

Area 2

Language

A child learns to speak by hearing others talk. The greater the language use in the home and school, the more opportunities a child has to learn language. As a parent or teacher, you can help develop language skills by responding to a child when he/she speaks and expanding on what a child says. Talk about what you are doing in daily activities, explain new experiences, and model correct language.

Listening Skills

A child's listening skills typically develop before his/her speaking skills. Listening skills begin at birth as a child reacts to various environmental sounds. Soon, a child begins to discriminate between various pitches, volumes, and qualities of sounds.

Around age one, a child responds to specific words.

Vocabulary Skills

Between the ages of one and two years, a child discovers that names stand for things. Following this realization, vocabulary explodes and typically grows from 200-300 words at two years of age to about 3,000 words by age six.

Speaking Skills

Around two years of age, a child creates two-word utterances to express thoughts. By age three, three words are put together and by age four, a child can give an account of a recent experience. By age five, a child can engage in a conversation with others.

Body Parts Identification Skills

From infancy on, a baby explores his/her body and learns about capabilities, contours, and the space it occupies. At the same time, a child learns the names of various body parts.

Suggested Items

- picture book(s)
- toys
- box(es)
- telephone (play or real)

Similar items may be substituted.

Language

Listening Skills - Age Norms

Listens to and understands picture book stories. . .

- 2.6 answers very simple questions about people and objects
- 3.6 answers simple questions about main events and details

Identifies simple action words. . .

- 2.6 identifies 5 or more common verbs: "running," "walking," "jumping," "swimming," "sleeping," "eating," "riding," etc.

Understands directional words when spoken by others. . .

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| 2.9 in/on/out | 4.6 away |
| 3.0 up/down | 4.6 forward/backward |
| 3.3 over/under | 4.6 before/after |
| 3.3 top/bottom | 4.6 around/through |
| 3.3 front/back | 4.6 above/below |
| 3.6 behind | 4.6 between |
| 3.6 next/beside | 5.0 center/corner |

Understands negative words in simple sentences when spoken by others. . .

- 3.0 knows the difference between "Give me..." and "Don't give me..."
- 4.0 understands the word "not."

Understands differences in comparative words. . .

- 3.6 knows the difference between big, bigger, biggest; long, longer, longest; close, closer, closest; far, farther, farthest; short, shorter, shortest, etc.

Understands the meaning of passive voice in sentences. . .

- 4.6 examples of sentences: "The cat was chased by the dog."
"The boy was hit by the toy."

Understands the meaning of abstract adjectives spoken by others. . .

- 4.6 pretty, ugly, wild, tame, etc.

Language

Vocabulary - Age Norms

Uses negative phrases other than “no” as a single word. . .

- 2.6 no: “No juice.” “Car no go.”
- 2.9 not: “I am not eating.” “Who is not eating?”

Using contractions. . .

- 2.6 what's: “What's that?”
- 3.0 I'll: “I'll find it.”
- 3.6 can't, won't, don't: “I can't sleep.” “I won't go.”
- 4.0 it's, there's: “It's over here.” “There's my shoe.”

Uses auxiliary verbs. . .

- 2.9 is: “He is going.” “The ball is red.”
- 3.0 can: “I can do it.”
- 3.3 am, are: “The kids are playing.” “I am tired.”
- 3.6 could, would: “I could/would do that.”
- 4.0 may, might: “I might/may...”

Uses endings on nouns, verbs and adjectives. . .

- 2.9 verb + ing: going, running, sitting, sleeping, etc.
- 2.9 plurals + s: cats, dogs, etc.
- 4.6 adjective + er: taller, bigger, hotter, smaller, etc.
- 6.3 verb + er to make a “one who” noun: runner, catcher, batter, singer, dancer, etc.

Uses several pronouns. . .

- 2.9 refers to self as I or me: “Come with me.” “I need that.” “Watch me.” etc.
- 3.6 to refer to others: he, him, she, her, you, they, etc.

Uses possessive nouns. . .

- 2.9 mom's, dad's, doll's, etc.: “That is mom's car.” “My doll's dress is blue.”

Uses verb tenses. . .

- 2.9 present tense (verb + s): runs, plays, eats, etc.
- 2.9 past tense (-ed): walked, jumped, talked, etc.
- 4.6 future tense: “We will go to the store soon.”

Language

Vocabulary - continued

Uses directional words correctly in phrases. . .

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 2.9 in/out/on | 4.6 around |
| 3.6 over/under | 4.6 behind |
| 3.6 front/back | 4.6 above/below |
| 3.6 beside | 6.0 toward |
| 3.6 up/down | 6.0 through |
| 3.6 next | 6.0 away from |
| 4.0 top/bottom | 6.0 right/left |

Uses conjunctions and articles. . .

