



Activities for Teaching Children to Ask and Answer Questions

A critical skill in maintaining conversations is answering questions and asking related questions. This article includes games and activities for teaching children to ask and answer Wh-questions, stay on topic during conversations, and ask relevant questions.

1. Wh- Bingo – Help children learn to listen to Wh- (who, what, where, when, why) words and details of questions with Wh- Bingo. Create Bingo cards with each Wh- word at the top. Include answers to the questions in picture or written form in each square. Have a set of corresponding questions. Just like traditional Bingo, use tokens or chips to mark correct answers. When children get a diagonal, vertical, or horizontal line of tokens, they win. Example cards and questions include:

- *Who:* Include pictures or names of people in the classroom or famous people children recognize. Have questions for the game like, ‘Who is wearing a yellow shirt today?’
- *Where:* Include words or pictures of familiar places such as the cafeteria, playground, or community location. Have questions for the game like, ‘Where do we eat lunch?’
- *Why:* Include answers to common questions such as, ‘Why do only adults use a stove?’ and show a picture representing a hot stove or the word ‘hot’.
- *When:* Include drawings of clocks, the time of day, or an event. Questions include things like, ‘When do you go to bed?’ or ‘When do you trick-or-treat?’
- *What:* Include nouns such as a hat and questions like, ‘What do you wear on your head?’

2. Question Toss – Teach children to answer a question while staying active with question toss. Ask a question then throw the ball to a student. The student answers the question then asks a related follow-up question. The student throws the ball to another student. The second student follows the same directions as the first student by answering the question and asking a related question. This continues until someone is unable to think of an answer, a question, or an on-topic response to a question.

3. One-on-One Show and Tell – Ask parents to send a picture, drawing, or item representing an activity or hobby their child enjoys or have children draw a picture of their favorite toy or activity. Put children in pairs. Before the activity starts tell children to ask their friends questions about their activity and to remain on topic until it is their turn to answer questions about their activity. Have one child show their item or picture and the other child ask questions about the favorite activity. After a few minutes have the children switch roles.



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4. Obstacle Course Conversation – Practice responding to questions and using prepositions with obstacle course conversation. Set-up a simple obstacle course that involves going over, under, beside, and between different objects. Demonstrate the course for the students and accentuate the prepositions when you talk about the course. For example, ‘I am crawling *under* the table.’ Have each child complete the course. Ask them questions about the course such as, ‘What did you jump over?’ and ‘When did you walk on the balance beam?’

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