

## DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES FOR SPEECH AND LANGUAGE

(from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Guidelines – Roles and Responsibilities of the School-Based Speech-Language Pathologist)

<b>Age</b>	<b>Language and Speech Behaviors</b>
<b>1 year</b>	recognizes his or her name understands simple instructions initiates familiar words, gestures and sounds uses “mama,” “dada,” and other common nouns
<b>1 ½ years</b>	uses 10 to 20 words including names recognizes pictures of familiar persons and objects combines two words, such as “all gone” uses words to make wants known, such as “more,” “up” points and gestures to call attention to an event and to show wants follows simple commands imitates simple actions hums, may sing simple tunes
<b>2 years</b>	understands simple questions and commands identifies body parts carries on conversation with self and dolls asks “what” and “where” has sentence length of two to three words refers to self by name names pictures uses two-word negative phrases, such as “no want” has about a 300-word vocabulary stays with one activity for 6 to 7 minutes
<b>2 ½ years</b>	has about a 450-word vocabulary gives first name uses past tense and plurals; combines some nouns and verbs understands simple time concepts, such as “last night,” “tomorrow” refers to self as “me” rather than name tries to get adult attention with “watch me” likes to hear same story repeated uses “no” or “not” in speech answers “where” questions uses short sentences, such as “me do it” holds up fingers to tell age

<b>3 years</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>matches primary colors</li> <li>begins to understand prepositional phrases such as “put the block under the chair”</li> <li>knows last name, sex, street name, and several nursery rhymes</li> <li>has sentence length of three to four words</li> <li>has vocabulary of nearly 1,000 words</li> <li>consistently uses m, n, ng, p, f, h and w</li> <li>sings songs</li> <li>stays with one activity for 8 to 9 minutes</li> <li>asks “what” questions</li> </ul>
<b>4 years</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>points to red, blue, yellow and green</li> <li>identifies crosses, triangles, circles and squares</li> <li>has sentence length of four to five words</li> <li>asks “who” and “why”</li> <li>begins to use complex sentences</li> <li>correctly uses m, n, ng, p, f, h, w, y, k, b, d and g</li> <li>stays with activity for 11 to 12 minutes</li> </ul>
<b>5 years</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>defines objects by their use and tells what they are made of</li> <li>knows address</li> <li>identifies penny, nickel and dime</li> <li>has sentence length of five to six words</li> <li>has vocabulary of about 2,000 words</li> <li>uses speech sounds correctly, with the possible exceptions being y, th, j, s/z, zh and r</li> <li>knows common opposites</li> <li>understands “same” and “different”</li> <li>counts 10 objects</li> <li>uses future, present and past tenses</li> <li>stays with one activity for 12 to 13 minutes</li> </ul>
<b>6-7 years</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifies most sounds phonetically</li> <li>forms most sound-letter associations</li> <li>segments sounds into smallest grammatical units</li> <li>begins to use semantic and syntactic cues in writing and reading</li> <li>begins to write simple sentences with vocabulary and spelling appropriate for age</li> <li>uses these sentences in brief reports and creative short stories</li> <li>understands time and space concepts, such as before/after, second/third</li> <li>comprehends mathematical concepts, such as “few,” “many,” “all,” and “except”</li> </ul>

Source: from the ASHA Guidelines: Roles and Responsibilities of the School-Based Speech-Language Pathologist , 1999/III-303-305. Ohio Statewide Language Task Force. (1990). Developmental milestones: Language behaviors, In Ohio Handbook for the Identification, Evaluation and Placement of Children with Language Problems (1991). Columbus: Ohio Department of Education.

Editor’s Note: These milestone are variable due to individual differences and variance in the amount of exposure to oral and written communication.