

# Asking Open-Ended Questions with Children Who Use Words

## Ideas for Asking Open-Ended Questions During Activities



### Play

- Encourage friendship skills by asking open-ended questions. When a child is playing alone, ask, *“Who should we ask to come play with us?”*
- While playing outside together, ask questions that put the child in the lead. *“Where should we go next?” “What should we make with the sand?”*
- When small groups of children are playing together, ask questions that encourage them to notice each other. *“What do you think Sam is building?” “What song is Nina singing?” “What is Andre drawing?”*
- During creative play, such as art or building, ask questions about how to make things. *“How are we going to make this kite?” “How should we stack the blocks?”*



### Daily Routines

- Help a child get comfortable when arriving at a familiar place by asking, *“Who should we say hello to?”*
- During routines a child is learning to complete more independently, such as toileting or hand washing, pause at a familiar step and ask, *“What do we do next?”*
- Ask questions during transition activities, like standing in line or walking in the hallway. *“Who’s in front of you?” “Where are we going?” “What animal should we pretend to be?”*



### Books

- Ask questions about the main idea of a picture. *“What is happening in this picture?” “What are these animals doing?”*
- Ask questions that encourage children to think about what might be happening in the story. *“What do you think will happen next?” “How do you think she feels?”*
- Choose books that show everyday events, such as eating, playing, or bathing. This can make it easier for children to answer questions like, *“What are they doing here?”* or *“Why is she doing that?”*



*It takes time and practice for children to be able to answer questions about pictures and books. If children look confused or don’t respond, model how to answer the question.*

### Open Questions

Ask questions in a way that encourages children to respond in different ways, rather than simply “yes” or “no.”

