

**LESSON 2 » TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD, PART 2**



*I can help my child be a reader!*

LESSONS FOR PARENTS IN SUPPORTING EARLY LITERACY





## LESSON 2 » TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD, PART 2

*Whatever you do, wherever you are,  
talk and read with your child.*

### TRAINER'S NOTES

#### WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES?

1. Parents will learn to:
  - use comments during conversations in everyday settings and when reading books
  - give children time to respond to a comment
  - look at their children when talking
  - point to pictures in books as a way to start conversations
2. Parents will review talking about what their child is interested in (following the child's lead)
3. Parents will increase the number of times they talk with their children each day.
4. Parents will increase the number of times they read with their children each day.

#### THIS LESSON LINKS TO THESE IOWA EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS:

##### *Infant and Toddler Early Learning Standards*

##### Area 4 – Communication, Language, and Literacy

4.1: Language Understanding and Use

4.2: Early Literacy

##### *Preschool Early Learning Standards*

##### Area 10 – Communication, Language, and Literacy

10.1: Language Understanding and Use

10.2: Early Literacy



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### THIS LESSON LINKS TO EVERY CHILD READS MODULES FOR EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROVIDERS:

*Every Child Reads: Birth to Three*

Module III (Engaging in conversation with infants and toddlers)

Module IV (Reading with infants and toddlers using interactive strategies)

*Every Child Reads: Three to Five Years*

#### **Language Module, Principle 1**

(Children need to have many experiences and interactions to develop background knowledge and language skills.)

#### **Reading Module, Principle 1**

(Children need opportunities to interact with books.)

### MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT

### MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT YOU WILL NEED TO TEACH THIS LESSON:

- Handouts: L1-H1 (for Trainer's Script Step #9) and L2-H1 (#71, optional)
- Chart paper, tape and marking pens
- Video clips showing a parent and young child talking (#26 and #42)
- TV and DVD player (#26, #42)
- Objects and/or pictures (#49)
- Sock with a hole in it (#50)
- Books to distribute to families (#56)
- Sticky notes (#60)
- 3x5 index cards (#69)
- Materials for the parent-child activity (#75)



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### PREPARATION

#### BEFORE TEACHING THIS LESSON:

- Duplicate extra copies of “Tips for Reading with My Baby or Toddler,” L1-H1. (#9)
- Duplicate copies of “How Can Parents Help Their Children Build Strong Language Skills?” L2-H1. (#71, optional)
- For Step #26 and #42 in the trainer’s script, you will need to select a video clip, such as, *Talking and Play: Language is the Key* which shows a parent making comments when talking with a child.
- Find pictures of children playing, eating, bathing, etc., to use in Step #49 of trainer’s script. You may use the same pictures as you did in Lesson 1 if you did the alternative activity. You can also use objects or a combination of pictures and objects. Examples of objects you could use: bar of soap, wash cloth, sand in a baggie, spoon or other utensil, toys, articles of clothing and crayons. You will need two to three pictures or objects for every two people.
- Prepare a demonstration for #65 in the script using the book you will distribute to families this month. During the demonstration, model how to:
  - > read the book title
  - > make comments
  - > ask questions
  - > wait for the child to respond before asking another comment or asking a second question
  - > point to pictures
  - > use an expressive voice.
- Prepare an activity for the parents and children to do together that will allow the parents to practice the strategies in this lesson. Examples of possible activities are in the Trainer’s Script. (#75)



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### OUTLINE

### TRAINER'S OUTLINE

#### I. Standard Introduction

- A. Participant Introduction
  - 1. Name
  - 2. Child's name and age
  - 3. Something funny or interesting child said when talking with them.

#### II. Review Key Points From the Last Meeting.

#### III. Review the Parent Follow-Up Activity.

- A. Were you able to talk more often with your child?
- B. What did you talk about?
- C. How did you decide what to talk about?
- D. What were some new times you talked with him?
- E. What was the most fun about talking with your child?
- F. What did you learn about your child when you talked with him?
- G. What new words did you teach your child or introduce him to when talking with him?
- H. What new things about your child's world (background knowledge) did you teach him when you were talking with him?
- I. Which of the tips did you practice when reading to your child?
- J. What happened when you did so?



