

Observing and Building on What Your Child Knows

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Children develop knowledge at different times and at different paces. Understanding what your child knows and building on that knowledge helps to ensure that the activities you do are meaningful and engaging and keep your child learning.



1

Share knowledge, ask questions, and observe.

When doing an activity with your child, provide some instruction, ask questions to understand your child's existing knowledge, watch what they can do, and see if they are able to talk about their process. For example, point to a circular object and say "circle." Ask your child to show you another circle. Once they identify a circle, ask them how they know it's a circle.



2

Build on your child's knowledge.

Once you understand your child's knowledge and skills, relate new ideas to his or her existing knowledge. For example, once your child can compare sets of three or four objects, try slightly larger sets. Activities just above your child's level of understanding help ensure that he or she does not get frustrated by an activity that is too difficult.



3

Monitor and adjust.

Make observations throughout the day, note what your child can and cannot do, and then repeat and adjust activities and questions to see how your child progresses.

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