

Whether it's mealtime, bathtime, or anytime in between, there are so many ways to help build your child's brain. This PDF has a few brain building activities for children ages 3-4. You can print or cut them out, put them on your fridge, or carry them around—whatever helps to remind you that brain building moments are all around you in the things you already do.

	Vrom	Brainy Background powered by Mind in the Making
Rhyme Time		
Pick a word, like cake, and take turns saying words that rhyme with it. Keep going until you run out of words that rhyme, and then let your child pick a word to play with. See if you can come up with silly ones to keep it fun like slinky, pinky, stinky.		Rhyming or word guessing games, like this one, help your child detect differences in sounds. This will help with reading and writing later on
Ages 3-4	3) vroom.org (5	For more activities like these, check out # the free Vroom app!
	vrom	Brainy Background powered by Mind in the Making
Name That T	une	
Start humming a song your child knows and		This game helps your child focus and pay
have them guess what it is. If they guess		attention to sounds—which is important in
wrong, start over and hum the tune again. After a few guesses, you can add in some		communicating, reading, and writing—and it's fun too!
	nints. After a few tries,	
Ages 3-4	ې vroom.org ج	For more activities like these, check out #
	Vrom	Brainy Background powered by Mind in the Making
Would You F	Rather?	
Ask your child questions like, "Would you		Asking your child questions helps develop
rather be a bird or a fish? Why?" Have		their reasoning skills—especially when you
them give you a few reasons from real-life experience like, "I love the water so I want		ask questions that go beyond simple "yes" or "no" answers.
	u take a turn answering	
		For more activities like these, check out #

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going to When w " As your child ge turns going back and	ake up a story: "We're ⁄e get there we'll see ts in the rhythm, take	Creating a fill-in-the-blanks story means your child is thinking and cannot go on automatic pilot. They have to shift their thinking to respond to an unpredictable and changing story line. Thinking in flexible ways encourages problem solving skills.
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		Brainy Background powered by Mind in the Making
and then smile. You ca	nk at them and y to copy you. When ge the order—wink first an make it even more g and winking two times.	Playing this game helps your child learn to pay attention to what you're doing, remember the rules, and copy what you're doing. These are important skills for school and life.
Ages 3-4	ې vroom.org ج	For more activities like these, check out #55 the free Vroom app!
		Srainy Background
	e ate you as you walk, jump, touch your toes. Then	Your child uses their skills of focus and self- control as they try to mimic your words and actions. By changing the speed of the

clap, or bend down to touch your toes. Then see if they can do the actions when you just say the words. Challenge them by going fast and slow or adding multiple steps like, "Reach up, turn around, and then jump!"

Ages 3-4

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Your child uses their skills of focus and selfcontrol as they try to mimic your words and actions. By changing the speed of the movements, you ask them to think on their feet. They must also use their working memory to keep track of what comes next.

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The next time you come back from visiting your family, invite your child to help you make a memory book using one or more photos from your visit. Write the words they use to describe what's happening in the pictures. Ages 3-4	ling	Brainy Background powered by Mind in the Making	Vrom	
Ages 3-4Image: vroom.orgthe free Vroom app!Image: Do as I Say, Not as I Do Ask your child to listen to your words and do what you say, instead of following what you do. Say, "Stomp your feet" while you clap your hands. They should stomp their feet and tryImage: Vroom.orgImage: the free Vroom app!Image: Do as I Say, Not as I Do Ask your child to listen to your words and do what you say, instead of following what you do. Say, "Stomp your feet" while you clap your hands. They should stomp their feet and tryImage: Vroom app!	ns t and	When you write down your child's words after a family visit, they make connections between their real experiences, photos, and their words. They use their working memory to remember details of the visit and their communication skills to describe what happened.	The next time you come back from visiting your family, invite your child to help you make a memory book using one or more photos from your visit. Write the words they use to describe what's happening in the	
Do as I Say, Not as I Do Ask your child to listen to your words and do what you say, instead of following what you do. Say, "Stomp your feet" while you clap your hands. They should stomp their feet and try	#94	For more activities like these, check out the free Vroom app!) vroom.org	Ages 3-4
and new actions when they learn to do this. Take turns!	t	distracted by what you do. It's hard, but playing this game helps children develop life skills that they'll use now and in the future.	ot as I Do o your words and do following what you t" while you clap your o their feet and try bing. Try new words	Ask your child to listen t what you say, instead of do. Say, "Stomp your fee hands. They should stom not to focus on the clap and new actions when th
Ages 3-4 S vroom.org T For more activities like these, check out the free Vroom app!	#110	For more activities like these, check out the free Vroom app!	S vroom.org (S	Ages 3-4

Pretend Packing

Pretend you and your child are packing for a trip. It can be for a visit to a family member's house or an imaginary trip, like to outer space. Take turns naming things to bring. As they get older, you can try coming up with things in alphabetical order.