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### IV. Present Key Points

- A. Make comments to start a conversation
- B. Using a video clip such as, “Talking and Play,” from the *Language is the Key* DVD show the clip from Chapter 2, “Comments,” of a parent and child talking where the parent makes comments or use another video clip of your choosing.
- C. Give your child time to respond to a comment or question
- D. Talk about what your child is interested in—follow his lead
- E. Look at your child when talking with him

### V. Model the Key Points

- A. Using the video clip such as, “Talking and Play,” show a second clip from Chapter 2, “Comments,” of a parent and child talking where the parent makes comments.
- B. Discuss the clip:
  - 1. What did the parent and child talk about? Do you think that topic was interesting to the child? How do you know?
  - 2. Did the parent look at the child when he was talking with him?
  - 3. Can you give some examples of the comments the parent made to start the conversation with the child?
  - 4. Did the parent wait long enough for the child to answer or respond in some way?
  - 5. What else did you notice?



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### VI. Conduct an Activity with the Adults to Reinforce Key Points

- A. Parents write comments to use when talking with their children.
- B. Parents write comments to use when reading books to their children.

### VII. Model Reading a Book.

- A. Demonstrate the following:
  - 1. Read the title
  - 2. Make comments
  - 3. Ask questions
  - 4. Wait for the child to respond
  - 5. Point to pictures
  - 6. Use an expressive voice
- B. Discuss the demonstration
  - 1. What did you see me do?
  - 2. Any questions about what we have discussed so far?

### VIII. Summary of Lesson's Key Points

### IX. Assign Parent Follow-Up Activity

- A. How many times will you talk with your child and make comments?
- B. How many times will you read to your child and make comments?

### X. Conduct Parent-Child Activity

- A. See Trainer's Script for examples

### XI. Closing Remarks



## TRAINER'S SCRIPT

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### CONDUCT A FOCUS ACTIVITY

**Introduce yourself.** (See introduction suggestions in the Manual Overview, “How do I begin each session?”)

1. Please tell us:
  - a. your name
  - b. your child’s name and age
  - c. a funny or interesting thing your child said to you when you were talking with him. If you can’t think of one, or, if your child is too young to talk, tell us a new time or place where you and your child were able to have a conversation with each other.

**Have an example of a funny or interesting thing a child has said to you ready to present in case no one in the group does.**

### REVIEW KEY POINTS FROM THE LAST MEETING

2. At our last meeting, we talked about how important it is to talk **WITH** our children. We mentioned the difference between talking **TO/AT** them—which we do when we are telling them things to do or not do.
3. Talking **WITH** our children is having a conversation with them. We say something and our child responds in some way, depending on his age. He might say a word or sentence, point, coo, smile, and so on. Then we make another comment or ask another question and our child responds again in some way. We take turns.



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4. Talking WITH children helps them learn new words and teaches them about the world they live in. Knowing lots of words and about the world they live in will help your children do well when they start school.
5. Talking with your children also lets them practice something they will do all of their lives—talk with other people.
6. It is important to talk with infants and toddlers even though they may not talk back using words. They are “talking” with you when they respond to what you say by kicking their legs, waving their arms, nodding their heads, looking at you, pointing, smiling and cooing. When they listen to you talk, they hear new words and information just as older children do.
7. We all talk often with other adults. However, sometimes, in our busy lives, we forget to take time to talk WITH our children. Talk WITH your children often no matter what their age is. Teach them new words, teach them new things and have fun doing so!
8. Remember our slogan: *Whatever you do, wherever you are, talk and read with your child!*

### REVIEW PARENT FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY

**During following large group discussions, model:**

- giving adults time to respond, and
- looking at the adults when you make comments and ask questions.

