



FACILITATING THICK CONVERSATIONS

Children benefit from “thick,” extended conversations in the classroom. Here are four key ways, each with specific strategies you can use, to extend conversations with children.

Encourage back-and-forth exchanges.	• Talk about children’s interests and experiences. • Take turns speaking. • Provide time for children to respond.
Extend children’s language.	• Expand children’s words by adding a little more. • Add new vocabulary to words children are already using. • Restate children’s language using correct grammar.
Invite children to talk about what they are working on.	• Comment on what children are doing. • Ask questions about what children say or do, and what they can do next. • Encourage children to make comparisons, consider other possibilities, and think beyond the here and now.
Encourage higher level thinking.	• Share what you know and/or understand. • Explain your thinking process. • Introduce new concepts or skills.