
SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

2

KINDERGARTEN (AGE 4-5)



3

GRADE 1 (AGE 6-7)



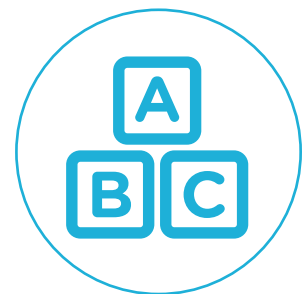
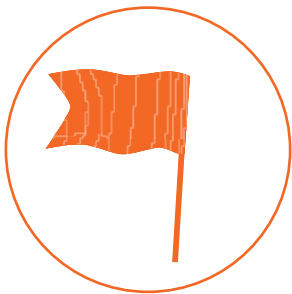
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GRADE 2 (AGE 7-8)



5

GRADE 3 (AGE 8-9)



SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

KINDERGARTEN (AGE 4-5)

RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE (COMPREHENSION)

- Follows 1-2 simple directions in a sequence
- Listens to and understands picture books read aloud
- Follows a simple conversation



EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE (SPEAKING)

- Speech mostly free of grammatical errors
- Answers simple “yes/no” questions
- Answers open-ended questions (e.g. “What are you drawing?”)
- Retells a story or talks about an event (uses some plot, but no high point or resolution)
- Participates appropriately in conversations
- Shows interest in and starts conversations
- Begins to use hints in conversation that do not mention the intention of the request (“those smell good!”)



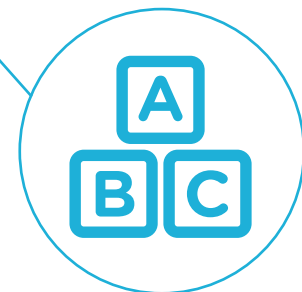
SPEECH (PRONUNCIATION)

- Should be easily understood
- May still have difficulty producing “s”, “z”, “v”, “j”, “r”, “l”, “th”



PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS (PRE-READING SKILLS)

- Can recognize and produce words that rhyme (e.g. “cat” and “hat”)
- Can recognize and produce words with the same beginning sound
- Can “clap out” a word into syllables
- Can segment/blend words by separating/combining the first sound from the rest of the word (e.g. s + un = sun)



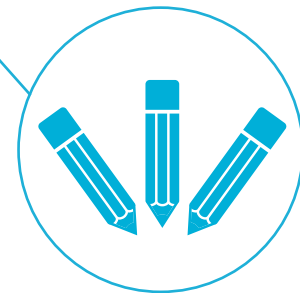
READING

- Knows how a book works (e.g. can orient it correctly and read from left to right and top to bottom)
- Understands that spoken words are made up of sounds
- Recognizes and names letters
- Understands that letters “have” sounds
- Recognizes own name in print
- Identifies upper- and lowercase letters
- Recognizes some words by sight
- “Reads” a few picture books from memory
- Imitates reading by talking about pictures in a book
- May recognize environmental print (e.g. reads “McDonalds” sign)



WRITING

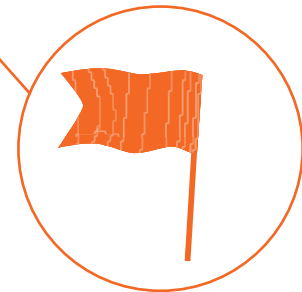
- Writes name
- Writes some letters (upper- and lowercase)
- Draws a picture that tells a story and labels and writes about picture (may use invented spelling)
- Distinguishes drawing from writing
- Uses knowledge of letter sounds to spell



RED FLAGS

Please refer to Speech and Language services if you notice any of the following:

- Inconsistent or awkward interactions
- Only uses 3 word sentences
- Poor understanding of spoken language
- Close relatives cannot understand more than half of what child says, strangers cannot understand much of child’s speech
- Uses “baby talk”
 - Substitutes “t” or “d” for other sounds (e.g. “tar” for “car” or “dame” for “game”, “tish” for “fish”)
 - Omits one sound in words with consecutive consonants (e.g. “poon” for “spoon”)
 - Omits a syllable in multisyllabic words (e.g. “tato” for “potato”)



References

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (1997-2017). Your Child’s Communication Development. Retrieved from <http://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/communicationdevelopment/> on December 21, 2017.

