Developmental Milestones for Speech and Language

Teach vocabulary concepts during real-life activities. e.g., when you are at the store/supermarket, name all of the foods you see. Talk about what is in the produce section, what’s a fruit and what’s a vegetable, and name specific items. Have child ask store employees where items are located.

Reinforce concepts learned in real-life experiences by reading books. e.g., go to the aquarium; then read a book about an aquarium and fish. Use a photograph album and “memory” photos to reinforce vocabulary concepts. Go to the pool, Grandma’s, Disneyland, the beach, etc., label what you see; then use the photos to talk about the places/trips.

You can use the photos from a family trip, and create a custom designed book. Use the photos as a guideline, and write a story together about your experiences on the outing.

Teach your child about categories by using objects first. Sort candy, toys, and clothing into cupboard, toy box, and dresser, etc.
Use word games to teach both superordinate categories (generic categories like “fruit” or animals”) and subordinate categories (specific examples within categories like “orange,” “apple,” and ”banana,”) After a trip to the zoo, ask, “How many animals can you think of?” or a bear is an animal. What’s a banana? Is it an animal? No, it’s food.”

When you go for a walk, point out objects (point out multiples) such as flowers, birds, trucks, boats, and lights, etc.
Teach morphemes that involve time concepts through real life activities (cooking with a recipe lends itself to this type of activity) e.g., “I will mix the cake, I am mixing the cake, I mixed the cake. Emphasize the last morpheme of the word ending.

Make a game using many small pictures of objects in your house. Roll a dice or use a spinner move your game piece the correct number of spaces, and land on a room name or picture. He/she then has to point to the object in the center of the board that goes in that room. Good practice for associations and categories for receptive language. Vary the game board and pictures to include other activities that your child enjoys such as camping, soccer, basketball, etc.

Talk about sounds that things make, such as a vacuum, animals, church bells, clocks, airplanes, water dripping out of the faucet. Audiotape the sounds. Have your child listen, with his/her eyes closed, and try to identify them.

Learn nursery rhymes; play Simon says (following one, two, three or more directions).
Use songs that involve sequences (“Jump down, turn around and pick up a bale of cotton” or “This old man.”
Songs, jingles, and rhymes help your child remember (increase memory skill)

Read to your child. Have them follow along and point out objects or imitate words. Have them "find" objects or actions in the story. Talk about the pictures and what is happening in the story.

ENJOY YOUR CHILD. Each one is very precious.

Darlene K. Batchelder, M.A., CCC-SLP
Developmental Milestones for Speech and Language

DEVELOPMENT OF SOUNDS

3.0  Consonants
   all vowels and diphthongs in place
   m, n, ng, p, t, k, b, d, t, g, f, h, w
   s, z, y

3.5  Double consonant blends
   final position: rk, ks, mp, pt, rm, mr, nr,
   pr, kr, br, dr, gr, sm

4.0  Consonants
     sh, r, l, y, v

     Double consonant blends
     Initial position: pl, pr, tr, tw, kl, kr, kw, bl,
     br, dr, gl, sk, sm, sn, sp, st

4.5  Triple consonant blends
     mpt, mps

     Double consonant blends
     ch, gr, fr,

*********

2-0 to 2-6
Pronouns
   I, me, my, mine your
   she, her, he, his, him
   you, they,
   us, their, them, we, our

2-6 to 3-0
Quality
   soft, heavy
   hard, same
   light, different

3-0 to 3-6
Position
   in, off
   on, under, out of, together, away from
   up, top, apart, toward
   around, in front, high, in back of, next to
   beside, bottom, backward, forward
   down, low
   behind, ahead of, first, last

2-6 to 3-0
Size
   big, tall
   little
   short, fat
   thin

3-0 to 3-6
3-6 to 4-0
4-0 to 4-6
5-0 to 5-6
Quantity
   all
   empty
   full, more, less
   each

*********80% of subjects comprehended the meaning of the word

****All language is learned by the time a child is five. After age five, language is refined.
18 - 24 months
Children at this age are non-stop, and there is a sudden burst in development. They are beginning to do many things on their own -- walk, run, and climb with greater skill. It is also the true age of imitation. Pretend play is one of their favorite activities. They also begin to want to be with other children their age -- one or two is plenty. This is a time when they begin to learn about themselves and their relationship with others. Your toddler will play mostly side by side with other toddlers, not directly with them. This is typical. Play becomes a powerful tool for learning. Children also become less cooperative, and their sense of independence grows. Have fun with your child. Play games with your child and his/her toys.

Some things to look for:
* Shows preferences for toys.
* Imitates another child's play.
* Begins to ask questions and asks for things by name.
* Has vocabulary of several hundred works, including names of toys.
* Uses two-three word sentences.
* Able to follow simple commands.
* Hums or tries to sing.
* Enjoys singing familiar songs.
* Listens to short rhymes or fingerplays.
* Talks to self and "jabbers" expressively.
* Enjoys exploring and getting into everything.
* Enjoys simple pretend play.

