

### Parent-Child Conversation Starters

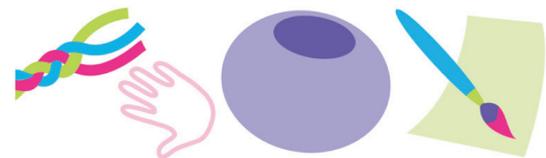
The Parent-Child Conversation Starters reflect a research-based approach that has proven effective in supporting early language development and literacy. Active conversations between a child and adult can result from an adult following a child's lead. This specific approach is called "dialogic conversations" and focuses on the following:

- 1** Together, children and parents look at a picture book or something in their immediate environment (in this case, the Picturing America artworks).
- 2** Children and parents engage in conversation about it.
- 3** Parents use simple language to promote conversation with the child.

- 1** Follow the child's lead. For example, when it is time to move to another picture, allow children to choose which artwork to view or talk about next.
- 2** Talk about what the child wants to talk about.
- 3** Wait 5 to 10 seconds after asking any questions to give the child time to think and respond.

Questions in conversations can help children expand many key language and literacy skills. There are several types of questions that are especially helpful in expanding children's responses:

- 1** Open-ended questions
  - a** What is happening in this picture?
  - b** The child practices putting his thoughts into his own words.
- 2** "Wh" questions (who, what, when, where, why)
  - a** What is that? Why do you think that is happening?
  - b** At many different levels, children can put their thoughts into words.
- 3** Distancing questions
  - a** What happened when we made your birthday cake?
  - b** Children remember past events and relate them to the present and future.



**FOLLOW THE CHILD'S LEAD!!!**