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## Tips for Communicating with Young Learners

- **Use your voice, face, and hands.** Gesturing with your hands and face (such as pointing, shrugging your shoulders, or frowning) helps young children understand the meaning of your words. And your voice can also help with word meanings – such as making your voice rise upwards as you say the word “up”.
- **Break it down.** Young kids have trouble following too many directions given at once. Try to stagger your requests into small blocks. Breakdown information into digestible, bite-sized pieces for the simplification of information for learners’ maximum absorption and retention of complex information. ***Slow down.***
- **Ask open-ended questions.** This questioning style provides invitations to say more and to share ideas and feelings.
- **Encourage students to ask their own questions.** “When students know how to ask their own questions, they take greater ownership of their learning, deepen comprehension, and make new connections and discoveries on their own” (Dan Rothstein).
- **Find similarities and embrace differences.** Relate to students about where you share interests. Show interest in areas where you differ.
- **Use visuals whenever possible.** Visuals can help turn a concept from abstract to concrete.
- **User personal stories.** Share your interests in particular subjects to motivate students by modeling enthusiasm and a love for learning.
- **Give examples.** Illustrate the concepts you’re discussing with real-world, relatable situations.
- **Define difficult words.** Ensure that students understand relevant vocabulary. Define words or rephrase using simplified terms.
- **Provide opportunities to practice.** Students will need lots of opportunities to practice the new skill or concept they have learned. One great way for students to review a new concept is to have them teach it to someone else. Teaching a concept reinforces the learning process, prompting differentiated and more in-depth comprehension.

The process of communicating the new skill or concept also develops learning, as the student must be able to explain using practical application. Finally, the opportunity to answer questions will enhance comprehension specific to the new concept or skill, as well as promoting communication and adaptive thinking skills.

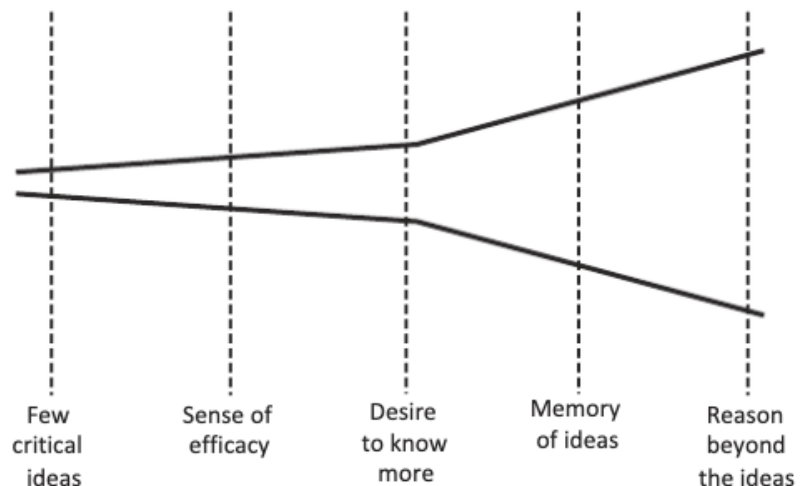


Figure 0.1 Learning That Expands Over Time



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Resources:

- <http://www.hanen.org/Helpful-Info/Articles/Talking-to-Young-Children-Makes-a-Big-Difference!.aspx>
- <https://childdevelopmentinfo.com/how-to-be-a-parent/communication/talk-to-kids-listen/#gs.yabnvq>
- [http://www.grecs.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Talking\\_With\\_Young\\_Children.pdf](http://www.grecs.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Talking_With_Young_Children.pdf)
- [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332131941\\_Teaching\\_Complex\\_Ideas\\_How\\_to\\_Translate\\_Your\\_Expertise\\_into\\_Great\\_Instruction](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332131941_Teaching_Complex_Ideas_How_to_Translate_Your_Expertise_into_Great_Instruction)
- <https://www.edapp.com/blog/what-is-a-complex-concept-and-how-do-you-teach-it/>
- <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/ed/15/05/does-it-have-be-so-complicated>
- <https://minds-in-bloom.com/how-to-simplify-difficult-concepts-for/>