

Supporting Information

There are three sections. First, we review the results for the amount of visible information mentioned in children's responses. Then we review how coders used the Likert Scales, and the relative frequency with which they gave different scores. Finally, we review results when we coded for the presence of generic language in children's responses.

Appendix S1. Analyses of Visible Scores

Responses in each trial were coded for the amount of visible information (information that was visually available in the picture) on a Likert scale from 1: "Never refers to visible" to 5: "Only refers to visible." Cronbach's alpha was very high, Experiment 1: $\alpha = .93$; Experiment 2: $\alpha = .91$; Experiment 3: $\alpha = .94$. Scores were then averaged across coders and across trials.

Experiment 1

An age by condition ANOVA revealed a no effect of age, $F(1, 61) = 0.35, p = .549$, but a main effect of condition, $F(1, 61) = 6.81, p = .011, \eta^2_p = .10$, qualified by a marginal interaction between age and condition, $F(1, 61) = 3.47, p = .067, \eta^2_p = .05$. Five-year-olds provided more visible information in the Knowledge condition than in the Ignorance condition, $t(31.92) = 3.89, p = .002$, while four-year-olds did not show a difference, $t(28) = 0.50, p = .623$. Four- and five-year-olds did not differ in their transmission of visible information to ignorant listeners, $t(30) = 0.81, p = .423$, but 5-year-olds were marginally more likely to provide visible information to knowledgeable listeners than were 4-year-olds $t(30) = 1.94, p = .062$.

Experiment 2

Visible scores showed a main effect of condition, $F(2, 153) = 13.285, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .148$, with no main effect of age, $F(2, 153) = 0.176, p = .839$, and a trending interaction, $F(4,$

153) = 2.114, $p = .082$, $\eta^2_p = .052$. Follow-up one-way ANOVAs by age revealed an effect of condition at ages 5, $F(2,51) = 7.42$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2_p = .23$, and 6, $F(2,57) = 9.94$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .26$, but not at age 4, $F(2,45) = 1.94$, $p = .155$. At age 5, children were more likely to provide visible information in the Knowledge condition than the Ignorance condition, $t(34) = 4.12$, $p < .001$, and were more likely to convey visible information in the Knowledge condition than the Baseline condition $t(31.46) = 2.36$, $p = .025$, while the Ignorance and Baseline conditions did not differ, $t(32) = 1.31$, $p = .199$. Similarly, 6-year-olds provided visible information more often in the Knowledge condition than in the Ignorance condition, $t(39) = 4.53$, $p < .001$, and more often in the Knowledge condition than in the Baseline condition, $t(38) = 2.81$, $p = .008$, but did not differ between Ignorance and Baseline conditions, $t(37) = 1.55$, $p = .129$.

Experiment 3

There were no main effects or interactions, all $ps > .10$.

Appendix S2. Coders' use of the Likert Scales.

In each experiment, coders judged whether responses included General and Specific information using 5-point Likert scales, ranging from 1: "Definitely does not [contain general/specific information]" to 5: "Definitely does." Here we report the relative frequency with which coders gave each rating (i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5). We show this first for general information, and then for specific information.

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------|----|---|---|----|----|
| Experiment 1 | | | | | |
| Ignorance | 12 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 75 |
| Knowledge | 44 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 47 |
| Experiment 2 | | | | | |
| Baseline | 17 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 65 |
| Ignorance | 11 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 78 |
| Knowledge | 24 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 56 |
| Experiment 3 | | | | | |
| Teach | 7 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 77 |
| Tell | 18 | 5 | 6 | 10 | 61 |

Percentage of times that each score (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) was given in each condition and experiment when coding for general information.

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------|----|---|---|---|----|
| Experiment 1 | | | | | |
| Ignorance | 56 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 37 |
| Knowledge | 24 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 67 |
| Experiment 2 | | | | | |
| Baseline | 46 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 42 |
| Ignorance | 54 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 32 |
| Knowledge | 30 | 2 | 2 | 9 | 57 |
| Experiment 3 | | | | | |
| Teach | 50 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 30 |
| Tell | 38 | 6 | 6 | 9 | 41 |

Percentage of times that each score (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) was given in each condition and experiment when coding for specific information.