Ages 3-4

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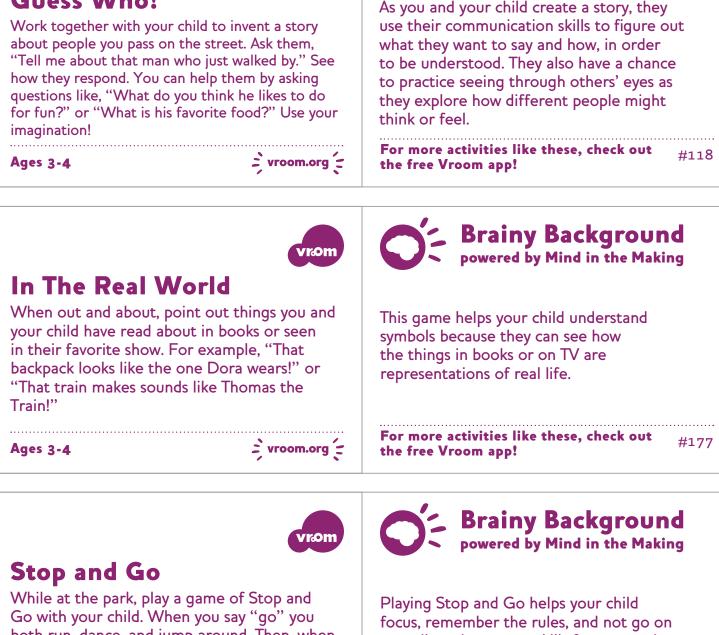


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When you take turns, you help your child practice their self-control. As they think of items to bring on your trip, they must use what they already know to imagine the future. This involves thinking critically to plan and thinking flexibly to come up with new and creative ideas.

For more activities like these, check out #111 the free Vroom app!

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Go with your child. When you say "go" you both run, dance, and jump around. Then, when you say "stop" everybody freezes. After a few rounds, let them be the one to shout the commands.

Ages 3-4

Guess Who!

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focus, remember the rules, and not go on autopilot—important skills for success in school and in life.

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Vrom	Brainy Background powered by Mind in the Making	
Reporting Live! While waiting at the supermarket, drugstore, or doctor's office, 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?"	Giving your child a chance to tell the news provides them with an opportunity to observe 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!	
Ages 3-4	For more activities like these, check out #216 the free Vroom app!	
	Brainy Background powered by Mind in the Making	
Finger Marker	powered by Mind in the Making	
While waiting, draw a shape (like a circle or a wiggly line), using your fingertip on your child's open palm. Can they name it? Repeat the same shape until they can guess what it is. Take turns back and forth, drawing and guessing shapes.	When you play a Finger Marker, you give your child a chance to put together what they know about how shapes look with how shapes feel. It's a new and fun way to learn shapes through the sense of touch!	
Ages 3-4 S vroom.org S	For more activities like these, check out #220 the free Vroom app!	
	Srainy Background	
Hot Potato	powered by Mind in the Making	
You and your child can play this game anywhere you are. Find a small item to pass back and forth and sing a song as you do. As the song ends, whoever has the object does something special or silly, like blink three times or jump up and down. Take turns	Playing Hot Potato gives your child practice in following the rules and taking turns. It also gives them practice with self-control, a skill that helps them to stick with something long enough to meet their goals.	

