

9: Using Language/Expressive Language

EYFS Communication and Language Development ELG 03: Speaking

Ages and stages of using language (Expressive language)

Age	Using language (Expressive language)
By 6 months	Babbles for attention. Reduplicated babble e.g. 'dada'. Uses body language. Words = 0
12 months	Babble that sounds like words. First words closely related to child's own world and functional needs. Words = 1-3
18 months	Single words, mainly object names. Vocabulary used in a variety of ways to convey different meanings. Words = 5-20
2 years	Using 2 word phrases e.g. 'want juice', 'mummy drink'. Using simple action word/sign e.g. 'jumping', 'drinking'. Asking questions 'what's this?', 'where's...?' Words = 50+
2 ½ years	Using 3-4 word phrases and simple sentences. Starting to use past tense e.g. 'me falled over' Words = 200+
3 years	Using 4-6 word sentences Able to use simple position words/signs e.g. 'in', 'on' and describing words/signs e.g. 'big', 'little'. Asking 'who', 'what', 'where' questions. Words = 500-1000
4 years	Uses 5-8 word sentences. Asking 'how', 'why', 'when' questions. Using future tense e.g. 'I'm going to jump'. Words = 1000-1500

Knowles, Masidlover (1982) Derbyshire Language Scheme. Cooke, J Williams, D (1985) Working with Children's Language Oxon: Winslow Press

9.1: How to develop early babble

Learning to make sounds is important in learning to communicate and talk. Children will use sounds before using words.

Activities/strategies to develop early babble:

- Sit the child on your lap facing you so they can see you when you:
 - Sing nursery rhymes
 - Look at picture books together
 - Play hand games/finger rhymes e.g. 'Pat a Cake', 'This Little Piggy', 'Round and Round the Garden'
 - Have cuddles and tickles
 - Talk about what you're going to do today
 - Play 'Peek-a-Boo'
- Sit on the floor and play with a toy together. Use lots of enthusiasm and simple sounds and language related to what they are doing or looking at to capture their interest.
- Copy any movements or sounds that the child makes. Gradually the child should begin to respond and become an active partner in play.
- Stop every now and again to watch what the child is doing. For example, whilst playing peek-a-boo, pause after each turn; if they make a sound which you could interpret as them wanting to play again, say 'again'. This is an important use of communication.
- Choose an exciting toy, such as a pop-up toy, the child likes. When they vocalise, make the toy work.
- Copy the sounds/vocalisations the child makes, such as coughs and yawns, as well as babble. Pause and give them time to repeat the sound back and then do it again.
- Play with balloons, blowing them up and letting them go. Copy the sound they make.
- Use sounds in play e.g. 'mmm' when eating, 'ahhh' when hugging a teddy, 'uh-oh' when toy cars crash, animal noises, 'brmm' for cars, 'knock, knock' on a door.
- Make silly faces and sounds when looking in the mirror together.
- Use microphones, boxes, tins, cardboard tubes which echo or make interesting sounds when you vocalise into them.
- Pop bubble wrap or bubbles in the bath/water tray and make the sound e.g. 'pop'.
- Sing action songs which have fun sounds e.g. 'Row the Boat': '...if you see a crocodile, don't forget to scream! **Aargh!**', 'Five Fat Sausages': '...one went **Pop!**'

9.2: How to develop early requesting skills

Target: The child will request an item by using a non-verbal method e.g. looking/gesturing.

The child will request an item by using a verbal method e.g. saying a sound or single word to request the item.

In order to achieve this, we must be giving the child a reason to communicate. Set up situations which encourage the child to communicate: a child is much more likely to communicate if they have a reason for doing so. The situations will be slightly different for every child and will be dependent on their interests, but here are a few ideas:

Children need to have a reason to communicate...

- At early stages of communication we expect children to reach, look or use body language to show what they want e.g. a child rocks their body to show they want more 'Row the boat' song.
- At later stages children use gestures or words/signs to show what they want e.g. a child says 'go' for the adult to activate the spinning top.

