

Communication Checklists for Children

Age and Grade-Based
Speech and Language
checklists from birth through
grade 12 for use by SLPs,
Teachers, and Parents.

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<http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Sublime-Speech>

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References:

American Speech-Language Hearing Association. "Your Child's Communication Development: Kindergarten Through Fifth Grade." *Your Child's Communication Development*. American Speech-Language Hearing Association, n.d. Web. 20 Feb. 2014

Sander, Eric K. "When Are Speech Sounds Learned?" *Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders* 37 (1972); 55-63. Web. 20 Feb. 2014. <http://jshd.pubs.asha.org/article.aspx?articleid=1747192>.

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0-3 Months

- Startle to loud sounds
- Quiet or smile when spoken to
- Seem to recognize familiar voice and quiets if crying
- Increase or decrease sucking behavior in response to sound
- Make pleasure sounds (cooing, gooing)
- Cry differently for different needs
- Smile when sees a familiar person

Notes: _____

4-6 Months



- Move eyes in direction of sounds
- Respond to changes in tone of voice
- Notice toys that make music
- Pay attention to music
- Babbling sounds more speech-like with many different sounds (including *p*, *b*, and *m*)
- Beginning to use intonation during vocalizations
- Chuckle and laugh
- Vocalize excitement and displeasure
- Make gurgling sounds when left alone and when playing with adults

Notes: _____

7-12 Months



- Enjoy games like peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake
- Turn and look in the direction of sounds
- Listen when spoken to
- Recognize words for common items like “cup”, “shoe”, “book”, or “juice”
- Begin to respond to requests (e.g. “Come here” or “Want more?”)
- Recognize name
- Babbling has both long and short groups of sounds such as “tata upup bibibibi”
- Use speech or non-crying sounds to get and keep attention
- Use gestures to communicate (waving, holding arms to be picked up)
- Imitate different speech sounds
- Has one or two words (hi, dog, dada, mama) around first birthday, although sounds may not be clear

Notes: _____

13-18 Months



- Has a vocabulary of approximately 5-20 words.
- Vocabulary is mostly nouns
- Some repeating of the same word or phrase repeatedly (echolalia)
- Use jargon (their own language) with inflection
- Follow simple commands ("Roll the ball")
- Point to a few body parts when asked
- Listen to simple stories, songs, and rhymes
- Use different consonant sounds at the beginning of words

Notes: _____

19-24 Months



- Vocabulary "explosion" to 150-300 words by 24 months. Can name common environmental objects
- Use more word combinations and intonation for questions
- Put two or more words together ("more cookie", "mommy book")
- Approximately 2/3 of what the child says should be intelligible
- Rhythm, fluency, volume, and pitch are not yet well-controlled
- Can use at least two pronouns correctly (I, me, and you can be confused easily)
- "My" and "Mine" begin to emerge
- Respond to simple commands
- Able to use prepositions (in, on, under typically first to develop)

Notes: _____

25-36 Months



- Understand differences in meaning (“go-stop”, “in-on”, “big-little”, “up-down”)
- Able to listen to longer stories and music activities
- Follow two requests (“Get the book and put it on the table”)
- Has words for nearly everything – Vocabulary of 900-1000 words
- Use 3 or more word sentences and questions
- Use *k, g, f, t, d,* and *n* sounds and most vowels
- Speech is at least 90% intelligible to familiar listeners and strangers
- Ask “why” questions
- Use pronouns I, you, me correctly
- Use some plurals, past tenses, and verbs
- Know at least 3 prepositions (in, on, under)
- Know and can name most body parts
- Can state gender, name, and age

Notes: _____

37-48 Months



- Hear when you call them from another room
- Understand words for some primary colors
- Understand some simple shapes (circle, square)
- Understand words for family members
- Talk about activities at school or with friends
- Talk about daily happenings using about 4 sentences at a time
- Answer simple “who?”, “what?”, and “where?” questions
- Ask “when?” and “how?” questions
- Use pronouns like I, you, me, we, and they
- Use more plurals
- Sentences are typically more than 4 words long
- Make-believe and use verbalizations during play
- Follow simple commands if item is out of sight
- Understand concepts like longer and larger, when contrast is presented

Notes: _____

5 Years

- Understand words for order (first, next, last)
- Understand words for time (today, yesterday)
- Follow multi-step directions. (2-3 steps)
- Follow classroom directions (1-2 steps)
- Say all speech sounds in words. May have articulation errors on harder sounds (*l, r, s, v, z, ch, sh, th*)
- Use sentences with more than 1 verb
- Tell short stories and keep conversation going
- Change communication based on environment/listener (louder outside, shorter with young kids)
- Use adjectives and adverbs
- Know common opposites
- Count to ten or above
- Can repeat sentences of up to nine words
- Can define common objects
- Most of speech is grammatically correct