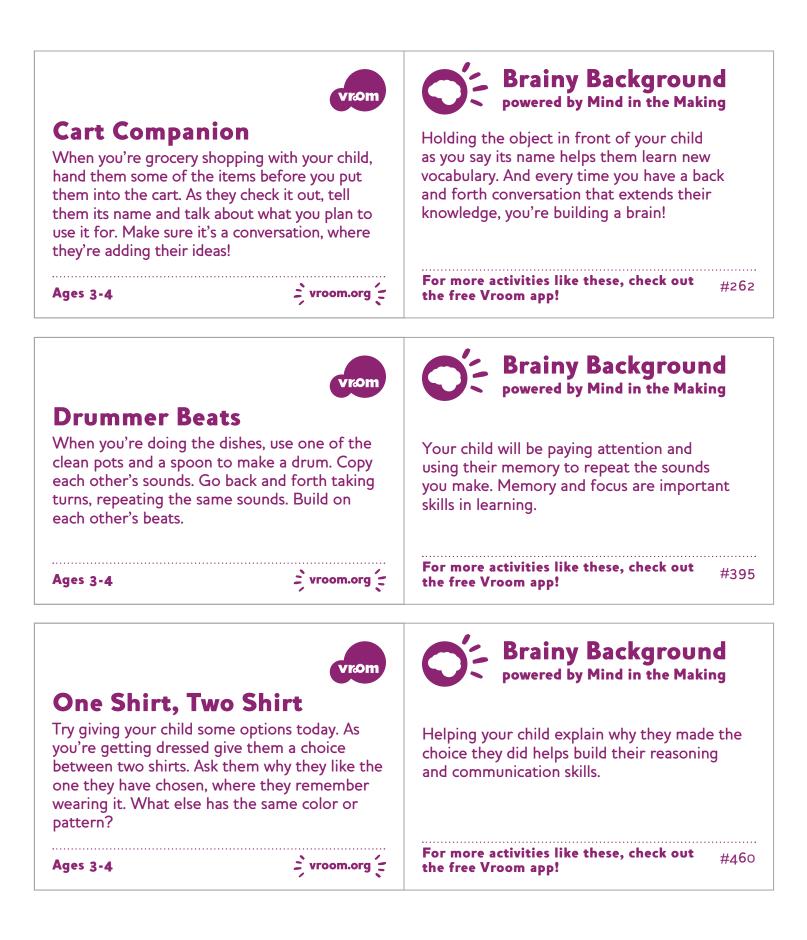
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or jump up and down. Take turns.

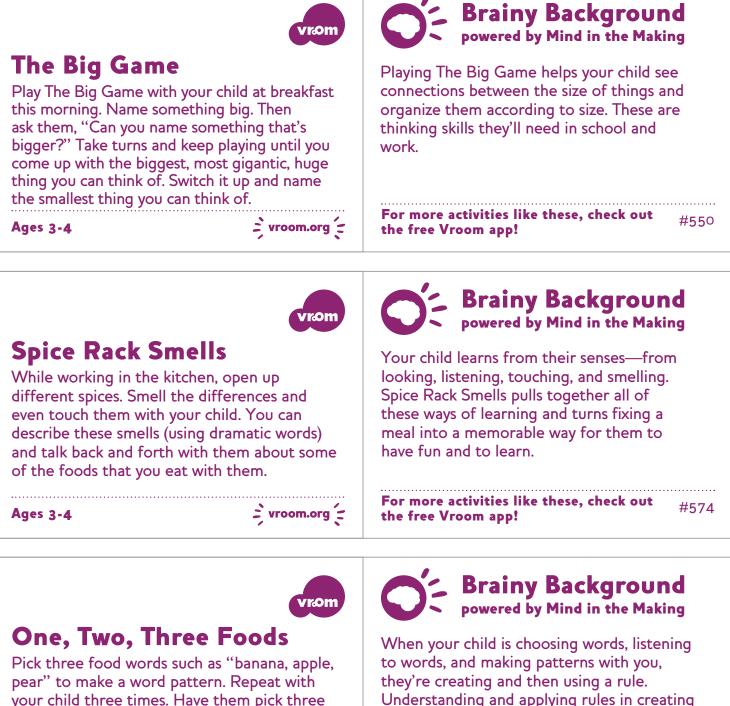
Ages 3-4





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Laundry Delivery After folding the laundry, ask your child to help you with Laundry Delivery. "Where do the towels go? That's right, in the bathroom! What about your pajamas? Yes! In your room. Which drawer?" Switch and let them pick the items and ask you where they go.		When children learn to group things into categories, they learn how to organize and make sense of their experience. Just think about how important "matching" is to reading math, science, and many other subjects.
Ages 3-4) vroom.org	For more activities like these, check out #524 the free Vroom app!
Sandwich Shap Sandwiches can seem ever aren't square. As you mal ask, "How many pieces de them together. Talk about arrange them on a plate ask what it looks like now	en better when they te one for your child, to you want?" Count t their shapes or in a new shape and	Did you ever think making a sandwich could stretch your child's thinking skills? You're helping them learn the skill of making unusual connections, which is the basis of creativity!
Ages 3-4) vroom.org	For more activities like these, check out #543 the free Vroom app!
Spot the Color At breakfast, ask your chi your shirt today (or pants ask, "What other things a your ideas, too, and make naming game. See how n name by the time you fin	ld, "What color is or dress)?" Then are that color?" Add a it a back and forth many things you can	Description Playing the Spot the Color doesn't just teach your child colors. You're also giving them the chance to practice their growing ability to focus on an idea and a task with another person. The ability to "focus" is very important in life and in school.
Ages 3-4) vroom.org (For more activities like these, check out #545



your child three times. Have them pick three food words and make a pattern three times: "fork, spoon, plate." Talk about what word comes first, second, and third.

