



The following is a general guideline for age appropriate speech and language development. Consult a speech and language pathologist if there are significant gaps in any of the categories.

0-6 Months

- Startle response to sound
- Repeats the same sounds
- Frequently coos, gurgles, and makes pleasure sounds
- Uses a different cry to express different needs
- Smiles when spoken to
- Recognizes voices
- Localizes sound by turning the head
- Quieted by the human voice
- Listens to speech
- Uses the phonemes /b/, /p/, and /m/ in babbling
- Imitates sounds
- Uses sounds or gestures to indicate wants
- Varies pitch and loudness

7-12 Months

- Understands *no* and *not*
- Understands and responds to own name
- Listens to and imitates more sounds
- Recognizes words for common items (e.g. cup, shoe, juice)
- Babbles using long and short groups of sounds
- Uses a song-like intonation pattern when babbling
- Uses a large variety of sounds in babbling
- Imitates some adult speech sounds and intonation patterns
- Uses speech sounds rather than only crying to get attention
- Listens when spoken to
- Uses sound approximations
- Begins to change babbling to jargon
- Uses speech intentionally for the first time
- Production of one or more words
- Uses nouns almost exclusively
- Has an expressive vocabulary of 1 to 3 words
- Understands simple commands

13-18 Months

- Uses adult-like intonation patterns
- Uses echolalia and jargon
- Uses jargon to fill gaps in fluency
- Omits some initial consonants and almost all final consonants
- Produces mostly unintelligible speech
- Follows simple commands
- Has an expressive vocabulary of 3 to 20 or more words (mostly nouns)
- Produces 2 word phrases
- Combines gestures and vocalizations
- Requests more of desired items

19-24 Months

- Uses words more frequently than jargon
- Has an expressive vocabulary of 50-100 or more words
- Has a receptive vocabulary of 300 or more words
- Starts to combine nouns and verbs
- Begins to use pronouns (*I* and *mine*)
- Maintains unstable voice control
- Uses appropriate intonation for questions
- Is approximately 25-50% intelligible to strangers
- Answers "what's that?" questions
- Enjoys listening to stories
- Knows 5 body parts
- Accurately names a few familiar objects
- Follows 2 part commands

2-3 Years

- Speech is 50-75% intelligible
- Understands *one* and *all*
- Verbalizes toilet needs (before, during, or after act)
- Requests items by name
- Responds to some yes/no questions
- Names everyday objects
- Points to pictures in a book when named
- Identifies several body parts
- Follows simple commands and answers simple questions
- Enjoys listening to short stories, songs, and rhymes
- Asks 1-2 word questions
- Uses 3-4 word phrases
- Uses some prepositions, articles, present progressive verbs, regular plurals, contractions, irregular past tense forms, and negation *no* or *not*
- Uses some regular past tense verbs, possessive morphemes, pronouns, and imperatives
- Uses words that are general in context
- Produces several forms of questions
- Understands *why*, *who*, *whose*, and *how many*
- Continues use of echolalia when difficulties in speech are encountered
- Has a receptive vocabulary of 500-900 or more words
- Has an expressive vocabulary of 50-250 or more words (rapid growth during this period)
- Exhibits multiple grammatical errors
- Understands most things said to him or her
- Frequently exhibits repetitions -- especially starters, "I," and first syllables

- Speaks with a loud voice
- Increases range of pitch
- Uses vowels correctly
- Consistently uses initial consonants (although some are misarticulated)
- Frequently omits medial consonants
- Frequently omits or substitutes final consonants
- Uses approximately 27 phonemes
- Uses auxiliary *is* including the contracted form

3-4 Years

- Understands object functions
- Understands differences in meanings (stop-go, in-on, big-little)
- Follows 2 and 3 part commands
- Asks and answers simple questions (who, what, where, why)
- Frequently asks questions and often demands detail in responses
- Produces simple verbal analogies
- Uses language to express emotion
- Uses 4 to 5 words in sentences
- Repeats 6-to 13-syllable sentences accurately
- Identifies objects by name
- Manipulates adults and peers
- May continue to use echolalia
- Uses up to 6 words in a sentence
- Uses nouns and verbs most frequently
- Is conscious of past and future
- Has a 1,200 - 2,000 or more word receptive vocabulary
- Has a 800-1,500 or more word expressive vocabulary
- May repeat self often, exhibiting blocks, disturbed breathing, and facial grimaces during speech
- Increases speech rate
- Whispers
- Masters 50% of consonants and blends
- Speech is 80% intelligible
- Sentence grammar improves although some errors still persist
- Appropriately uses *is*, *are*, and *am* in sentences
- Tells two events in chronological order
- Engages in long conversations
- Uses some contractions, irregular plurals, future tense verbs, and conjunctions
- Consistently uses regular plurals, possessives, and simple past tense verbs

4 Years

- Imitatively counts to 5
- Understands concept of numbers up to 3
- Continues understanding of spatial concepts
- Recognizes 1 to 3 colors
- Has a receptive vocabulary of 2,800 or more words
- Counts to 10 by rote
- Listens to short simple stories
- Answers questions about function
- Uses grammatically correct sentences
- Has an expressive vocabulary of 900-2,000 or more words
- Uses sentences of 4 to 8 words
- Answers complex 2-part questions

- Asks for word definitions
- Speaks at a rate of approximately 186 words per minute
- Reduces total number of repetitions
- Enjoys rhythms, rhymes, and nonsense syllables
- Produces consonants with 90% accuracy
- Significantly reduces number of persistent sound omissions and substitutions
- Frequently omits medial consonants
- Speech is usually intelligible to strangers
- Talks about experiences at school, at friends' homes, etc.
- Accurately relays a long story
- Pays attention to a story and answers simple questions about it
- Uses some irregular plurals, possessive pronouns, future tense, reflexive pronouns, and comparative morphemes in sentences

5-6 Years

- Names 6 basic colors and 3 basic shapes
- Follows instructions given to a group
- Follows 3-part commands
- Asks *how* questions
- Answers verbally to *hi* and *how are you?*
- Uses past tense and future tense appropriately
- Uses conjunctions
- Has a receptive vocabulary of approximately 13,000 words
- Names opposites
- Sequentially names days of the week
- Counts to 30 by rote
- Continues to drastically increase vocabulary
- Reduces sentence length to 4 to 6 words
- Reverses sounds occasionally
- Exchanges information and asks questions
- Uses sentences with detail
- Uses grammatically complete sentences
- Accurately relays a story
- Sings entire songs and recites nursery rhymes
- Communicates easily with adults and other children
- Uses appropriate grammar in most cases

6-7 Years

- Names some letters, numbers, and currencies
- Sequences numbers
- Understands *left* and *right*
- Uses increasingly more complex descriptions
- Engages in conversations
- Has a receptive vocabulary of approximately 20,000 words
- Uses a sentence length of approximately 6 words
- Understands most temporal concepts
- Recites the alphabet
- Counts to 100 by rote
- Uses most morphologic markers appropriately
- Uses passive voice appropriately

The above information was taken from *Assessment in Speech-Language Pathology: A Resource Manual*

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