- 2.9 a, the
- 3.0 and, or, but
- 4.0 if

Uses adjectives. . .

- 2.9 "this" and "that" in phrases
- 4.0 to describe persons, places, things

Uses words to express imagination. . .

- 4.0 "I hope. . ." "I wish. . ." "Let's pretend. . ." etc.

Uses irregular words. . .

- 4.6 several irregular past tense verbs: ran, fell, spoke, ate, sat, drank, etc.
- 4.6 several irregular plurals: children, teeth, mice, feet, men, women, etc.

Uses comparative and superlative forms of words. . .

- 6.0 adjective or adverb + er, est: taller, tallest; higher, highest; bigger, biggest; warmer, warmest; heavier, heaviest; etc.

Language

Speaking Skills - Age Norms

Average sentence length. . .

- 2.3 2 words: "See doggie." "Drive car." "Give cookie."
- 2.9 3 words: "Me want cookie." "Me do it." "Cake is gone." "Dog is barking." "Ball is red." "I find it."
- 3.0 3-4 words: "Daddy's car so big."
- 3.6 4-5 words: "Let's go to the store." "You have to stay here."
- 4.6 uses compound sentences with "and": "I hit the ball, and it went into the road."
- 5.0 6 or more words: "Let's go to the store now." "I want to stay here with my friend."

Asks simple questions. . .

- 2.6 that require a yes or no answer: "It raining?"
- 2.6 beginning with "Who. . .?" "What. . .?" "Where. . .?" "Why. . .?"
- 3.0 uses "Is" at the beginning of questions: "Is it raining?"
- 3.9 beginning with "When. . .?" "How. . .?"
- 4.0 beginning with "Which. . .?"

Gives personal information. . .

- 2.6 first name: "What is your name?"
- 2.9 first and last name: "What is your first and last name?"
- 3.0 sex: "Are you a boy or a girl?"
- 3.0 age: "How old are you?"
- 3.0 names of brothers/sisters: "What are your brothers'/sisters' (or close family member's) names?"
- 4.0 city or town: "Where do you live?"
- 4.0 month of birthday: "When is your birthday?"
- 4.6 street name: "What street do you live on?"
- 4.9 month and day of birthday: "When is your birthday?"
- 5.6 telephone number: "What is your telephone number?"

Engages in 2-way conversations. . .

- 2.9 short exchanges of one or two turns on the same topic.
- 3.6 exchanges of three or more turns.
- 5.6 sustains a topic beyond a dozen turns.

Language

Speaking Skills - continued

Recites . . .

- 2.9 portions of some nursery rhymes and some songs.
- 3.0 a few entire nursery rhymes or songs.

Answers simple 3-5 word questions that start with. . .

- 2.9 "Who. . .?" "What. . .?" "Where. . .?"
- 3.3 "Why. . .?"
- 3.6 "How. . .?" "When. . .?"
- 4.0 "Which. . .?"

Retells main events of an unfamiliar picture book story with beginning, middle, and end. . .

- 4.3 by looking at the pictures.
- 5.6 from memory, not referring to pictures, with reasonable accuracy.

Describes. . .

- 4.6 a simple procedure: "Tell me how you make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich," etc.

Answers. . .

- 4.6 complex 2 part questions.

Has telephone skills. . .

- 4.6 answers telephone appropriately, calls adult to phone.

Language

Points to Body Parts

Points to body parts upon request...

- head
- hair
- ear
- leg
- arm
- fingers
- toes
- hand
- stomach
- back
- chin
- waist
- thumb
- knee
- neck
- fingernail
- chest
- toes
- ankle
- shoulder
- elbow
- hip
- wrist
- eyebrow
- eyelashes
- lips
- cheek
- gums
- forehead
- palm
- jaw
- heart
- lungs
- brain
- eyes
- nose

Language

Names Body Parts

Names body parts upon request. . .

- ___ head
- ___ hair
- ___ ear
- ___ leg
- ___ arm
- ___ fingers
- ___ toes
- ___ hand
- ___ stomach
- ___ back
- ___ chin
- ___ waist
- ___ thumb
- ___ knee
- ___ neck
- ___ fingernail
- ___ chest
- ___ toes
- ___ ankle
- ___ shoulder
- ___ elbow
- ___ hip
- ___ wrist
- ___ eyebrow
- ___ eyelashes
- ___ lips
- ___ cheek
- ___ gums
- ___ forehead
- ___ palm
- ___ jaw
- ___ heart
- ___ lungs
- ___ brain
- ___ eyes
- ___ nose