

EYFS · PRE-K-Y1

Communication & Language

EYFS Knowledge Organiser — Reception / KS1

Three strands of communication and language

1 Listening, attention, and understanding

Being able to attend to and understand what others say. Foundational to all learning.

Example: Children at the expected level can listen in a range of situations and understand longer sentences.

2 Speaking

Being able to express ideas, feelings, and thoughts in words. Includes vocabulary development and sentence structure.

Example: Children at the expected level use sentences that are mostly grammatically correct.

What to look for at different ages

1 Age 2

Vocabulary of 50+ words; starting to combine two words; understands simple instructions with one key word.

Example: 'More milk' / 'Daddy gone'

2 Age 3

Vocabulary of 300+ words; three-word sentences; asks 'why?' and 'what?'; follows two-step instructions.

Example: 'Where is the big red ball?'



3

Age 4-5 (Reception)

Can listen in small groups; uses complex sentences; tells stories with beginning, middle, end; vocabulary growing rapidly.

Example: Narrative: 'And then the bear came... but the girl ran away... and then...'

4

End of Reception ELG

Children at the expected level can: listen attentively and respond in partner, small group, and whole class; understand long sentences and complex vocabulary; use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences; use past, present, and future correctly.

Port communication and language

What practitioners can do

- SUSTAINED SHARED THINKING: follow the child's lead in conversation — extend, question, wonder aloud together
- RICH VOCABULARY: deliberately introduce new words in context. Don't simplify vocabulary — expand it.
- STORIES: read aloud daily. Pause and discuss. Model the language of stories (suddenly, meanwhile, however...).
- TALK TIME: create opportunities for extended talk — circle time, group investigations, role play.
- QUESTIONING: use open questions (what, how, why, tell me more about...) not closed (yes/no) questions.
- REDUCE NOISE: high-noise environments are particularly difficult for language development.
- LISTEN: genuinely and patiently. Model the attentive listening you want to develop in children.

