

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGES

Communication and Language

EARLY LEARNING

GOALS



22-36 Months

Listening and attention

- Listens with interest to the noises adults make when they read stories.
- Recognises and responds to many familiar sounds, e.g. turning to a knock on the door, looking at or going to the door.
- Shows interest in play with sounds, songs and rhymes.
- Single channelled attention. Can shift to a different task if attention fully obtained – using child's name helps focus.

Understanding

- Identifies action words by pointing to the right picture, e.g. "Who's jumping?"
- Understands more complex sentences, e.g. 'Put your toys away and then we'll read a book.'
- Understands 'who', 'what', 'where' in simple questions (e.g. Who's that/can? What's that? Where is?).
- Developing understanding of simple concepts (e.g. big/little).

Speaking

- Uses language as a powerful means of widening contacts, sharing feelings, experiences and thoughts.
- Holds a conversation, jumping from topic to topic.
- Learns new words very rapidly and is able to use them in communicating.
- Uses gestures, sometimes with limited talk, e.g. reaches toward toy, saying 'I have it'.
- Uses a variety of questions (e.g. what, where, who).
- Uses simple sentences (e.g. 'Mummy gonna work'.)
- Beginning to use word endings (e.g. going, cats).



30-50 Months

Listening and attention

- Listens to others one to one or in small groups, when conversation interests them.
- Listens to stories with increasing attention and recall.
- Joins in with repeated refrains and anticipates key events and phrases in rhymes and stories.
- Focusing attention - still listen or do, but can shift own attention.
- Is able to follow directions (if not intently focused on own choice of activity).

Understanding

- Understands use of objects (e.g. "What do we use to cut things?")
- Shows understanding of prepositions such as 'under', 'on top', 'behind' by carrying out an action or selecting correct picture.
- Responds to simple instructions, e.g. to get or put away an object.
- Beginning to understand 'why' and 'how' questions.

Speaking

- Beginning to use more complex sentences to link thoughts (e.g. using and, because).
- Can retell a simple past event in correct order (e.g. went down slide, hurt finger).
- Uses talk to connect ideas, explain what is happening and anticipate what might happen next, recall and relive past experiences.
- Questions why things happen and gives explanations. Asks e.g. who, what, when, how.
- Uses a range of tenses (e.g. play, playing, will play, played).
- Uses intonation, rhythm and phrasing to make the meaning clear to others.
- Uses vocabulary focused on objects and people that are of particular importance to them.
- Builds up vocabulary that reflects the breadth of their experiences.
- Uses talk in pretending that objects stand for something else in play, e.g., 'This box is my castle.'



40-60 Months

Listening and attention

- Maintains attention, concentrates & sits quietly during appropriate activity.
- Two-channelled attention can listen and do for short span.

Understanding

- Responds to instructions involving a two-part sequence.
- Understands humour, e.g. nonsense rhymes, jokes.
- Able to follow a story without pictures or props.
- Listens and responds to ideas expressed by others in conversation or discussion.

Speaking

- Extends vocabulary, especially by grouping and naming, exploring the meaning and sounds of new words.
- Uses language to imagine & recreate roles and experiences in play situations.
- Links statements and sticks to a main theme or intention.
- Uses talk to organise, sequence & clarify thinking, ideas, feelings & events.
- Introduces a storyline or narrative into their play.



ELG: Listening and attention

Children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.

ELG: Understanding

Children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.

ELG: Speaking

Children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.



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