



Infant: Early Language Support

Title: Teacher Talk during Book Reading

The teachers in this classroom provide the infants with language exposure by frequently labeling animals, speaking in complete sentences, initiating communication, and building upon the infants' communication attempts.

Teacher Talk

- The lead teacher labels animals in the picture book with descriptive and specific words (color and size) such as in the following examples:
 - “There’s a zebra and a lion. And a horse and a frog. There’s a green tree frog. And a baby tiger. A goose. ‘Honk-honk.’ And a baby kitten. A pig.”
 - “Look and a chicken. ‘Bok-bok, bok-bok.’”
 - “And a sheep and a chimp. ‘Or-or-or.’ And some Guinea pigs. And a calf and an elephant. And some chicks. A fox and an owl. ‘Whoo-hoo.’”
 - “And a bear. ‘R-r-r-rah.’”
- The teachers use complete sentences when talking to the infants such as in the following examples:
 - Lead teacher: “Jackson thought that chicken was funny.” “When Ms. Pamela had Victoria in her class, your big sister, she could go, ‘whoo-hoo.’ Gonna have to get big sister, Victoria, to teach you how to do that?” “You’re going to play somewhere else now? Okay.”
 - Teacher two: “Did you learn how to throw a toy?” “Did you just throw a toy across the floor?”

Communication Support

- The lead teachers attempt to involve Charley in several language exchanges by asking direct questions (“Do you want Ms. Pamela to read it to you? You want Ms. Pamela to tell you what’s in here?”)
- When another child, off screen, makes a sound in response to the chicken noise the lead teacher makes, the lead teacher responds to this communication attempt by encouraging the infant to vocalize (“Did you hear that chicken? You heard that chicken? You think that was funny?”).
- The lead teacher encourages Charley to imitate her owl and bear sounds (“‘Whoo-whooh.’ Can you do that? Can you do that, Charley? ‘Whoo-hoo.’” “‘R-r-r-rah.’ Can you growl like the bear?”).

Communication Extension

- The teachers encourage turn-taking and back-and-forth exchanges with the infants by providing words for their verbalizations and actions, therefore extending their communication attempts. For example, Charley makes a vocalization or sound while reaching for the book, and the lead teacher says, “No? Oh, it’s not a pig? It kinda looks like a pig, though.” In another exchange, the second teacher extends an infant’s action of

throwing a toy on the rug with words (“Did you learn how to throw a toy? Did you just throw a toy across the floor?”).

The teachers in this classroom frequently use Teacher Talk in the form of asking questions, labeling animals, and speaking in complete sentences. The lead teacher encourages several infants to talk, and both teachers encourage turn-taking by adding words to the infants’ actions or sounds. The teachers provide effective Early Language Support through language-stimulation and language-facilitation techniques.