

## Language Development: 4 - 5 Years

**Remember, children develop skills at different rates but by age 4 children usually will:**

### Understanding spoken language

Understand and use colour, number and time related words.

Begin to understand complex and abstract instructions.

Use who, what, where, why to ask questions.

Begin to ask complex questions using 4 or more words.

Describe events that have happened in the past, e.g. 'We goed there for tea'.

Link ideas using conjunctions 'but', 'because', 'so', 'if', 'then.'

### Storytelling and Narrative

Begin sequencing events and narrative using time words, e.g. 'first', 'last' and 'next.'

Start to retell stories in the right order.

Listen to longer stories and answer questions about a storybook they have just read.

Answer questions about 'why' something has happened in a story.

Begin to use well-formed sentences with complex grammar.

Begin to take on more roles within imaginative play.

### Vocabulary

Have an increasing vocabulary.

Use abstract concepts and things beyond their own experience.

Be keen to learn new words and ask meaning.

Start to be able to plan and explain games with others.

## Speech sounds

Be able to say the following sounds in words – p, b, m, n, t, d and all vowels.

Beginning to sound much clearer.

Should be developing use of k, g, f, s

May still have difficulty with, sh, ch, j, l, r, w, th

### Social

Have greater awareness of themselves in relation to a group.

Enjoys role play.

Enjoys simple jokes

Shows interest in things related to others, 'That's a nice hat Lucy.'

Begin to be aware of different speech styles and tones.

Begin to choose their own friends.

### To find out more about how you can support your child's speech, language and communication visit:

[www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)

[www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk](http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk)

[www.Talkingpoint.org.uk](http://www.Talkingpoint.org.uk)

[www.radld.org](http://www.radld.org)

[www.afasic.org.uk](http://www.afasic.org.uk)

**Disclaimer:** This leaflet has been put together using information from the above websites. It is intended for your help and information only. It does not serve as a diagnostic assessment of a child's needs and please keep in mind that all children are different. If you have any concerns regarding your child's development, please speak to their teacher in the first instance.

Debbie Willshaw  
[speak.write@outlook.com](mailto:speak.write@outlook.com)  
[speakwriteforliteracy.co.uk](http://speakwriteforliteracy.co.uk)  
Tel: 07941 865 743



## How to support your child's speech, language and communication.

### Information for parents

## Age 4-5



## How can I support my child's speech, language and communication development?

You are your child's best teacher and your child will love to copy what you do and say. There are lots of simple things you can do to help support your child's skills and all they need cost is your time!

The best thing you can do is to spend time interacting with your child face to face. All kids love screen games but these are is substitute for human interaction and children miss out on so many essential skills needed for good communication and language including, but not limited to: turn-taking, listening skills, interpreting facial expressions, developing empathy, hearing and producing correct speech sounds, exposure to a rich vocabulary and varied sentence structure.

## Why are these skills important for all of our children in the early years?

Low vocabulary and limited understanding of language can make it difficult for children to understand written text.

Poor awareness of our speech sounds can cause difficulties decoding for reading.

Difficulties with sentence structure, word meaning and social language skills can impact on learning to break down words to read, understand language, write and build friendships.

## What can you do to support your child's speech, language and communication development at home?

- Avoid the use of a dummy as they can cause articulation difficulties.
- Time – allow them 5-10 secs to process and reply
- Teach your child to look at who is talking to show they are listening.
- Do not make your child repeat things over and over. Try to model what they are saying so that they can hear how it should be said.
- Model good language skills– speak clearly and always try to speak above your child's current level so that you are continuously expanding their vocabulary and sentence understanding
- Read together and talk about the pictures. **Who** is in the story?, **What is happening?**, **When** is the story happening?, **Where** is the story set?
- Sing – nursery rhymes are great for helping with sounds and rhyme.
- Play traditional games together to help listening, turn-taking and following instructions.

## Games and apps to support speech and language development.

Try to limit screen time but when used, think about downloading games that will support speech and language. Here are just a few..

### **Spingo**

A fun interactive game to support listening and use of pronouns, categories and verbs.

### **Otsimo**

Fun and engaging app to aid language development in children with non verbal autism, speech delays, articulation difficulties and aphasia. Also gives the opportunity to develop the key building blocks to articulation; attention and concentration, hearing, process speech sounds and muscle coordination.

### **iSequences**

Fun game to support listening and following instructions.

### **Traditional games**

Use picture matching cards to support vocabulary and turn-taking. These also help with memory, processing and retention of information.

### **Also try -**

Ispy, word association games, categories, Headbands, cherades, Guess who?, simple board games. Any face to face game to promote attention, listening and turn-taking.