Situations which give your child a reason to communicate...

- **Hard to operate:** use toys/objects where the child needs your help to make them work. For example:

- o Balloons need an adult to blow them up or operate the balloon pump
- o Bubbles need an adult to blow through the wand
- o Wind-up toys and spinning tops need an adult to activate them

WAIT for the child to communicate (e.g. looking at you, pointing or saying a sound) then model the word e.g. 'bubbles'.

• **Put favourite things in view but out of reach:** the child will need your help to get the object/toy. For example:

- o Place a favourite toy on a high shelf where the child can see it but cannot reach it
- o Put favourite toys inside clear plastic containers that are hard to open e.g. a screw top container

WAIT for the child to communicate (e.g. looking at you, pointing or saying a sound) then model the word e.g. 'car'.

- **Give things bit by bit:** keep hold of the bits in a box or bag and give only one bit to begin with so the child has a reason to request more. For example:

- o **With toys:** some toys are easy to give out bit by bit because they have lots of pieces. If you give the child puzzle pieces, Lego, stacking rings or train tracks one-by-one, they will have repeated opportunities to ask you for the things they want.
- o **With snack food:** cut food into pieces; for example, cut a banana into slices or break a biscuit into pieces and give the child one bit at a time so that they will have several chances to request more.
- o **Give all but one:** give the child all but one of the things that they need for an activity. Hold that one thing out of their reach but within view and wait for the child to request it. For example, give them a piece of paper but hold onto the crayons, or give them the bubble wand but hold the pot of bubbles.

WAIT for the child to communicate (e.g. looking at you, pointing or saying a sound) then model the word e.g. 'car', 'banana', 'crayon'.)

- **Choices:** when you let the child make choices, you allow them to send a message to you and express their preferences.
Start with easy choices: the easiest choice is between two items: one thing they like and one thing they dislike. Hold up the two choices in front of them and ask:
 'milk or juice?'
 'ball or painting?'
 'Row the boat or Twinkle, Twinkle?'

Top Tips...

- Pictures or objects to represent songs are really useful when giving a choice.
- Get the child's attention by *naming* and *showing*:
 e.g. tickling game: say 'tickles' as you wiggle your fingers
 bubbles: show them the bubble pot and say 'bubbles'
- Be face-to face: get down to the child's level. It is important for them to be able to see your face and for you to be able to see how they communicate.

Name

Date Target Set:

Outcome: Achieved = 2

Partially achieved = 1

Not achieved = 0

Date	Outcome	Comment

9.3: How to develop verbal choice making

Target: **The child will make a verbal choice.**

Please ensure that the child understands choice making before supporting them to make a verbal choice: see Section 8.1 for guidance.

Give the child the chance to choose between two options. Choices are really useful in all sorts of situations and they give the child a chance to communicate their ideas and wishes, with support, in a natural situation. Encourage the child to choose regularly in many different situations; for example, at mealtimes, when getting dressed, during play, choosing a video.

Making choices gives the child an awareness that they can influence what happens around them.

- When you're playing together ask 'book or train?' showing the child the items as you say them.
- At snack/lunch/tea time, offer the child a choice of things to eat e.g. 'apple or banana?', showing the child the items as you say them.

By doing this, you are modelling the vocabulary that the child can learn and start to use. It's fine for them to just point at first, but as they become more familiar with choosing, they may try to say a word/sign to make a choice.

Don't assume that you know what the child wants. For example, when giving them a drink, offer a *choice* e.g. 'juice or milk?' Show them the drinks as you say them and accept the way they communicate.

- If they look at one for longer, respond by saying 'juice....you want juice'.
- If they attempt to point to one of them, *label* their choice by saying 'juice....you want juice'.
- If they attempt to say something *interpret* what they say and *model* it correctly. For example, if they say 'duice' you could say 'juice...you want juice'.

It doesn't matter how repetitive you are!

Name

Date Target Set:

Outcome: Achieved = 2

Partially achieved = 1

Not achieved = 0

Date	Outcome	Comment