**Think about what you will say if the participants’ answers are incorrect.**



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**If the participants are not willing to talk in a large group, divide them into small groups and assign two or three questions to each group. After five minutes, call them back together and discuss the questions as a large group.**



9. Please find your index card and your handout (L1-H1), “Tips for Reading with My Baby or Toddler.”

**Distribute copies of the handout to parents who need one.**

10. At our last meeting, you wrote on the index cards how many times you would try to talk with your child. Were you able to talk more often with your child?
11. What did you talk about?
12. How did you decide what to talk about?

**Review how important it is to talk about what your child is interested in.**

13. What were some new times you talked with him?
14. What was the most fun about talking with your child?
15. What did you learn about your child when you talked with her?
16. What new words did you teach your child or introduce him to when talking with him?



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17. What new things about your child's world did you teach him when you were talking with him?
18. Look at your handout and your index card. Which of the tips did you practice when reading to your child?
19. What happened when you did so?

### PRESENT KEY POINTS

20. When you are talking with your child about a book you are reading together or what she is eating, or playing with, you can start your conversation by making a comment. When we make comments, children often hear us use new words.
21. Comments encourage children to talk with us, or respond to what we are saying in some way. They may say something back to us, nod their heads, point to something and so on.
22. Let's say you and your child are playing together. "You are playing with your blocks" is one comment you could make. You are describing what your child is doing.
23. Or, you can make a comment that describes what you are doing:
  - "I am building a tall building with the blocks."
  - "I am changing the flat tire on our car."
24. You can describe an object, person or something that is happening:
  - "This block is red. It is a square block."
  - "It is snowing outside. Look at the big, white snowflakes."



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25. Here is a trick that might help you when you are making comments. Pretend you are talking on your phone telling a friend what your child is doing or what you are doing or what is happening. Use the words you would with friends—not baby talk. Or, pretend you are a sports announcer describing what your child is doing to a TV or radio audience.
26. Let's watch a brief example of a conversation between a child and a parent. Watch for comments the parent makes.



**Show a video clip of an example of a conversation between a parent and child. For example, use the Chapter 2 “Comments” clip from, *Language is the Key*.**

**You may want to show this DVD two times.**



27. What comments did you hear?

**Write the comments on chart paper.**

28. We all know that talking with children is different than talking with adults. For example, you can't talk about the same things with children as you do with adults. Also, you usually can't talk for as long with children because their attention span is not as long as an adult's is.
29. Here is another difference. If we ask a child a question or make a comment, it will usually take him longer to respond than an adult. Children need more time to think about what you said and then it takes more time for them to figure out what to say next—how to answer your question or respond to your comment.



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30. So, we want to give our children time to think before expecting them to answer our questions or respond to a comment we made.
31. Let's say I make a comment or statement to my child such as, "You are playing with your blocks." I need to wait at least five seconds before I make another comment. My child will need time to think about what he wants to say to me.
32. It is really easy for adults to talk too much—to dominate the conversation with a child if they don't wait and give the child time to respond. We don't want to do all the talking! We want to talk WITH children—not TO—to help them learn new words and about their world.
33. So when you are talking with your child, say something and then wait five seconds before you ask another question or make another comment. That may not seem long but it is. Let me demonstrate how long five seconds is.

**Use your hand and "chop" in the air one time per second, like a basketball referee.**

34. Children need this much time because they need both time to think and time to express themselves.
35. What could you do at home when talking with your child to remind yourself to wait five seconds?

**Mention the following if the participants don't:**

- Tap thumb to each finger two times.
- Count silently to self: "One-one thousand, two-one thousand..."



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36. Another thing to remember when you are talking WITH your child is to talk about what they are interested in.
37. Listen to the questions they ask or the comments they make to tell you what they are interested in. You can also watch them. Do they pick up a toy or point to something? Their actions may give you clues about what they are curious about and you can talk about it with them.
38. Look around this room. When your child comes back here at the end of our meeting, what are some things you think he might be interested in and might want to talk about that are in this room? What could you have a conversation about?
39. Talk with your neighbor about your answers to these questions.