Ages 3-4

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#577

patterns will help them learn math concepts

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as they grow.

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Mealtime Check-In

When eating together, invite your child to think about their day by asking, "What was the BEST part of your day?" Have each person at the table answer. Then ask, "What was the WORST part of your day?" Go around the table again. Share your day with them and encourage them to ask others.

Ages 3-4



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When your child hears about others' experiences, they begin to learn how to understand another person's point of view—an important skill for life. They're also practicing the back and forth of conversation and evaluating the day's experience, which build family connections and make mealtime meaningful.

For more activities like these, check out #592 the free Vroom app!



When you set the table for a meal, encourage your child to think of different ways to fold napkins or paper towels to make different shapes and sizes. You might say, "What shapes can you make? What does this shape look like? What would happen if you kept folding the corners down?"

Ages 3-4

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Your child is thinking about a familiar thing—a napkin—in new ways as they fold. Engaging in a back and forth conversation about what they're doing promotes curiosity and helps them make connections between shapes and what they look like. The conversation also helps develop creativity and critical thinking, all skills they'll need later in life.

For more activities like these, check out #593 the free Vroom app!



Silly Songwriter

Turn a familiar tune like "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" into a silly song. Change the words to something like, "Row, row, row your elephant." See if your child catches on to the joke. "Can you really row an elephant? What could you row?" Can they take a turn to add a silly verse to this song?

Ages 3-4

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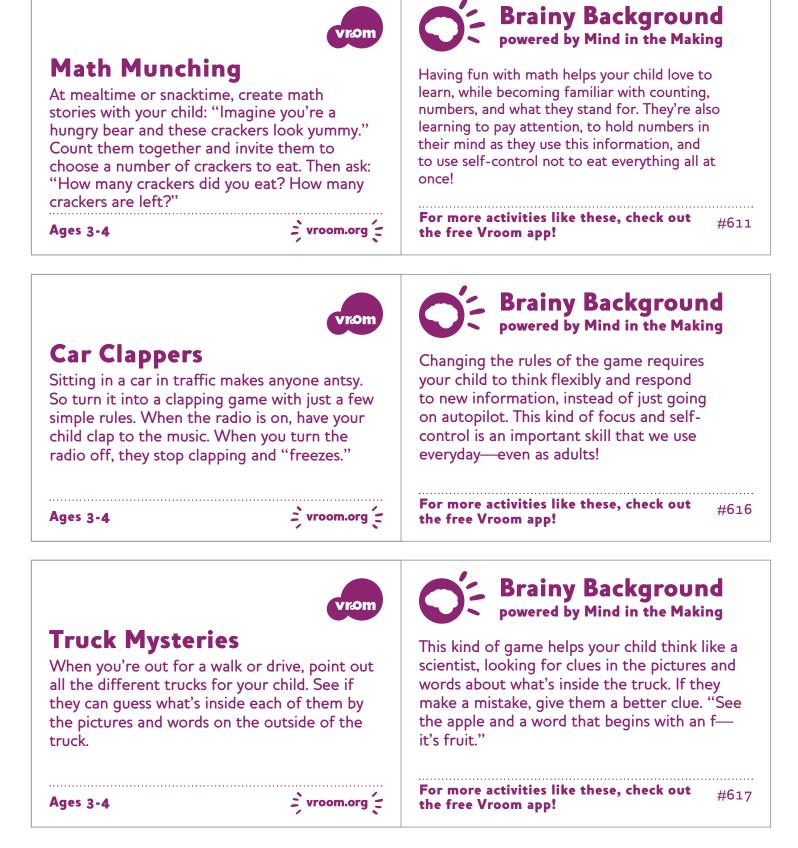


Brainy Background

To play this game, your child must listen closely and use their memory to recall the words to songs. They're also playing with what's real and what isn't—important concepts for understanding how the world works.

