

Kindergarten Ready: Language Skills



It's fun to monitor your child's physical growth with scales and a measuring stick, but how do you measure your preschooler's growth in other areas, like age-appropriate language skills? Children learn to communicate by listening to others speak to them, and by speaking on their own. The more you talk to your child and introduce new words and concepts, the more their vocabulary grows. As their vocabulary and language skills grow, your child will be able to use more descriptive language and complex grammar.

A child ready for kindergarten should be able to speak clearly in complete sentences with an appropriate volume; express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas; understand most of what is said to them and follow directions with at least two steps. Language skills are a critical ingredient for success, both in learning skills and concepts, and in getting along with others. Encourage language development at home by reading books, singing songs, and by taking time each day to listen to and talk with your child.

LANGUAGE SKILLS (EXPRESSIVE & RECEPTIVE) READINESS KIT

Check out our Language Skills Readiness Kit that has been carefully cultivated to provide hours of education and entertainment for your preschooler. This kit includes books, games, puppets, and more to develop and reinforce language skills!



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ACTIVITIES TO TRY AT HOME

RELAY RACES

Create your own simple races with 2 and 3 step directions, such as, “Skip across the yard, spin around 3 times, then hop back across the yard.” These simple activities are a fun way for your child to practice following multi-step instructions as well as improve gross motor skills.

I SPY CONTAINERS

Fill a large container with small objects from around your house, then screw on the lid. Show the container to your child and say, “I spy something (object), and you use it to (description).” When your child guesses the correct object, unscrew the lid and let your child hold the item. Optionally, let your child try giving clues for you to find an object!

SHOPPING

When you’re out shopping with your child, include them in discussions about what you are buying, how many items you need, and what you plan to make with your ingredients. Ask open-ended questions that require your child to make and express a choice, for example, “What kind of toppings should we buy to make a homemade pizza?” Use the opportunity to enrich and expand your child’s vocabulary; even if you don’t intend to purchase an item you can still have a conversation about new products and ingredients.

STORY BASKETS

Take a container of your choice (basket or tin) and fill it with a small collection of items based around a theme. Open the lid and invite your child to tell a story with the contents. The idea of this activity is to give your preschooler an encouraging prompt, then allow them to use their own ideas to tell you a story.