

VERMONT EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

MODULE 3: FAMILY ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 4: I WONDER...

AGE: Preschoolers

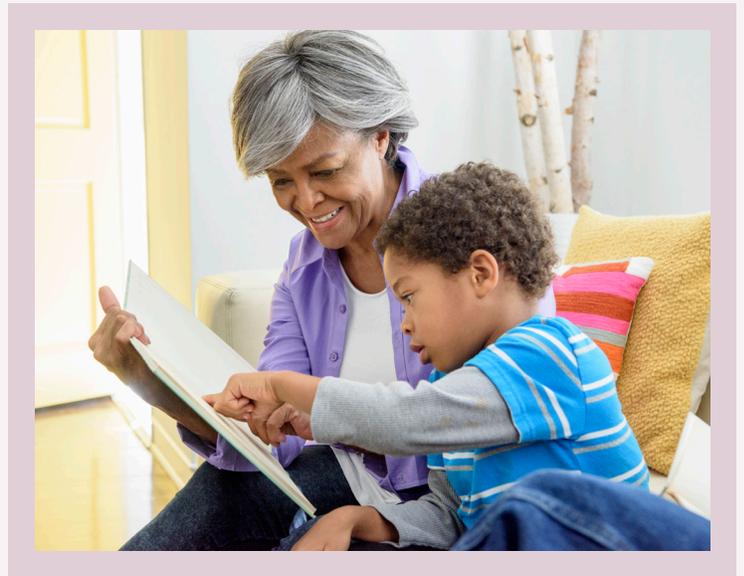
WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Pictures in a book or magazine, or pictures on the wall at home or out in the community

PURPOSE

Part of your child's language development is learning how to use their imaginations to create new ideas and stories, and to share those with you. This activity provides you with ways to get your child to think creatively and to tell you stories about what they see, using only what you see around you.

This activity relates to the Expressive Language element in the **Language Development** domain of the VELs.



HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO!

1. When you see an interesting picture with your child, use the ideas below to talk with your child.

- » Begin with, "I wonder..." and finish with things like, "where that boat is going," or "what would happen if..." Ask your child, "What do you think?"
- » Ask your child "What if..." questions about the picture. For example:
 - What if you were on that boat on the ocean? Where would you go? What would you see? Would you like being on the boat?
 - What if dinosaurs could talk? What would it say to you? What would you talk about?
 - What if you could fly on that bird's back? What would you see? Where would you go together?
- » Use your imagination to come up with questions to get your child to talk about the picture and to use their imagination to come up with a story.



2. Continue as long as your child is interested. If your child answers with only one sentence, that's ok. It may be that picture wasn't interesting to them. Move on to another one. If your child still isn't responding, consider these ideas:
- » Share some of your ideas. You can start with, "I think that maybe..." and then ask your child what they think.
 - » Is your child tired or hungry? Is there a better time of day for the activity? Maybe your child is ready for a nap or a meal instead.
 - » It may be helpful to start with things you know your child loves to practice these kinds of conversations. For example, if your child loves trains, start with pictures of trains and train stations.

SWITCH IT UP!

Here are some different ways that you and your child can do this activity throughout your day together.

- If English is not your home language, you may choose to have your child do this activity in English, or in your home language, or both!
- Use the same type of questions when your child brings you a picture they have made. This is a nice addition to, "Tell me about your picture."
- Events that children see in their TV shows or out in the community (for example, a sibling's baseball game or at the grocery store) can also be used as ideas for conversation starters. It doesn't have to be a picture.
- Places out in your community, such as libraries, museums, restaurants, parks, stores, the post office or the doctor's or dentist's office, are other places you may see different pictures and events to spark your child's creativity. Look around you for interesting things to look at and explore, particularly while you are waiting. This is a great way to pass the time!



CHECK IT OUT!

Visit your local library and check out these books to read with your child.

- *Dear Mr. Blueberry* – Simon James
- *Harold and the Purple Crayon* – Crockett Johnson
- *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* – Laura Numeroff
- *What Can You Do With a Paleta?* – Carmen Tafolla

Activity adapted from:

- McKinnon, E. (1996). *Teaching Town: Early Learning All Around the Town*. Warren Publishing House, Torrance, CA.
- McKinnon, E. (1996). *Teaching Trips: Early Learning on Short Trips*. Warren Publishing House, Torrance, CA.

