



SCIENCE IN PRE-K

A Partnership between PNC Grow Up Great,
DCPS and the National Air and Space Museum

Teacher Responses

Teacher responses are a crucial way to validate children's theories and support their sense of wonder and discovery. Responses can either promote or limit inquiry. It is important to practice promoting inquiry and to recognize when a teacher limits inquiry – this only helps improve our practice!

Promoting Inquiry

- Teacher responses can promote reflection
 - Restating/paraphrasing what children say
 - Asking children for their ideas
 - Accepting their ideas without judgment
- Teacher responses can promote analysis
 - Ask for descriptive details
 - Ask for examples, comparisons, and alternatives
 - Use “What if...? Why do you think so? How do you know?” questions.

Limiting inquiry

- Teacher responses can prevent children's thinking when
 - Explaining the observation to children
 - Cutting students off during conversation
 - Correcting students, or telling them what to think
- Teacher responses can limit children's thinking when
 - Leading them to the “correct” answer
 - Telling them what to do
 - Moving on too quickly – thinking takes time!