Bishop, D. V., Snowling, M. J., Thompson, P. A., & Greenhalgh, T. (2016). CATALISE: A multinational and multidisciplinary Delphi consensus study. Identifying language impairments in children. *PLoS One* 11(7): e0158753. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0158753

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SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

GRADE 1 (AGE 6-7)

RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE (COMPREHENSION)

- Remembers information
- Responds to instructions
- Follows 2-3 step directions in a sequence



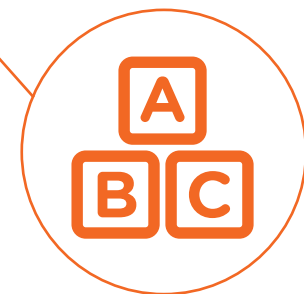
EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE (SPEAKING)

- Answers more complex "yes/no" questions
- Tells and retells stories and true events in a logical order with a main idea, high point, and resolution
- Expresses ideas with a variety of complete sentences
- Uses correct grammar most of the time
- Asks and responds to "wh" questions (who, what, where, when, why)
- Stays on topic and takes turns in conversation
- Gives directions
- Starts conversations
- Should be easily understood with no pronunciation errors



PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS (PRE-READING SKILLS)

- Can name the first, middle, and last sound in word
- Can list words that start with the same sound
- Can segment word into 3-4 sounds (hand = h-a-n-d)
- Can manipulate sounds in words (Say "hat", now say it again without the "h"? "at")
- Can create rhyming words



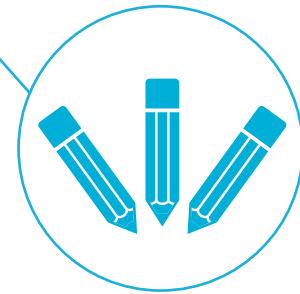
READING

- Learns to decode by “sounding out” words
- Learns some sight words (approx. 100)
- Matches spoken words with print
- Reads grade level material fluently
- Understands what is read
- Knows how a book works (e.g. read from left to right and top to bottom)
- Begins to understand word structure (morphological awareness) and uses knowledge in reading and spelling (e.g. identifies root words, prefixes, suffixes -s, -ing)
- Reads picture books with and without assistance
- Knows all letter names and sounds



WRITING

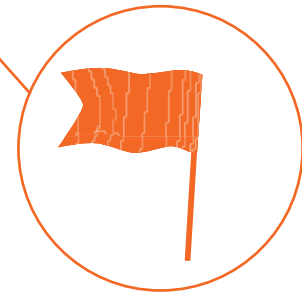
- Expresses ideas through writing
- Learns correct spelling for some frequently used words
- Uses capital letters and ending punctuation
- Writes more often than draws
- Spells by segmenting words into sounds and writes letters for each sound
- Spelling errors clearly made from sounding out words
- Writes a variety of stories, journal entries, or letters/notes



RED FLAGS

Please refer to Speech and Language services if you notice any of the following:

- Difficulty in telling or re-telling a coherent story (producing narrative)
- Difficulty in understanding what is read or listened to
- Marked difficulty in following or remembering spoken instructions
- Talking a lot but very poor at engaging in reciprocal (back and forth) conversation
- Many instances of over-literal interpretation, missing the point of what was meant
- Omits grammatical suffixes (e.g. past tense –ed “He walk_ to school yesterday”, third person singular –s “She walk_ to school everyday”, or copular form of the verb to be “I eating chocolate”)
- Difficulties producing and responding to “wh” questions
- Slow to learn new words
- Appears to have an immature communication style relative to peers
- Pronounces words incorrectly



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SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

GRADE 2 (AGE 7-8)

RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE (COMPREHENSION)

- Follows 3-4 oral directions in a sequence
- Understands direction words (e.g. location, space, and time words)
- Correctly answers questions about a grade-level story
- Understands some words have multiple meanings



EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE (SPEAKING)

- Answers more complex “yes/no” questions
- Asks and answers “wh” questions (e.g. who, what, where, when, why)
- Uses increasingly complex sentence structures
- Clarifies and explain words and ideas
- Give directions with 3-4 steps
- Uses language to inform, to persuade, and to entertain
- Stays on topic, takes turns, and uses appropriate eye contact during conversation
- Opens and closes conversation appropriately
- Uses pronouns for nouns previously named (e.g. “My cat’s name is Ginger. She ...”)
- Begins to understand and produce figurative language and jokes
- Tells complete stories with internal goals, motivations, and reaction of characters
- Easily understood (no pronunciation errors)



READING

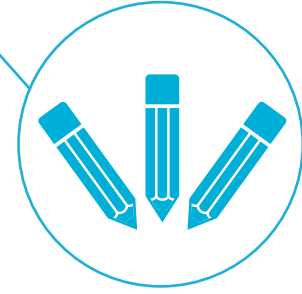
- Has proficient phonological awareness skills (identifying and manipulating individual sounds in words)
- Uses meaning clues when reading (e.g. pictures, titles/headings, information in the story)
- Rereads and self-corrects when necessary
- Locates information to answer questions
- Explains key elements of a story (e.g. main idea, main characters, plot)
- Uses own experience to predict and justify what will happen in grade-level stories
- Reads, paraphrases/retells a story in sequence
- Recognizes many words by sight
- Decoding becomes more automatic; recognizes spelling patterns (e.g. silent “e” rule)
- More attention is focused on comprehension of the material than decoding the text
- Reads grade level stories fluently
- Understands word structure (morphological awareness) and uses knowledge in reading and spelling (e.g. knows root words, prefixes, suffixes –s, -ing)