Appendix S3. Generic Language in Children’s Responses

Our primary focus in the main text was on whether children mentioned general and specific facts in their responses. However, children’s responses also varied in whether they featured generic language in which children referred to kinds. To examine the extent to which children used generic responses, we (the first and second author) independently coded each of children’s responses for the presence of generic language across the three experiments. We were blind to condition and children’s age while doing the coding, and categorized responses as including generic language if, at any point, they referred to the relevant kind of object (e.g., sheep in trials about the sheep) using: bare plurals nouns (e.g., “leaves”, “leafs”); a plural preceded by “all” (e.g., “all leaves”); a singular preceded by “a” or “an” (e.g., “an umbrella”); or “they”. Inter-rater reliability was excellent, $\kappa = .88$, and conflicts were resolved by discussion.

Because many responses included multiple pieces of information, responses that included generic language often also featured non-generic language (e.g., “It comes down from a tree. And they’re different colours”). Even so, generic language was used relatively infrequently, occurring in only 33% of children’s responses. The following table shows the percentage of responses including generic language in each experiment.

Table S1. *Percentage of Responses Including Generic Language by Experiment and Condition*

| Study | Percent generic |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Experiment 1 | |
| Ignorance | 41 |
| Knowledge | 21 |
| Experiment 2 | |
| Ignorance | 42 |
| Baseline | 39 |
| Knowledge | 13 |
| Experiment 3 | |
| Teach | 35 |
| Tell | 43 |

We were curious about whether the differences in children's references to general facts (i.e., those reported in the main text) fully overlapped with variations in generic language. To examine this, we reanalyzed the General Scores from each experiment, but excluded all trials in which the child included generic language. Hence, if a participant had used generic language in both trials, they were excluded; and if they had used generic language in just one trial, we only used the General Score from their other, non-generically worded trial.

These analyses replicated the major effects of listener's knowledge and children's pedagogical intent on General Scores. In Experiment 1, a condition by age ANOVA revealed a main effect of condition, $F(1, 51) = 6.94, p = .011, \eta^2_p = .12$, and an interaction between age and condition, $F(1, 51) = 5.97, p = .018, \eta^2_p = .11$, but no main effect of age, $F(1,51) = 1.46, p = .41$. The main effect of condition resulted because children were more likely to mention general facts when the listener was ignorant ($M = 4.01$) compared with when the listener was knowledgeable ($M = 2.95$).

In Experiment 2, a condition by age ANOVA again revealed a main effect of condition, $F(2, 122) = 4.22, p = .017, \eta^2_p = .07$, but no effect of age, $F(2, 122) = 1.62, p = .201$, and no interaction between age and condition, $F(4, 122) = 1.87, p = 1.21$. The main effect of condition resulted because children were more likely to mention general facts when the listener was ignorant ($M = 3.94$) compared with when the listener was knowledgeable ($M = 3.15$), $t(90) = 2.96, p = .004$. However, responses in the baseline condition ($M = 3.49$) did not differ from those in the knowledge and ignorance conditions, both $ps > .15$.

In Experiment 3, a condition by age ANOVA revealed a main effect of condition, $F(1, 54) = 10.99, p = .002, \eta^2_p = .17$, a marginal effect of age, $F(1, 54) = 3.63, p = .062, \eta^2_p = .063$, and no interaction, $F(1, 54) = .09, p = .769$. The main effect of condition resulted because

children were more likely to mention general facts when their intent was to teach ($M = 4.29$) than merely to tell ($M = 3.93$).

Together these findings show that variations in children's references to general facts occurred even when excluding responses that included general language. This is not surprising as children were asked a question that referred to a specific object (i.e., "Can you tell Mr. Bear about *it*?"), and because general facts can be conveyed using non-generic language (e.g., in describing the cup many children said "*it's* for drinking").