

Kitchen Study

Targeted skill

Young children are expected to connect experiences and ideas with those of others through speaking and listening.

Materials

- ◆ kitchen items, such as stove, pots and pans, and cooking utensils

What to do

Using objects commonly found in the kitchen to engage your child in conversation extends and enriches his or her vocabulary and use of oral language.

You might begin by pulling out all the bowls in the kitchen and placing them on the floor. Ask your child to stack the bowls so they will fit in the cabinet (or arrange them in some other fashion). Engage your child in conversation about the bowls. Say things such as, "Tell me about that bowl," encouraging him or her to use words to describe the bowl's size, shape, color, and so on.

Extending the activity

- ✦ Encourage your child to compare two similar objects, using words to describe how the two objects are alike and different.
- ✦ This activity can be done with lots of common household objects, such as things found in the bathroom, bedroom, or garage. Be sure to supervise the selection of objects to keep your child safe.
- ✦ Encourage your child to use unfamiliar words. For example, if *oval* is a new word, encourage him or her to find other oval objects. Young children need many experiences with a word before they learn its meaning and begin to use it on their own.

What your child is practicing

Children need practice in many activities to help develop their oral language skills. Your child is learning to express himself or herself in complete thoughts and link these thoughts together to make conversations. These oral language skills are basic to learning to read and write.