24 to 36 months (2 to 3 years)
Independence is the key description for this age! Two year olds want to do things by themselves one minute, and the next they will want you to do those things for them. They are very active -- usually non-stop from the time they open their eyes until they fall asleep. Play with and enjoy your child. Explore new places and objects together.

Some things to look for:
* Able to take part in simple conversations.
* Able to name a variety of objects.
* Intrigued by cause and effect actions.
* Beginning to see that things have a purpose.
* Starts to make groups of things like animals, cars and food in his/her mind.
* Asks many questions.
* Follows two-step directions.

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* Begins to make choices.
* Says names of toys.
* Interested in learning how to use common things.

36 to 48 months (3 to 4 years)
Children at this age are emerging from the negativism of a 2 year old to a more cooperative young child as a 3 year old. Imagination begins to take over. Your child will begin to watch everyone around in new ways. Your child will begin symbolic play where toys and objects are used to act out events and interactions. Learning is best done through play. Children will try different techniques and ideas and determine what works best for them. They also are learning about themselves as social people. They are interested in mastering motor skills and they enjoy the repetition of riding a tricycle or climbing up and down stairs. They also like to repeat activities or may do and undo actions like putting a puzzle together. This is important to their later understanding of how things change or remain the same. Have fun playing out of doors with your child and enjoy physical activities with him/her.

Some things to look for:
* Enjoys making simple choices.
* Talks in complete sentences.
* Enjoys familiar stories told without changing words or sequence of story.
* Able to listen to short stories and books.
* Able to tell simple stories from books with pictures.
* Alert and curious.
* Constantly asks “why” questions.
* Enjoys guessing games and riddles.
* Able to carry out two or more directions.
* Understands the sequence of events.
* Beginning to understand the concept of time.
* Able to match simple colors and shapes.
* Begins to sort by size, shape and color.
* Sings and learns fingerplays.
* Able to distinguish between night and day.
* Likes to listen to short stories.
* Interested in similarities and differences.
* Can count two-three objects.
* Can put together a six-piece puzzle.  

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48 to 60 months (4-5 years)

Children this age feel good about the things that they can do. Their language development is in full force as they love to talk, They delight in wild stories and often their imagination becomes greater than life. Lot of energy and willingness to try new adventures is characteristic of this age group. Children are bold and need to be watched closely as they are child and share in their joy of discovery and understanding.

Some things to consider:
* Understands routines and can tell what activity comes first and second in a sequence.
* Asks questions constantly to gain information.
* Speaks in complex sentences.
* Interested in life-death concepts.
* Interested in how things work.
* Full of ideas.
* Can stay with an activity for 10-15 minutes.
* Beginning to have basic concepts related to number, size, weight, colors, textures and distance.
* Asks and answers who, what, when, why and where questions.
* Understands the immediate passage of time.
* Can follow two unrelated directions.
* Still confuses reality with fantasy.
* Able to remember stories and repeat them.
* Like to argue and reason.
* Enjoys riddles and jokes.
* Enjoys creating and telling stories.
* Knows basic colors.
* Can understand and use comparative terms like big, bigger, biggest.

How much should my child be saying by what age?
A simple rule of thumb is to know that:

* At 1 year of age, your baby will use one-word utterances.
* At 2 years of age, your baby will use two-word utterances.
* At 3 years of age, your toddler will use three-word utterances.
* At 4 years of age, your child will use sentences of four-five words.
* At 5 years of age, your child will use complete sentences of five-six words.

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A. **Talk TO YOUR CHILD.** From birth on, talk about everything.
   1. Play with sounds.
   2. Name things as you point to objects or pictures.
   3. Use short sentences at first and increase the length as the child begins to talk.
   4. Use correct pronunciation and grammar. Do not use or encourage “baby talk”
   5. Use and teach new vocabulary
   6. As you go about your daily activities, talk about them.
   7. Use gestures and body language to enhance the meaning of a word or concept but NOT as a replacement for talking.

B. **LISTEN TO YOUR CHILD**
   1. Look at him when he talks and interact with him.
   2. Answer her questions.
   3. Don’t correct or criticize his speech. If he mispronounces a word or uses incorrect grammar, just say the word or sentence correctly.

C. **HELP YOUR CHILD LISTEN AND REMEMBER**
   1. Listen for sounds around the house and in the environment.
   2. Listen to story records, tapes, cd’s, together.
   3. Give your child simple directions to follow. Start with one and increase them. Be sure to praise her success.
      Examples: “Put the cup in the bathroom.”
      “Put the plates on the table and then call Billy to dinner.”
   4. Read books or tell stories to your child. Let him repeat them
   5. Have conversations over play telephones or walkie-talkies.
   6. Help her recall past events.
      “Do you remember what grandma gave you for your birthday?”

D. **READ TO YOUR CHILD**
   1. Start with simple picture and cloth books. Read or talk about the pictures for a few minutes. Increase the amount of time as his attention span increases. READ EVERY DAY!
   2. Read nursery rhymes, fairy tales, Dr. Seuss books and big picture books.
3. Start your child’s own library. Give her books for special occasions or for rewards and surprises. Put her name and the date in each book and provide a special place for them.

