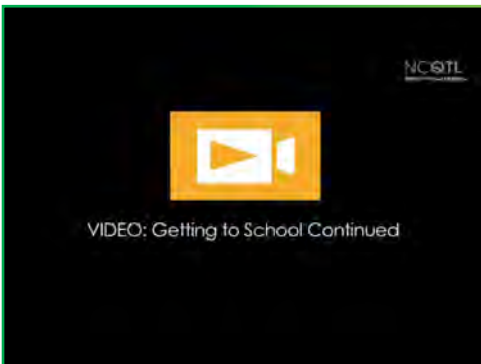
For this learning activity, participants work individually or with a partner to practice responding to children's comments using expansions.

HANDOUT

Distribute the *Practicing Responses that Expand* handout to each participant and review the directions.

DISCUSSION

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



Length of video: Approximately 1 minute and 47 seconds

SLIDE 11: VIDEO: GETTING TO SCHOOL CONTINUED

NOTE

This video begins with and continues the conversation presented on Slide 6. For this slide, choose either option A or B, based on the time allotted for this training and the needs of your audience.

Option A:

Introduce the video: This video provides an example of a teacher using expansions to engage a child in an extended conversation during free play.

VIDEO

DISCUSSION

Ask participants to share the key elements they noticed from this example. Possible examples:

When the child responded, "Yeah," to the teacher's question, "Did you ride your bicycle?", the teacher said, "You rode a bicycle here."

The child said, "I crashed my truck." The teacher expanded by saying, "So you crashed your orange truck."

The child said, "I go fast... and I rrr-ooo, rrr." The teacher expanded by saying, "You crashed into a building."

Option B:

Complete *Capturing Expansions Video Activity* (outlined below).





LEARNING ACTIVITY: CAPTURING EXPANSIONS VIDEO ACTIVITY

This learning activity provides an opportunity for participants to observe a teacher expanding on a child's words in the context of free play.

HANDOUT

Distribute the *Capturing Expansions Video Activity* handout to each participant.

Introduce the activity:

As we view the video, *Getting to School Continued*, take the perspective of an observer analyzing teacher-child conversations. As you watch this clip, use the handout to write examples of what the teacher says to expand the conversation.

VIDEO

NOTE

The presenter may want to provide time at the conclusion of the video to allow participants to complete their observations. Additionally, the presenter may want to show the video again to allow participants more time to process their observations.

DISCUSSION

Ask participants to share with a partner their observations and the feedback they would provide to the teacher.

In large group, ask for a couple of volunteers to share highlights from their small group conversations.

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!

- Expand on children's words.
- Add more complex language.
- Add new information to support higher-level thinking.



SLIDE 12: NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!

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

Review the main ideas from the presentation:

- Expand on children's words to extend conversations.
- Expand by adding more complex language to children's words.
- Expand on children's words by adding new information to support higher level thinking.

HANDOUT

Based on participant roles, distribute and review handouts.

Tips for Teachers: This tip sheet for teachers includes simple, straightforward suggestions and reminders for how to build extended conversations using expansions.

Tools for Supervisors: This is a guide to focus supervisors on conversations in classrooms. It provides several essential elements to capture extended conversations. Note: This is a comprehensive tool that covers the five in-service suites called *Language Modeling and Conversations*.

Tools for Teachers: This visual supports teaching and learning by serving as a reminder for how to engage children in rich back-and-forth exchanges.

Helpful Resources: This is a list of additional resources related to the importance of engaging children in conversations.





LEARNING ACTIVITY:

DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

This learning activity provides an opportunity for participants to develop a plan for how they intend to integrate this content into their classrooms/centers.

HANDOUT

Distribute the *Developing an Action Plan* handout to each participant.

Introduce the activity:

- This handout is designed to assist participants in planning opportunities to engage in extended conversations with children.
- The first column provides space to select a time of day and location that is appropriate for engaging in an extended conversation with a child or group of children.
- The second column provides space to outline the topic of conversation and how this topic fits with a child's or children's interests.
- The third column provides space to brainstorm meaningful questions that promote thinking based on the conversation topic.
- The fourth column provides space to plan how you can expand the conversation.

Provide time for participants to work alone or together to plan meaningful opportunities to engage in extended conversations in their classrooms.

Have participants 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.

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 conversation possibilities.





SLIDE 13: CLOSING

Provide participants with NCQTL contact information and encourage them to visit our website for additional resources on effective teaching practices.



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 4.

*Expansions is one in a series of five in-service suites focused on engaging children in conversations. These five in-service suites can easily be remembered by “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 listening and expanding on what children say.*

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*