FACILITATING THICK CONVERSATIONS

Children benefit from “thick,” extended conversations in the classroom. Here are four key ways, each with specific strategies you can use, to extend conversations with children.

| Encourage back-and-forth exchanges. | • Talk about children’s interests and experiences.  
| | • Take turns speaking.  
| | • Provide time for children to respond.  |
| Extend children’s language. | • Expand children’s words by adding a little more.  
| | • Add new vocabulary to words children are already using.  
| | • Restate children’s language using correct grammar.  |
| Invite children to talk about what they are working on. | • Comment on what children are doing.  
| | • Ask questions about what children say or do, and what they can do next.  
| | • Encourage children to make comparisons, consider other possibilities, and think beyond the here and now.  |
| Encourage higher level thinking. | • Share what you know and/or understand.  
| | • Explain your thinking process.  
| | • Introduce new concepts or skills.  |