Notes: _____

6 Years/Kindergarten

- Follow 2-step simple classroom directions in sequence
- Listen to and understand age-appropriate stories read aloud
- Follow and participate in simple conversations
- Show interest in and start conversations
- Completely intelligible, not including articulation errors
- Answer simple "yes/no" questions
- Answer open-ended questions ("What did you have for lunch today?")
- Retell a story or talk about an event
- Identify words that rhyme
- Understand how a book works
- "Read" a few picture books from memory
- Compare and match words based on sounds
- All phonemes expected in speech except: *r, s, ch, sh, z, j, v, th, zh*

Notes: _____

7 Years / 1st Grade



- Follow 2-3 directions in a sequence
- Remember information
- Respond to instructions
- Answer more complex "yes/no" questions
- Tell and retell stories and events in logical order
- Express ideas with a variety of sentences
- Use most parts of speech (grammar) correctly
- Ask and respond to "wh" questions
- Start, stay on topic, and take turns in conversations
- Give Directions
- Blend separate sounds to form words
- Understand what is read
- Express ideas through writing
- Write a variety of stories, journal, etc.
- All phonemes expected in speech except: *r, s, z, j, v, th, zh*

Notes: _____

8 Years / 2nd Grade



- Follow 3-4 oral directions in a sequence
- Understand direction words (e.g. location, space, time)
- Correctly answer questions about grade-level story
- Answer more complex "yes/no" questions
- Ask and answer "wh" questions
- Increasingly complex sentence structures
- Clarify and explain words and ideas
- Give directions with 3-4 steps
- Use language to inform, persuade, and entertain
- Start, maintain topic, use eye contact, and close conversations
- Fully mastered phonics/sound awareness
- Explain key elements of a story
- Use a variety of sentence types in writing
- Associate speech sounds, syllables/words/phrases with written forms
- Locate information to answer questions
- All phonemes expected in speech except: *r, th* (both should be stimulable and present in some positions)

Notes: _____

9 Years/3rd Grade



- Listen attentively in group situations
- Understand grade-level material
- Speak clearly with appropriate voice
- Ask and respond to questions
- Participate in conversation and group discussion
- Use subject-related vocabulary
- Summarize a story accurately
- Explain what has been learned
- Use word analysis skills when reading
- Use clues from language content and structure to help understand readings
- Predict, justify, compare/contrast stories
- Ask and answer questions regarding readings
- Include details in writing
- Write stories, letters, simple explanations, brief reports
- Use acquired information to learn about new topics
- All phonemes expected

Notes: _____

10 Years/4th Grade



- Listen to and understand information presented
- Form opinions based on evidence
- Listen for specific purposes
- Use words appropriately in conversation
- Use language effectively for a variety of purposes
- Understand some figurative language
- Participate in group discussions
- Give accurate directions to others
- Summarize and restate ideas
- Make effective oral presentations
- Use subject area information and vocabulary
- Use previously learned information to understand new material
- Follow written directions
- Learn meanings of new words through word origins, synonyms, and multiple meanings
- Write effective stories and explanations
- Paraphrase content, including main idea and details

Notes: _____

11 Years/5th Grade



- Listen and draw conclusions in subject area learning activities
- Make planned oral presentations appropriate to the audience
- Maintain eye contact and use gestures, facial expressions, and appropriate voice during group presentations and conversation
- Participate in class discussions across subjects
- Summarize main point of information heard/read
- Report about information gathered in group work
- Learn meanings of unfamiliar words through knowledge of root words, prefixes, and suffixes
- Describe development of character and plot
- Use reference materials to support opinions
- Write for a variety of purposes
- Use vocabulary effectively
- Vary sentence structure

Notes: _____

6th Grade (CCSS)



- Pose and respond to specific questions related to topic under discussion
- Paraphrase key ideas and material
- Use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation during presenting
- Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks including formal speech when indicated/appropriate
- Appropriate use of pronouns (intensive, vague)
- Use context as clue to meaning of word/phrase
- Use common affixes and roots for meaning of words
- Interpret figures of speech in context
- Use relationship between words to understand word meaning
- Acquire and use grade-appropriate vocabulary.