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Imagination Station When you're waiting at a stoplight or on the subway, make up a story together about someone across the street or on the opposite platform. Where is the woman in the hat going? What will she do when she gets there? Try to elaborate on their ideas.		When you're telling stories, have your child think about how the character in the story might think and feel. This will help them learn how to see other people's perspectives. It's a valuable skill that we all use everyday, adults and children!	
Ages 3-4	ې vroom.org ج	For more activities like these, check out #626 the free Vroom app!	
	Vrom	Brainy Background powered by Mind in the Making	
Colorful Wor	ld		
When you're out with y with them to find color something and name the all of the things you ca same color. Take turns	s. Have them point to ne color. Then you name n think of that are the	Thinking about what characteristics objects have in common (whether it's colors, shapes, or size) sparks connections in your child's growing brain.	
Ages 3-4) vroom.org	For more activities like these, check out #632 the free Vroom app!	
	Vrom	Brainy Background powered by Mind in the Making	
Listoping Gou			
that are all around you. W them what you hear and o	ur child, talk about sounds /hen you hear a sound, tell describe where you think nink it is in that tree." Ask a they think the sound is	When your child listens and identifies what they're hearing, they're paying attention and learning to connect words with sounds, which promotes language skills. By going back and forth together, you're reinforcing their learning.	

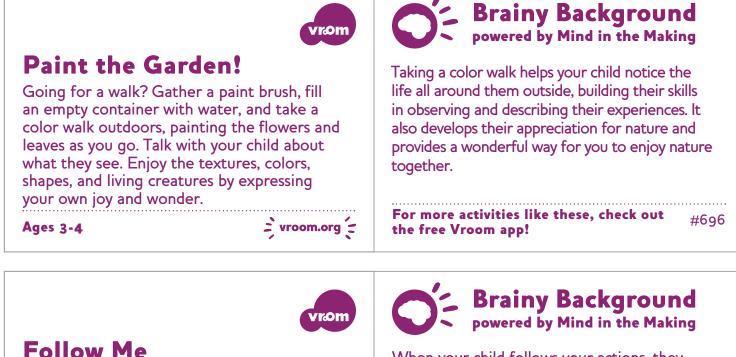
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Ages 3-4



When your child follows your actions, they learn concepts like up, down, forward, and backward by experiencing them with their body. By changing the rules, you challenge them to use self-control to stay focused and not go on autopilot, important skills for learning now and in the future.

For more activities like these, check out #715 the free Vroom app!



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Wheel Watch

what you do.

Ages 3-4

While on foot, on the bus, or in the car, encourage your child to point out the different kinds of wheels they see. Talk with them about what you both notice. Do they see big wheels on a truck or two small wheels on a bike? What else can they think of that has wheels?

Ask your child, "Can you do what I do?" Walk

forward or backward, bend down or reach up

high. Talk with them about what you're doing

like, "Touch your toes and touch the sky!"

Then give them a turn to lead. Change the

game and see if they can do the opposite of

Ages 3-4

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By supporting and responding to your child's explorations, you're helping build their vocabulary and ability to focus on a task. Being able to put things in categories (thinking about what's the same and different), also helps them become better at making connections.

For more activities like these, check out #737 the free Vroom app!



Turn Tower

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Using items like cups, take turns stacking with your child to build a tower. Say, "My turn," as you stack one and then, "Your turn," as they do. Eventually, stop using words. Do they keep taking turns? Try to playfully break the rules and take two turns. What do they do?

Ages 3-4

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You're showing your child the importance of working together as you build, while also asking them to focus to make sure the tower stays up. They're also using working memory to keep track of whose turn it is, without your words to guide them.

For more activities like these, check out #861 the free Vroom app!



Warm and Cold

Hide something like a spoon or cup and encourage your child to find it. As they get closer say, "You're getting warm." If they move farther away say, "You're getting cold." When they find the item, invite them to choose a hiding place and use "warm" and "cold" to tell you where to look.

Ages 3-4

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For more activities like these, check out #869 the free Vroom app!



Brainy Background powered by Mind in the Making

As you give your child clues with the words "warm" and "cold," they must remember the rules of the game to search for the item. They must focus on finding the object without getting distracted, a skill that will help them pursue goals now and in the future.

For more activities like these, check out #1005 the free Vroom app!



Ages 3-4

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How Many?

Invite your child to predict how many seeds will be in an apple when you cut it or how many pieces of orange there will be when you peel it. Count the seeds or slices together and compare their prediction to what you both discovered. What other foods can you use for this game?

Ages 3-4

Ages 3-4

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In this game, your child is using early science skills to predict the number of seeds or slices, count them, and then compare their prediction to what they discover. They're also learning to estimate numbers, an important concept in math.

For more activities like these, check out #1037 the free Vroom app!



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Our Weather Wrap-Up

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When you come in from outside, have a conversation with your child about the weather. Were you hot or cold? Make sure you use simple sentences, but add bigger words, too



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Talking with your child about their experience helps to build their brain. Remember to ask questions: "Did your coat keep you warm?" And build on what they say: "The wind made me shiver, like it did you."

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