Description of Scaffolding Strategies

General Open-Ended Questions:
These questions occur naturally as part of a conversation and are intended to facilitate dialogue and reciprocal participation. Open-ended questions are questions to which the answer is unknown and to which there is no one correct response. They help the child initiate and maintain a topic or an activity:
“What’s happening?” “What’s this story about?”

Encouragements:
The adult offers simple encouragements on an on-going basis to increase the child’s confidence and sense of self-competence:
“You’re putting all the blocks in the wagon.”
“That’s exciting!”

Predictions:
The adult helps the child go beyond the immediate context and hypothesize about novel situations, predict future events, and anticipate possible difficulties:
“What’s going to happen if we put one more block on the tower?”
“What could go wrong?”

Planning:
The adult helps the child organize and sequence future actions and events:
“What should we do next?”

Cause-Effect Inferences:
The adult helps the child establish causal relationships between events and outcomes:
“What did you do to make a sound with the drum?”
Pointing to drum after child has made sounds, “What did you do?”

Evaluations:
The adult encourages the child to check the results of his/her own actions and to judge the appropriateness of his/her actions:
“Is that how you put your shoes on?”
“Does that look right?”

Think Aloud Summaries:
The adult summarizes events and actions to help the child complete a task:
“What else?”
“We’ve put the juice and cookies in the diaper bag. What else do we need?”

Clarification Requests
The adult encourages the child to provide reasons for his or her ideas and actions in order to help solve a problem.
“Why do you think Big Bird is hiding from Oscar?” asked while reading a story.
“If you stand on the coffee table, what do you think could happen?”

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Interpretation of Events and Assumptions:
The adult offers interpretations and explains underlying meanings to help the child complete a task, reach a solution or understand reasons for success or failure of an action:
   “I don’t think Katie heard what you said. Can you tell her again?”
   “Daddy wants you to ask for more juice with words not hitting.”

Clarification of Goal:
The adult reminds the child of the purpose of an activity and of the performance levels expected:
   “Remember, we make everybody’s sandwich before we eat them.”
   “Let’s put your coat and hat on so we can go home.”

Restatement of Goal:
The child is asked to restate the goal of a task and performance levels expected:
   “How many sandwiches do we need? Who gets them?”

Recognition of Inconsistencies and Contradictions:
The adult helps the child recognize the inconsistencies and contradictions between actions, events, and facts:
   “You said that you needed a big block, but this one is very small.”
   “You asked for a ball.” As dad is showing a car to the child, he asks,
   “Is this a ball?”

Think Aloud:
The adult helps the child describe aloud what he or she is doing or thinking to help them become aware of the processes involved in solving problems:
   “Tell me what you are doing.”

Relationships:
Adults prompt children to notice relationships and connections between events and characteristics of objects:
   “This shirt is the same color as your pants.”
   “When you drink your juice, the cup is empty.”

Similarities and Differences:
Adults help children consider how the present situation is different or similar to previous one:
   While looking at a picture in a book that is
   similar to previous page, but also has some
   differences, ask “What’s different?”
   Where entering a room with the furniture rearranged, ask “What’s new?”

Sequencing:
The adult prompts the child in the use of logical connectives (e.g.,
before, after, because, if this/then that). The adult helps the child
find a starting point and continue in correct sequence:
   “Which puzzle piece would you choose first?”
   “What should you put on first, shoes or socks?”

Peer Modeling:
The adult pairs the child with a more experienced peer so that the child learns to perform tasks through observation and collaboration.
   “Billy likes to build with blocks, too.”
Making Distinctions:
The adult prompts the child to make distinctions between categories of events, objects and statements:
"Is this a real cookie or just pretend?"
"Is that your shoe or daddy’s shoe?"

Relating to the Child’s Own Experience:
The adult helps the child relate a new or strange situation experience to something in the child’s experience:
"Is that cold like ice cream?"
"This is rabbit fur, have you ever felt anything soft like this?"

Alternatives:
The adult encourages the child to propose alternative ways and solutions to a problem:
"What else could we use to reach the cupboard?"
"What else could you use to make the house taller?"

Information Talk:
The adult verbally describes the child’s actions:
"Now you’re pouring the water into the big bucket.”
“That’s a brown cow and that’s a yellow cat.”

Orientation:
The adult proposes appropriate tools or strategies to help facilitate the child’s performance:
"Try using the big truck.”
"Do you think we could push it?"
"Ask mom to help you.”

Providing Modeling:
The adult exposes the child to adult models of problem-solving strategies:
The adult stacks half of the books on the shelf.
as a demonstration.
The adult stirs the pudding and then offers the spoon to the child.

Reduction of Alternatives:
The adult simplifies the task by reducing the number of choices, stimuli and/or actions:
"Should we play with the legos or blocks?"
“You can drink milk or juice.”

Increasing Incentives:
The adult makes the task more motivating for the child by associating completion of the task with rewarding activities:
"When we finish the story, we can go out to the playground.”
“When the juice is gone, you can watch Barney.”

Increasing Familiarity:
The adult makes the task more familiar for the child by using familiar materials or teaching tasks in a familiar setting or routine:
“The socks go in this drawer.”
Name the foods at snack and find their pictures in the story.

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Matching Interests:
The adult modifies aspects of the original to match closer the interests of the child.
   Substitute blocks with toy dinosaurs.
   Put toy cars in the sand table instead of scoops and pails.

Rearrangement of Elements:
The adult changes the arrangement of materials to help the child complete the task or solve the problem:
   Place puzzle pieces together that go together.
   Turn objects in the right direction.

Making More Concrete:
The adult modifies a situation by decreasing the level of symbolic representation and memory demands.
   When reading stories, match real objects with pictures.
   Comb your own hair instead of a dolly’s hair.

Reminders:
The adult “holds” in memory important information for the child and offers it as needed during the problem-solving:
   “Remember, the big one goes in first.”
   “If you sit down, it’s easier to put your shoes on.”

Direct Questions:
The adult cues the child to relevant aspects of the task by asking direct questions:
   While pointing to an object asks, “What’s this?”
   While eating snack, “What are you eating?”

Visual Cues:
The adult facilitates task performance by providing visual models and visual prompts (e.g., the adult demonstrates how to complete the task or points to the correct solution).
   Adult points to the next ring for the stacking ring.
   Adult demonstrates “Peek” with a hanky.

Co-Participation:
The adult encourages the child to accompany the adult in performing an action or task (e.g., singing a song, playing a turn taking game).
   “Ring around the roses.”
   “Let’s put the hankies on our faces and pull them down to play ‘peek’.”

Labeling:
The adult provides a verbal description of how to perform a task, or of the solution of a problem:
   “I would push the green one.”
   “That animal is a cow.”

Direct Requests:
The adult provides the child with directive prompts to help the child complete a task:
   “Take the big ball.”
   “Say ‘juice’.”

Repeating the Task:
The adult encourages the child to repeat a task after the child's first attempt failed:
   “Let’s try again.”