4. Start your child going to the public library as soon as possible. Attend the story hour. Let him/her select books he likes to read there and others to take home.

E. **PLAY WITH YOUR CHILD**

1. Play peek-a-boo, Pat-a-cake, finger plays like Here is the Church, and Eensy-Weentsy spider, singing games like Simon Says.

2. Do pantomimes. Act out nursery rhymes.

3. Get involved in dramatic play with your child. Play airport, post office, restaurant, or school. Collect items associated with these places and store them in a box. Play different roles: waiter, cook, customer, cashier, etc. Your child will learn to try out new vocabulary and to express herself creatively and spontaneously.

4. Play cards and board games. Children learn to follow rules as well as number values and new vocabulary.

5. Do puzzles: Colors, shapes, sizes, whole-part relationships can be taught and reinforced as you talk about how the pieces fit together.

F. **WATCH TELEVISION WITH YOUR CHILD**

1. Limit viewing to appropriate programs like Mr. Rogers, Sesame Street, etc., and children’s specials.

2. Watch with your child and discuss what is going on. Television is a passive medium but can be of value if there is opportunity for adult-child interaction.

G. **HELP YOUR CHILD DISCOVER**

1. Look at, feel, taste, smell, and hear together. Introduce new words and concepts by using things in the child’s environment, such as:
   - plant seeds and talk about how things grow
   - experiment with different foods in the kitchen
   - play with a magnet
-make and use a paper cup telephone

2. Give your child many opportunities to match and sort and talk about likenesses and differences. Sort socks and silverware, buttons, and bottle caps, coins and candies. As you put away groceries, sort tin cans, things to be refrigerated, vegetables, fruits, sweet things.

3. Make things out of junk---egg cartons, tubes, ribbons, scraps of material, foil, etc., Talk about what you are doing.

4. Use measuring instruments like a clock, tape measure, yardstick, calendar, thermometer, scale, etc. Talk about how long until, how tall/short, how big/little, how hot/cold, how many, how heavy/light.

5. Let your child help you cook. There are many things he can learn in the kitchen: size, shape, color, how many, textures, smells....

H. PROVIDE NEW EXPERIENCES

1. Take mini field trips to place in your neighborhood and around the city, town, village. TALK ABOUT WHAT YOU SEE.
-Visit a pet store. Talk about the different animals and fish, about colors, sizes, what they eat, how they move.
-Visit a hardware store. Talk about the names and uses of the tools and appliances.

2. Make books with your child. Let her tell stories while you write her words down. She can draw or cut out pictures to go with the story. Make category books of toys, vehicles, food, round things, animals, etc. Let your child do the cutting pasting, and coloring.

I. HELP YOUR CHILD TALK AND USE LANGUAGE

1. Play with sounds with your child.

2. Carry on conversations with your child. Listen to him and respond to show you’re interested. He needs a lot of practice communicating.

3. Make and use puppets with your child. Then help her try out new and different ways of talking and being creative with them.

4. Make up stories together.

5. Use a tape recorder and make up little plays, say nursery rhymes, or let your puppets talk.

6. Let your child do tasks in which she has an opportunity to talk
with other adults. She could borrow something from a neighbor, purchase an article at the store, or call someone on the telephone for you.

7. Discourage a lot of shouting or screaming which can be harmful to a child’s vocal cords.

8. Play word games:
   a. Rhyming: think of rhyming words in the kitchen:
      SINK: pink, wink, think, blink
      BREAD: red, said, Fred, thread, head
   b. Associations: say the first half of a word pair and the child fills in the second word:
      bread and ........
      salt and ...........
      lock and ........
      table and ........
      toothbrush and .......
      paper and ........
      brush and ........
      envelope and .......
      fork and ........
      hammer and ........

J  REMEMBER The 10 Don’t Forgets of Language Stimulation
1. Talk about the things you do
2. Talk about the places you go
3. Answer questions.
4. Listen to your child
5. Read and talk about books.
6. Tell stories together.
7. Play games with your child
8. Play word games together.
9. Pretend with your child.
10 Praise your child.
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Guidelines for raising a bilingual child

1) Do what is comfortable for you and your family. Some parents and caregivers are comfortable speaking in more than one language; others are not. Every family has unique goals, strengths and resources.

2) Frequently expose your child to the languages you are encouraging. Children learn through play. Find plenty of opportunities to sing, play and read together in the language(s) you are encouraging.

3) Encourage language development without pressure. Do not punish your child for using one language over another. When you encourage a child’s efforts and support development in loving, playful ways, that child gradually comes to understand and appreciate more than one language.

4) Use good grammar while speaking with your child. You are the model for that language.

5) Do not mix the languages while speaking. This is called 'code switching' and only confuses the child.

6) It is generally best to have one parent speak English to the child. The other parent can speak the other language. Expect your child to be delayed in both languages until age 7-9. It takes time to develop a language (generally 6 years to become fluent and fluency in a language encompasses reading and writing, as well as speaking).