



Try It

Baby Talk

Practice ways of playing with a baby that build your relationship and also build language.

Work with a partner. Use an interesting baby toy, board book, or household object to try out “baby talk” techniques. Take turns playing the roles of educator and baby, then reflect together.

Educator:

Engage the baby in back-and-forth play, with you or with the object you were given.

- Talk face-to-face, play a hand clapping or peek-a-boo game, pass the object back and forth, or use it together.

Use an engaging, expressive voice as you try out one of the techniques below:

- Talk face-to-face, wait for the baby to respond, and try to get in tune as you respond to her responses.
- Use a verbal mapping strategy such as labeling, self talk, or mirror talk to engage the baby in play or support her exploration.

Baby:

Respond to the educator's offers and talk as a baby might, with coos, babbles, fussing, looking intently, reaching out, exploring, or turning away as appropriate.

Discussion Questions:

- *How did the educator use her tone of voice and facial expressions to engage the baby?*
- *Did the baby and the educator respond to each other? Did they get in tune? Did the educator use words to build both the baby's language and their relationship?*
- *Did you feel comfortable practicing the strategies with another adult? Would you feel confident using similar strategies with babies if another adult were present? What might help you feel more confident?*