Notes: _____

7th Grade (CCSS)



- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions
- Pose questions that elicit elaboration
- Respond to others' questions and comments
- Use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation during presenting
- Adapt speech to variety of contexts and tasks including formal speech when appropriate
- Choose and use appropriate simple, compound, and complex sentences depending on situation
- Recognize and correct misplaced and dangling modifiers
- Use language that expresses ideas precisely
- Use context as a clue to word meaning
- Use affixes and roots as clues to word meaning
- Interpret figures of speech in context
- Use word relationships to understand meaning
- Acquire and use grade-appropriate vocabulary

Notes: _____

8th Grade (CCSS)



- Pose questions to connect ideas of several speakers
- Respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas
- Use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation when presenting
- Present claims/findings in focused/coherent manner with relevant evidence and details
- Adapt speech to variety of contexts and tasks including formal speech when appropriate
- Form and use verbs in active and passive voice, and indicative/imperative/interrogative/conditional/subjunctive moods
- Use context as clue to word meaning
- Use affixes and roots as clues to word meaning
- Interpret figures of speech in context
- Use word relationship to determine meaning
- Acquire and use grade-appropriate vocabulary

Notes: _____

9th-10th Grades (CCSS)



- Propel conversation by posing and responding to questions that relate to discussion or broader idea
- Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives and summarize points of agreement/disagreement
- Present information clearly/concisely and logically
- Adapt speech to variety of contexts and tasks including formal speech when appropriate
- Use parallel structure
- Use various types of phrases and clauses to convey specific meanings and add variety
- Use context as a clue to word meanings
- Identify/Use patterns of word changes
- Interpret figures of speech in context and analyze their role in text/speech
- Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations
- Acquire and use grade-appropriate vocabulary

Notes: _____

11th-12th Grades (CCSS)



- Propel conversation by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence
- Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made; resolve contradictions
- Present information, findings, and evidence with a clear and distinct perspective
- Adapt speech to variety of contexts and tasks including formal speech when appropriate
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of grammar and usage when speaking
- Vary syntax for effect
- Use context as a clue to word meaning
- Identify and use patterns of word changes
- Interpret/analyze figures of speech in context
- Analyze nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations
- Acquire and use grade-appropriate vocabulary

Notes: _____

Signs of a Language



Disorder: What to look for

- Does not smile or interact with others (0-3 mo.)
- Does not babble (4-7 months)
- Makes few sounds (7-12 months)
- Does not use gestures (7-12 months)
- Does not understand what others say (7mo-2 yrs)
- Says only a few words (12-18 months)
- Does not combine words to make sentences (1½-3 yrs)
- Has trouble playing and talking with others (2-3 years)
- Has problems with early reading and writing skills – may not show interest in books or drawing (2½ - 3 years)

Ways to Help

- Listen and respond to the child
- Talk, read, and play with the child
- Communicate with the child in the language they are most comfortable using
- Know that it's good to teach a child a second language
- Talk about what you and the child are doing
- Use a lot of different words with the child
- Use longer sentences as the child gets older
- Encourage the child to play with other children

Signs of a Speech Sound



Disorder: What to look for

- Says *p, b, m, h,* and *w* incorrectly (1-2 years)
- Says *k, g, f, t, d,* and *n* incorrectly in words (2-3 yr)
- Produces speech that is unclear, even to familiar people (2-3 years)
- Says *r, s, ch, sh, z, j, v, th, zh* incorrectly (7-8 years)
- Not understood by peers and adults at least 80% or not fully able to express ideas, thoughts, needs to others – particularly unfamiliar listeners (4-5 years)

Ways to Help

- Say the sounds correctly when you talk – it's okay if the child makes some mistakes with sounds
- Do not correct speech sounds – it is more important to let the child keep talking
- Consult a Speech-Language Pathologist for targeted exercises and tips specific to the child

Notes: _____

Signs of Stuttering

(Disfluency): What to look for

- Struggles to say sounds or words (2½ - 3 years)
- Repeats first sounds of words – “b-b-b-ball”(2½-3 yr)
- Pauses a lot while talking (2½ - 3 years)
- Stretches sounds out – “f-f-f-f-farm” (2½ - 3 years)

Ways to Help

- Give the child time to talk
- Do not interrupt or stop the child while he or she is speaking
- See a Speech-Language Pathologist if you are concerned (Many young children stutter for a short period of time; in most cases, the stuttering will stop.)

Notes: _____

Signs of a Voice Disorder:

What to look for

- Uses a hoarse or breathy voice
- Uses a nasal-sounding voice

Ways to Help

- See a doctor, or suggest that a parent see a doctor, if the child sounds hoarse or breathy or has a nasal-sounding voice
- Tell the child not to shout or scream
- Keep, or suggest that parents keep, the child away from cigarette smoke

Notes: _____

How to find a Speech-Language Pathologist



- Look for an SLP who has earned the Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC) from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. ASHA-certified SLPs have “CCC-SLP” after their names.
- An ASHA-certified SLP:
 - Has a master’s degree or doctoral degree,
 - has a state license to practice,
 - has a teaching certificate (if required),
 - participates in continuing education activities.
- To locate an SLP in your area, outside of a school, consult the “Find a Professional” page from ASHA (<http://www.asha.org/findpro/>)
- To contact an SLP within your school district (for ages 3+), contact your School District’s Special Education department or the child’s school SLP.

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