### **After a few minutes, ask the parents to respond.**

40. Try to look at your child when you are talking with her. You don't need to stare but turn off the TV or phone or other distracting activities, and really pay attention to your child. This will encourage your child to talk with you. She will feel like you are interested in what she is saying.
41. Remember, these conversations between you and your child can take place anywhere and any time. They offer a wonderful opportunity for you and your child to be together, connect with each other and have fun.



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### MODEL THE KEY POINTS

42. We are going to watch a video clip of a parent and child having a conversation again. As we watch, think about what the parent is doing. Does the parent:
- give the child time to respond to a comment (did he wait five seconds or more)?
  - talk about what the child is interested in?
  - look at the child when talking?
  - make comments?



**Show a different video clip than you used previously in #26.**

**You may want to show the clip two times.**

43. What did the parent and child talk about? Do you think that topic was interesting to the child? How do you know?
44. Did the parent look at the child when he was talking with him?
45. What comments did the parent make to start the conversation with the child?
46. Did the parent wait long enough for the child to answer or respond in some way?
47. What else did you notice?



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### CONDUCT AN ACTIVITY WITH THE ADULTS TO REINFORCE KEY POINTS

For the following demonstration, you can use real objects or pictures.

48. Please find a partner.



**Distribute two or three pictures or objects to each pair.**

49. Each pair has two or three pictures (objects). If you and your child were doing what the picture shows (using the object in some way), what could you say to start a conversation?

**Hold up a sock with a hole in it.**

50. Let's use this sock as an example. Let's say I was helping my child get dressed. I might start the conversation by pointing to the sock and saying, "You have a hole in your sock." That is a comment.

51. If your child were a little older, I could point to the sock and say, "Your blue sock has a hole where your toes go."

52. Work with your partner and write comments you could say to start a conversation with your child. Write one or two comments for each picture (object).

53. Take about five minutes to do this and then we will discuss your comments. Work together. If you have questions, call me over.



**After about five minutes, call the group back together and discuss their ideas. Ask them to hold up each picture (object) and state their comments.**



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54. Talk with your children as many times a day as you can. Talk with them no matter how young they are. Use comments to tell them about things and introduce them to new words.

55. We have discussed how to use comments to start a conversation with our child during daily activities. You can also use them when reading books.



### **Distribute a book to each family.**

56. Take a few minutes to look at your book. As you do so, ask yourself, “What would my child like to talk about when I am reading this book to him?”

### **After most, or all, are finished, call the group back together.**

57. When you are reading a book to your child, it is okay to stop and talk about what is happening in the book. You don’t need to wait until the end of the book to talk about it. Your child will learn more new words and more from the book if you do stop and talk about what is happening in the story rather than if you read the book straight through without stopping.

58. What could you and your child talk about when reading this book? What comments could you make?



**Write the responses on chart paper. If the group has trouble answering the question in #58, tell them to look at a specific page in the book and say what comments they could make.**

59. How would you start the conversation?



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### **Record responses on chart paper.**

60. When you are making a comment or asking a question about a picture in the book, point to it. Ask your child to point to it also. That will help her focus on what you are talking about.



### **Distribute sticky notes.**

61. Write two comments you would like to say when you read this book to your child. Write each one on a sticky note. Then put it on the page of the book where you will need it.



### **After about four minutes, call the group back together.**

62. Remember to pause five seconds after making the comment to give your child a chance to respond. We make comments about the book to encourage our children to think about the book and to have a conversation with us.
63. Read this book to your children as many times as you can between now and the next time we meet. Say your comments to encourage your child to talk about the book. After you have used the ones on your sticky notes, make up others. The important thing is to use the comments to encourage your child to talk about the book.
64. Questions?
65. I will now read this book to you. Please push your books away. You have two roles: pretend you are your children and respond the way they would and watch and listen to what I do when I am reading.



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**Read the book and demonstrate:**

- reading the book title.
- making comments.
- asking questions.
- waiting for the child to respond before making another comment or asking a second question.
- pointing to pictures.
- using an expressive voice.

