



# Communicating in the Classroom

## Vroom Tip™ Collection

### Conversations (0-12)

**Vroom Tip:** If your child says "Ba," repeat the sound back to them. Then add on to it, "Ba, ba, ba." Do they try to copy your sounds? Add a new sound next, "Ba, ba, MA." Do they notice the change? Do they try to repeat it? Go back and forth repeating each other's sounds and building on them.

**Brainy Background:** Even conversations with only sounds encourage communication by your child, using sounds and actions to talk to you. Changing the sounds helps them pay careful attention to the differences between sounds—an important step in learning to talk.

### A Changing Conversation (0-12 months)

**Vroom Tip:** When you're changing your child, make a funny sound. How do they respond? By smiling? Kicking their legs? Making a sound? Try a new sound and see what they do. Keep adding new ones to the mix!

**Brainy Background:** Back and forth conversations can happen even without words. You're teaching your child how conversations work. First one person speaks, then the other. This is an early lesson about communication—a skill that's important in school and in life.

### Read to Me (12 months – 2 years)

**Vroom Tip:** Share a picture in a book, magazine, or news article with your child. Be sure to point at what you're looking at and chat about it. For example, "Look at the blue shirt the lady is wearing—I have one too!" Or, "This is a picture of diapers, like the ones you wear." Let them pick the next picture and talk about what you see together.

**Brainy Background:** Around age one or later, babies start to understand that pictures represent real things. As you connect pictures and real things—especially things they know—you help them understand symbols. These chats are a critical step in learning to read later.

### Mail Time (2 – 3 years)

**Vroom Tip:** Talk to your child about getting mail and what it means. Then write them a note or give them a piece of junk mail or store flyer and say, "Mail Time!" After they look at it, take turns talking about the letters, pictures, colors, and designs.

**Brainy Background:** This game sets the stage for a back-and-forth conversation. As you talk about mail, your child's vocabulary grows. As you point at the letters, they begin to understand that the lines on paper stand for sounds, words, and objects. This is a big step in becoming a reader.

### Daily Favorite (2.5 – 5 years)

Vroom Tip: In the evening, ask your child what their favorite part of the day was. Make sure you follow up with questions. "Why did you like that? Was it more fun than the last time you did that? Why?" You can make this a regular part of your day!

Brainy Background: Asking your child questions that require more than a simple yes or no help build language, communication, and reasoning skills. Repeat what they say back to them in more complex sentences. Don't be afraid to use words they don't know!

### Listening Game (3 – 4 years)

Vroom Tip: When you're out with your child, talk about sounds. When you hear a sound, tell them what you hear and chat about where you think it is. "I hear a bird and I think it is in that tree." Ask what they hear, and where they think the sound is coming from. Take turns being the leader.

Brainy Background: When your child listens and names what they're hearing, they're paying attention and learning to connect words with sounds. This promotes language skills. By going back and forth together, you're reinforcing their learning.

### Reporting Live (3-5 years)

Vroom Tip: Waiting is a part of life. Do you wait in line at the store, at a doctor's office, or for a ride? While you're waiting, pretend you're a newscaster. Using your pretend microphone, ask your child questions: "What do you see? Who else is here? What do you think is going to happen next?"

Brainy Background: Giving your child a chance to tell the news provides them a chance to look at what is happening around them and put it into words. They're learning to be an effective communicator. There's nothing like a pretend microphone to get someone talking!

### Tomorrow Talk (4-5 years)

Vroom Tip: Today's the perfect time to talk to your child about tomorrow. Find out what they hope tomorrow has in store for them: "If you could do anything tomorrow, what would you most want to do?" Ask follow-up questions to stretch the moment. It's a good way to learn about their hopes for the future.

Brainy Background: Asking your child to think about the future helps them think ahead. These kinds of questions help them think flexibly to make up their own answers and be creative.

### Same Letter Sentence (4-5 years)

Vroom Tip: Start this game by choosing a letter. See if you and your child can think of a sentence that uses as many words as possible that begin with that letter. If you chose the letter M you might say, "My mother made meatballs." What other M words can you both come up with?

Brainy Background: Playing with letters and sounds is not just fun, its also the building blocks of your child's language and reading skills. They're using what they already know, paying attention and thinking flexibly. These skills also help them to come up with new, creative ideas.