

Oral Language: Progression Continuum

Progression Milestones – Early a to d

*early a	The child is aware of and/or responds to sensory stimuli. He/she uses verbal or non-verbal methods to communicate and request. The child attends and/or responds to objects of reference. He/she indicates preferences, responds to and/or anticipates familiar cues.
a	The child gestures to and shares attention of an object with another person. He/she exchanges smiles, vocalises and, in some cases, uses single words to respond. The child relies on the other person to interpret and share their meaning.
b	The child understands familiar words and basic phrases used to describe him/herself and his/her immediate surroundings. He/she uses single words, phrases and/or simple sentences, sometimes with gestures, to initiate conversation, to make requests, to talk about familiar people and objects, and to express themselves and interact with others. The 'other person' continues to play a key role in interpreting and sharing meaning.
c	The child refers to familiar objects and events, and shared experiences. He/she uses language from home and their surroundings to communicate for a variety of purposes. The child uses non-verbal cues to help understand spoken language and when sharing meaning with others. The child uses simple social conventions when interacting. He/ she responds showing some appreciation of the communication partner's needs. The child begins to see a conversation as an exchange of knowledge and information with another person. He/she can readily follow one-step instructions.
d	The child uses language to communicate their thoughts, feelings and ideas, and to ask questions. He/she has conversations about things that interest them, personal experiences, topics familiar to them and increasingly unfamiliar. The child engages others in conversation, asking questions and exchanging information. He /she begins to reflect on experience and to explain problems and consider solutions for age-appropriate topics. He/she begins to understand that the audience influences how we communicate. He/she can follow one-three step instructions.

Progression Steps – Oral Language

Element	Learning Outcome: Number and label	*early a The child...	a The child...	b The child...	c The child...	d the child..
Communicating	1. Engagement, listening and attention	<p>indicates awareness of sensory stimuli in the learning environment</p> <p>shows consistent patterns of attending to stimuli/personnel/activities in the immediate environment</p> <p>engages in an activity requiring joint attention with one or more</p>	<p>attends to stimuli, keeps eye gaze and tracks adult's gaze to visually attend to an object jointly.</p> <p>imitates actions and sounds.</p>	<p>attends for longer to interesting or familiar stimuli including: actions, gestures, tone of voice, conversations and stories read aloud, and joins in with rhymes, songs and games.</p>	<p>takes part in conversation using appropriate eye-contact while attending to body language, gestures and tone of voice and uses these cues with context to understand new words/phrases.</p> <p>listens to factual accounts.</p>	<p>listens to new information on an unshared experience including fiction and non-fiction of increasing complexity. listens to and appreciates other languages.</p>

	2. and 3. Social conventions and awareness of others	shows awareness of and/or uses tone, body language, gestures, pace, vocalisations and volume to impact communication.	responds to and seeks adult attention and recognises, responds to and says own name.	takes part in imitative and turn-taking games, rhymes and songs.	shares personal anecdotes and responds to conversation on an unshared experience.	initiates conversations on an unshared experience.
		demonstrates verbal/non-verbal turn-taking with a communicative partner. initiates verbal/non-verbal communication with a familiar adult/peers. engages in and enjoys a meaningful verbal/non-verbal exchange with a communicative partner.	responds to stimuli using voice, sounds and gestures and exchanges a smile and uses facial expressions, sounds, gestures, signs or speech to communicate.	speaks audibly and coherently at appropriate volume, interacting over a short number of turns with individuals and beginning to communicate readily with others in class. initiates communication with familiar adult	greet and responds appropriately to greetings and discussion topics showing some appreciation of listener's needs. initiates and takes turns in conversation with peers, small groups and familiar adults.	responds to questions but omits some information and begins to make indirect requests. switches style of speaking to suit audience. takes part in small group discussions on a familiar topic showing awareness of listener-speaker rules and is able to list these.

Understanding	4. Sentence structure and grammar		uses single-word utterances and combines these with vocalisations.	uses multi-word utterances and short common phrases and uses basic sentences when imitating or chorusing with someone.	uses complete basic sentences and speaks audibly and with clear articulation as appropriate to developmental stage. uses some basic connectives to begin to join short sentences. completes familiar rhymes and repeats short rhymes.	uses lengthier sentences with correct word order for the most part, basic connectives and uses plurals and simple pronouns. mostly places the verb in the correct place in the sentence.
	5. and 6. Acquisition and use of vocabulary	shows recognition of personal and/or standardised objects of reference. attends and responds to increased vocabulary in texts*.	recognises people and objects and uses appropriate gestures to refer to an object, linking actions with objects.	uses single words and common phrases and understands common pronouns and prepositions. begins to describe properties of familiar objects and, with help, uses words and phrases from a story when retelling it.	uses a wider range of single words and short, simple sentences. requests objects and recurrence or change in activity, uses question words appropriately and uses greetings, farewells, and protests. understands vocabulary and phrases from a	infers the meaning of a new word by using gestures and context and infers the meaning of stories of increasing depth from context. uses words or phrases to refer to feelings. uses words and phrases acquired from stories and factual accounts in contexts beyond