**You do not have to read the whole book.**

66. What did you see me do?

67. Any questions about what we have discussed so far?

### **SUMMARY OF THE LESSON'S KEY POINTS**

68. We talked about many things today such as how:

- important it is to talk with children often. Talking is something you can do any time and anywhere. It is easy! It is cheap! It is fun!
- to start a conversation with a comment
- to give children time to respond to a comment
- to talk about what your child is interested in
- to look at your child when talking
- to point to pictures in a book as a way to encourage your child to talk.



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### ASSIGN A PARENT FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY

**Distribute index cards.**

69. Write “comment” at the top of your index card. Then, write the word “talk” under it. Now, write how many times you will talk with your child each week and make comments.
70. Please write the word “read.” Next, write how many times you will read with your child each week and make comments when you are doing so.
71. Put your card on your refrigerator or someplace where you will see it so it will remind you of what you want to do before we next meet. Please bring the card back with you.

**Point out that a way to remember to make comments is to think of the word, “CAR.” C=comment. Mention that the other two strategies— A=ask questions and respond and R=respond by adding a little more information—will be discussed at future sessions.**



**(Optional: Distribute the handout, “How Can Parents Help Their Children Build Strong Language Skills?” [L2-H1]. Discuss the key points.)**

72. Your children will be coming back soon and you will have a chance to practice making comments when you talk with them as we do an activity.



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**Explain what you want participants to understand and do for the activity. (Activity suggestions are offered below.)**

73. Have a conversation with your children as you do the activity. Practice making comments, looking at them when you are talking and waiting five seconds for them to respond before you make another comment.
74. What do you think your child will be interested in talking about when you do the activity with him?
75. Focus on talking with your child and not the other parents.

### **CONDUCT A PARENT-CHILD ACTIVITY TO REINFORCE KEY POINTS**

**In this lesson, the focus was on using comments when talking and reading with children. Plan an activity for children and parents to do together that will give parents an opportunity to practice strategies taught in this lesson.**

**Examples of parent and child activities.**

- do a craft/art project.
- play a board game.
- take a walk outside.
- sort blocks, rocks, shells, etc.
- play at the sand or water table.
- play in the housekeeping or block center.
- play with toys.



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**As the activity is occurring, walk around the group. If you notice a parent not practicing the strategies correctly, try to find an opportunity when you can talk with the child, while his or her parent is watching you, and demonstrate how to use the strategies correctly. Do not call attention to the “mistake.” Instead, demonstrate another example of the correct way to use the strategies with a child.**

**If many parents are not using the strategies correctly, model it again at the next session.**

**END**

### **CLOSING REMARKS**

76. Thanks for coming! See you at the next session on \_\_\_\_\_.  
Please bring your index card with you.



# *Handouts*

LESSON TWO



## HOW CAN PARENTS HELP THEIR CHILDREN BUILD STRONG LANGUAGE SKILLS?



- Listen as much as you talk.
- Follow the child's lead—talk about things he/she is interested in.
- When you can, stop what you are doing and look at your child to show him/her you are interested in what he/she is saying.
- Name objects, people and events in your everyday world.
- Watch a favorite television program or video with your child. Talk about what you see during and after the show. "He sounds happy.
- Why is he so happy?" "What would you do if that happened to you?"
- Read books and talk about them.
- Tell stories about your childhood.
- Tell stories about when your child was a baby, or another family member or pet, was a baby.
- Talk about your family traditions and celebrations. For example, talk about how you celebrate birthdays.
- Sing songs and play rhyming games.

Adapted from: Every Child Reads 3-5 Year Olds  
 Language is the Key: Washington Research Institute  
 PBS Families #14: Talking Together. WGBH Educational Foundation, 2002.



- C** COMMENT ON WHAT YOUR CHILD IS DOING AND WAIT.
- A** ASK QUESTIONS AND WAIT AT LEAST 5 SECONDS FOR YOUR CHILD TO ANSWER BEFORE SAYING ANYTHING MORE. (WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHY DO YOU THINK...?)
- R** RESPOND BY ADDING A LITTLE MORE NEW INFORMATION OR ASKING A FOLLOW-UP QUESTION.