WRITING

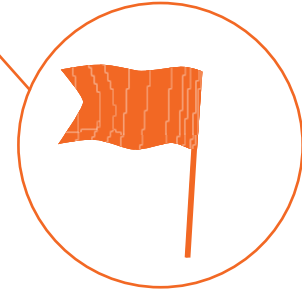
- Writes clearly and neatly
- Uses a variety of sentence types (e.g. questions, statements, etc.)
- Uses punctuation and capitalization correctly
- Organizes writing to include beginning, middle and end
- Learns spelling patterns
- Writes to send messages
- Spells frequently used words correctly
- Increases vocabulary of known spellings
- Writing is similar in complexity to speech



RED FLAGS

Please refer to Speech and Language Services if you notice any of the following:

- Difficulty in telling or re-telling a coherent story (producing narrative)
- Difficulty in understanding what is read or listened to
- Marked difficulty in following or remembering spoken instructions
- Talking a lot but very poor at engaging in reciprocal conversation
- Many instances of over-literal interpretation, missing the point of what was meant
- Uses short utterances with grammatical errors (e.g. “me go there” for “I went there”)
- Omits grammatical suffixes (e.g. past tense –ed “He walk_ to school yesterday”, third person singular –s “She walk_ to school everyday”, or copular form of the verb to be “I eating chocolate”)
- Difficulties producing and responding to “wh” questions
- Slow to learn new words
- Appears to have an immature communication style relative to peers
- Pronounces words incorrectly



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SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

GRADE 3 (AGE 8-9)

RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE (COMPREHENSION)

- Listens attentively in the classroom
- Understands grade-level material
- Understands some words have multiple meanings



EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE (SPEAKING)

- Speaks clearly with an appropriate voice
- Asks and responds to questions
- Participates in conversations and group discussions
- Uses subject-related vocabulary
- Stays on topics, uses appropriate eye contact, and takes turns in conversation
- Summarizes a story accurately
- Explains what has been learned
- Uses pronouns for nouns previously named (e.g. "My cat's name is Ginger. She ...")
- Begins to understand and produce figurative language and jokes
- Tells complete stories with internal goals, motivations, and reaction of characters



READING

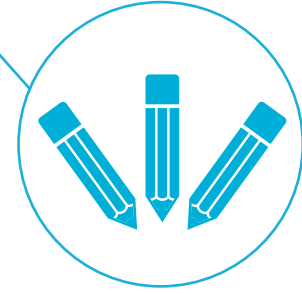
- Has mastered phonological awareness (identifying and manipulating individual sounds in words)
- Recognizes many words by sight
- Decoding becomes more automatic; recognizes patterns (e.g. silent "e" rule)
- More attention is focused on comprehension of the material than decoding the text
- Understands word structure (morphological awareness) and uses knowledge in reading and spelling (e.g. knows root words, prefixes, suffixes -s, -ing)
- Predicts and justifies what will happen next in stories, and compares and contrasts stories
- Asks and answers questions regarding reading material
- Uses acquired information to learn about new topics
- Reads grade-level books fluently (fiction and non-fiction)
- Rereads and corrects errors when necessary
- Reads "chapter books" or non-fiction independently





WRITING

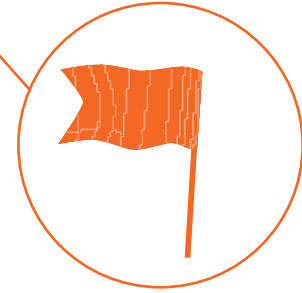
- Uses punctuation and capitalization appropriately
- Learns and uses spelling patterns
- Writes to send messages
- Spells simple words correctly, corrects most spelling independently, and uses a dictionary to correct spelling
- Increases vocabulary of known spellings
- Writing is similar in complexity to speech
- Plans, organizes, revises, and edits
- Includes details in writing



RED FLAGS

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- Difficulty in understanding what is read or listened to
- Marked difficulty in following or remembering spoken instructions
- Talking a lot but very poor at engaging in reciprocal conversation
- Many instances of over-literal interpretation, missing the point of what was meant
- Omits grammatical suffixes (e.g. past tense –ed “He walk_ to school yesterday”, third person singular –s “She walk_ to school everyday”, or copular form of the verb to be “I eating chocolate”)
- Difficulties producing and responding to “wh” questions
- Slow to learn new words
- Difficulty understanding jokes or figurative language
- Appears to have an immature communication style relative to peers
- Pronounces words incorrectly



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