



Read to Succeed Parent Tips for Elementary-Age Children

Talking Together

Talk and read with your child every day to help build her vocabulary. Help her to learn new words and understand what they mean. Here are some ways to get started:

- ★ **Have mealtime conversations.** Mealtime is a great time to talk with your child about anything. Let him take the lead in the conversation. Listen as he talks about his day or a special event at school. Respond with positive comments (*Hmm, that's exciting!*) to encourage him to talk more. You can also talk about future events (class fieldtrip) and plans (visiting a relative) or imagined events (dream vacation).
- ★ **Share stories.** Tell your child stories about your life when you were her age. Use family photos to encourage her to share stories with you (*Who is in the photo? What's happening? Where was the photo taken?*). Sharing a special memory with your child will teach her new words, help her use her imagination, and make her feel closer to you!
- ★ **Play word games.** Word search games and crossword puzzles are fun ways to learn new words. Play word games such as Hangman, Scrabble and Boggle. Encourage him to create his own jokes and riddles using vocabulary words from school. Create a vocabulary BINGO game. Draw a 4x4 grid on paper and then write one of your child's vocabulary words in each box. Read off a definition for each vocabulary word. He can put a game marker (a penny or small cracker) on the correct word that goes with the definition until he has 4 words in a row to win.
- ★ **Create an illustrated dictionary.** Make a picture dictionary together. Staple 10 blank papers together. Encourage her to write one of her vocabulary words from school on the top of each page and then illustrate it with a picture. Keep adding more vocabulary words or words that your child is interested in.
- ★ **Read together.** Read books, magazines, and newspapers with your child. He will hear new words that are not used in everyday conversations. Once in a while, stop and provide a simple definition of a word that he may not know (*"Teeny" means that something is really, really small*). Use the new words that you talked about in everyday conversations or things related to your child's life (*You have a teeny scar on your finger*). Ask him what he remembers about a story (*What was your favorite part of the story? Why did you like it? What's one new thing that you learn from the story?*).