					range of stories and factual accounts and uses these words and phrases appropriately in context	that in which they were originally acquired.
	7. Demonstration of understanding	<p>responds to verbal and non-verbal cues related to familiar communicative routines.</p> <p>consistently responds to familiar factual questions.</p>	recognises and responds to own name and other familiar words.	follows one-step instructions and shows understanding in a variety of contexts by attempting to imitate what they have seen and heard.	<p>responds to familiar questions and follows one-to two step instructions.</p> <p>shows understanding of familiar story content, characters and vocabulary, and of factual accounts and step-by-step processes.</p>	<p>listens to fiction and non-fiction of increasing complexity and begins to infer meaning from context.</p> <p>can follow three step instructions and respond appropriately to phrases used regularly in the school environment</p>

Exploring and Using	8. and 9. Requests and questions	<p>indicates preferred objects and/or activities and refuses non-preferred items.</p> <p>requests repetition and/or more of and/or change of objects or events.</p> <p>makes a request and/or expresses a need, verbally or non-verbally</p>	<p>uses speech, sounds and/or gesture to show preferences, make choices and make requests.</p> <p>clearly indicates preferred objects and refuses non preferred items.</p> <p>verbally and/ or non-verbally responds to a familiar question.</p>	<p>makes simple choices and requests and asks simple questions.</p> <p>requests objects and events verbally and makes clear self-directed choices, requesting repetition, change of objects or events.</p>	<p>with support, engages with an unfamiliar adult to give or request information or recall an event.</p> <p>asks and responds to familiar questions.</p>	<p>asks questions to clarify others' thoughts or actions, and to gain new information and get help.</p> <p>uses complete sentences to express personal needs and asks and responds to speculative questions leading to drawing inferences.</p>
	10. Categorisation		attends to familiar toys and objects.	names familiar toys and objects.	categorises familiar objects in the environment.	categorises a range of objects.
	11. Retelling and elaborating	participates in the verbal/ non-verbal sharing of a familiar or personal story, activity or event	<p>with help, uses voice, sound, gesture and props to join the adult in singing songs, reciting rhymes, retelling stories, providing accounts, initiating communications</p>	with help, shares a familiar or personal story, activity or event using single or multiple words.	<p>exchanges information on a shared experience.</p> <p>with help, identifies main characters and sequences main points in a narrative.</p>	<p>retells the main points of an unshared event or conversation using a clear structure to an audience of peers.</p> <p>creates a short story, identifying main characters and events and</p>

			and presenting objects and news.		<p>constructs a story drawing on experiences and orally narrates to a group with support.</p> <p>gives an account from direct experience sequencing up to three key events.</p>	<p>tells main points of their own news.</p> <p>retells a familiar story sequencing key events.</p> <p>explains a factual account from direct experience to a group, introduces a topic, outlines and describes processes.</p>
	12. Playful and creative use of language		listens and attends to familiar rhymes and songs.	listens to and joins in with rhymes, songs and language games.	<p>responds to poetry, rhymes and songs through gesture, action and props.</p> <p>distinguishes between and has fun with nonsense words and real words.</p> <p>in pretend play, uses language to create simple imaginary scenarios with peers and adults.</p>	<p>uses language playfully and creatively in providing alternative endings for rhymes while maintaining the rhyme.</p> <p>in pretend play, uses language from experiences and texts** to create elaborative imaginary scenarios.</p>

	13. Information giving, explanation and justification	<p>communicates to express feelings verbally or non-verbally</p> <p>expresses interests and opinions through a range of verbal or non-verbal communication methods</p>	<p>chooses objects of reference to show understanding and to share meaning, and extends meaning by linking objects of reference.</p>	<p>tells what they are doing and names and describes familiar people, toys and activities.</p>	<p>provides a description or explanation about a visible object or person.</p> <p>when retelling a familiar story with adult support, uses language removed from the current context to explain, describe problems and suggest possible solutions.</p>	<p>names, explains and describes familiar objects, people, events, concepts and subjects giving main points or functions.</p> <p>uses language suited to topic to explain how to play, construct, conduct a process, play a game or toy. gives brief explanations and justifications for their opinions or responses showing their individuality and voice.</p>
	14. Description, prediction and reflection	<p>shows signs of anticipating next steps in a familiar activity when presented with a stimulus.</p> <p>predicts outcomes for a familiar or unfamiliar story or event choosing from a range of possible outcomes.</p>	<p>chooses objects of reference to indicate activities completed, indicates what they would like to do next and what materials will be needed.</p>	<p>says what they are doing and names and describes familiar people.</p> <p>recalls/describes something they have completed in class to other members of the group.</p>	<p>identifies a problem and begins to use language to express own thoughts and to show awareness of others' thoughts.</p>	<p>when telling a familiar story, interprets behaviours and speculates about characters' motives.</p>

**** 'text' to include all products of language use: oral, gesture, sign, written, braille, visual, tactile, electronic and digital.**

