



Extraordinarily Committed to Enrichment in Language & Literacy

The *Art* of Narrating Your Day

A strategy often recommended for children who are deaf or hard of hearing is narration: having adults around them **sign/talk out loud** or **narrate** actions—their own and the child's. Children of all ages may not fully realize that all humans are constantly thinking and problem-solving in their minds. Narrating actions and thoughts helps children learn information directly that is often expected to be absorbed passively. It also assists children in understanding how to use language for thinking. Just trying a few things will make a huge impact with your child's language development.

Infants and young toddlers

- Observe your child's actions. Use simplified language to describe what you see. (e.g., *You are jumping! Up and down!*)
- Sign/talk about what you are doing and thinking when you are around your child and have their attention. (e.g., *I am hungry. I want a banana.*)

[Thirty Million Words: The Power of Words](#)
[VL2 Research Brief: Family Involvement in ASL Acquisition](#)



Older toddlers through preschoolers

- Begin to talk about what your child may do next using words such as *think, wonder, suppose, curious, etc.* (e.g., *I see you put your shoes on—I wonder if you want to go outside.*)
- Begin to narrate your problem-solving in a way your child can access (e.g., *Oops, I dropped this egg. I need to pick it up. If I don't, it will be sticky and ants might come. I will use a paper towel to clean it up.*)

[Hearing First: Play-By-Play](#)

Elementary students

- Read books with them and beside them daily. Talk with them about the book you are reading, what you think will happen, what emotions you are experiencing, etc.
- Involve your child in solving common problems. For example, if the sink is clogged, have your child help you take it apart to clean it while talking about each step. If it does not work, have your child help you find how to contact the plumber or watch a YouTube tutorial.

[All Pro Dad: 10 Ways to Teach your Children to be Problem Solvers](#)



Teenagers—*narration and discussion is very crucial for this age, too.*

- Read while your student is doing homework. Talk with them about their school reading and tell them about things you read. Be sure to expand their world knowledge by discussing world events and how you may feel about them.
- Do a project together where your student is significantly involved in the planning. For example, if going on a trip, look up the route together, compare flight prices, make a packing list, etc. Be sure you are discussing your thoughts!

[Scholastic: Be a Reading Role Model](#)

