



Making Connections in the Classroom Vroom Tip™ Collection

Real Life Matchup (0-12 months)

Vroom Tip: Match pictures to the real objects. After looking at a picture of an apple, for example, let your child touch and smell one. Describe what they're doing. "You're feeling the smooth red apple. Look, here it is in the picture!" Go back and forth and create a conversation.

Brainy Background: Babies take in information through their senses. When you let them make connections between real objects and pictures by using their senses, you help them understand the world around them. You're also introducing them to new words in a fun way through a back-and-forth conversation.

Sing, Read, Repeat (12 months – 2 years)

Vroom Tip: Your child probably enjoys listening to their favorite stories and songs over and over again. After singing or telling stories with them, ask if they want more. How do they respond? Do they nod or squirm away? Talk about their actions like, "You said yes!" or "You look like you're all done."

Brainy Background: Children learn through repetition and shared back-and-forth conversations. Repeating stories and songs helps your child understand the meaning behind words. It sets the stage for talking, and eventually reading. They're learning the basics of communication!

Body Language (0-2 years)

Vroom Tip: Practice using gestures with your child as another way to communicate. You can wave your hand and say "hi!" or shake your head and say "no." Or you can clap your hands and say "yay!" See if they will mimic your actions and sounds. Try going back and forth like a conversation.

Brainy Background: Many children use gestures before they speak. When you show your child how bodies and words work together, you teach them how to communicate. You also help them make connections between words and actions, an important part of talking, reading, and writing.

Today Is.... (0 – 3 years)

Vroom Tip: Describe to your child how the day is: "Today is bright and sunny. I can feel the warmth of the sun on my face," or "Brrr, today is cold! That's why we have coats on." Ask them to take a turn. Be sure to respond to their words or sounds.

Brainy Background: When your child hears you describe the weather and things associated with the weather, they're learning to make connections between what and why. These connections will help them develop critical thinking and communicating skills.

Animal Game (2-3 years)

Vroom Tip: Here is a fun guessing game while waiting. Start with, "I'm thinking of an animal." Then give your child clues to help guess what animal it is. For example, "I'm thinking of an animal who lives in our house and is black."

Brainy Background: Playing games like this help develop what scientists call "working memory." They are using working memory to remember names and details. It also turns waiting-time into a fun time for learning!

Can You Find It? (2-3 years)

Vroom Tip: Draw or use your cell phone to take pictures of things in your room like a chair, a table, or the refrigerator. Ask your child to look at your cell phone picture and say, "Can you find it in the room?" As they get good at this, you can make it a little harder.

Brainy Background: This game helps your child make connections between pictures (symbols) and real objects. This skill is a basic for reading (where written marks stand for words) and math (where numbers stand for quantities of things), and is essential for learning.

Picture Detective (2-4 years)

Vroom Tip: Encourage your child to be a picture detective. Look at a picture in a book or magazine. It can even be in a newspaper or in an ad on a bus or train. Talk about the picture together. Can you find certain objects? Ask questions like, "Look at that boy's face. How do you think he feels?"

Brainy Background: Pictures help your child make connections and to understand that words have meaning. Having them look closely builds focus and self-control. The example here also helps them learn to recognize other people's feelings.

Letter Lookout (4-5 years)

Vroom Tip: Pick a letter with your child and try to find it everywhere you go. Take turns calling it out when you see it. If they see an apple for the letter A, then you have to find something next. See how many things you can find. Four? Ten? More?

Brainy Background: "I Spy" games like this one are great brain builders. They make your child aware of their environment and teach them to make connections between similar things. You can try this game with letters, colors, shapes—anything really!

Playtime Picks (4-5 years)

Vroom Tip: Pick a color or letter with your child and go on a scavenger hunt to find as many things as you can in three minutes. How many things can you find that are blue? Count out loud together as you find each item. You can also play with letters: How many things do you see that start with T?

Brainy Background: Games like this one are great brain builders. They help your child get to know the world around them and teach them to make connections between similar things. You can try this game with letters, colors, shapes—anything really!