



The Owl Centre

Attention and Listening

Age		Listening	Auditory memory
1 ½ - 2 years	1	Enjoys listening to an entire nursery rhyme. Attends to own choice of activity. Follows a routine sequence of 2 parts (e.g. first brush your teeth and then wash your face)	Recalls 2 items within the same category (e.g. apple and banana).
2-2 ½ years	2	Listens to familiar songs on CD/tape. Can listen from a distance (e.g. mummy talking to child from a different room). Single channel attention (i.e. can only focus on one thing at a time) Follows a 2 part command (e.g. pick the wrapper up and put it in the bin)	Recalls 2 items that are not within the same category (e.g. spoon and shoe)
2 ½ - 3 years	3	Listens to and follows simple stories. Can sit in a small group and focus for 3 minutes without being distracted during enjoyable activities. Will attend to adult's choice but frequent refocusing needed.	Recalls 3 random items (e.g. pen, sock and train)
3 - 3 ½ years	4	Single channel attention for child's own choice of toy; can switch focus on verbal commands but then goes straight back to task. Follows 2 random directions (e.g. touch your nose and spin around)	Answers questions about an unfamiliar story that they've just heard.
3 ½ - 4 years	5	Can maintain focus for 5-10 minutes.	Repeats a 9-word sentence. Remembers 4 items of a story.
4 - 4 ½ years	6	While playing, only needs to look at speaker if verbal commands are difficult.	Recalls 4 numbers, letters or words. Repeats 2 numbers backwards.

4 ½ - 5 years	7	Listen and do at the same time e.g. drawing a picture while talking to Mummy	Recalls 5 items of a story.
5 – 5 ½ years	8	Attends while being read to for 8 to 10 minutes. Can follow 2-3 part commands (e.g. put the book away, wash your hands and then get your coat).	Remembers 5 numbers letters or words
5 ½ - 6 years	9	Stays alone on an activity for 20 minutes. Attends while being read to for more than 10 minutes.	Recalls 6 numbers letters or words

Receptive language

Age	Step	
1 ½ - 2 years	1	Identifies 2 familiar objects from a group of 4. Knows several body parts on self. Understands simple instructions such as where's your shoe?, point to Daddy.
2-2 ½ years	2	Understands a two information carrying word command e.g. make baby sleep. Understands functions e.g. which one do we kick, drink. Understands a range of action pictures, e.g. eating, sleeping, etc. Understands big and little. Understands he, she.
2 ½ - 3 years	3	Identifies smaller body parts e.g. eyebrow, chin, elbow Understands in, on, under, in front and behind. Understands today, tomorrow, and yesterday. Believes all you say.
3 – 3 ½ years	4	Understands a three information carrying word command e.g. make the green teddy jump. Understands comparatives e.g. I'm taller than you. Understands texture and quantity e.g. rough / smooth, lots of, many, all, some. Associates an object with the person e.g. thermometer and doctor.
3 ½ - 4 years	5	Understands singular and plural words e.g. bus and buses. Understand past, present and future tenses. Understands day, morning, afternoon, night.
4 – 4 ½ years	6	Understands the number 3 (e.g. give me three cars). Understands a four information carrying word command e.g. put the big teddy under the bed
4 ½ - 5 years	7	Understands time phrases e.g. for years, for a long time, a whole week

		Understands “the opposite of.” Understands comparatives and superlatives e.g. tall, taller, tallest. Knows above, between, below, top, bottom.
5 – 5 ½ years	8	Understands 5 information-carrying words (e.g. put the little blue car below the bridge) when comparable objects are available. Understands some idioms e.g. it’s raining cats and dogs.
5 ½ - 6 years	9	Can follow and understand nearly all that’s said at home and at school. Can guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from their context.

Expressive language

Age	Step	Grammar	Vocabulary and Sentence development
1 ½ - 2 years	1	Uses negatives (e.g. no, gone)	Has approx. 20 words that are recognisable to parent at 18 months. Is using words rather than gestures. Repeats words that he hears. Using new words regularly in context. Attempts ‘stories’ using gibberish with occasional recognisable word at 1 ½ At 2 years has at least 50 words and is using simple 2 word sentences such as all gone juice, more biscuit, bye-bye daddy.
2-2 ½ years	2	Uses negative forms (e.g. don’t). Refers to self by pronoun “me”. Uses some pronouns “my, you”	Using sentences of 2 to 3 words. Refers to self using own name and towards 2 ½ using a pronoun (I or me). Recites nursery rhymes and favourite songs. Asking questions using where, what, who.
2 ½ - 3 years	3	Uses some plurals. Uses possessives (e.g. Daddy’s coat). Begins to use “and” Names 3 or 4 colours. Uses “I”. Uses a verb + “ing”	Using 300 words. Talks about what they have drawn. Gives first and last names when asked. Uses 2-4 word phrases. Knows if boy or girl.
3 – 3 ½ years	4	Holds conversations using many correct	Has about 500 intelligible words.

		grammatical structures (prepositions, regular plurals, pronouns, possession). Uses conjunctions and, then, but.	Relays a message. Describes what objects can be used for. Identifies what does not belong and why. Uses 4-7 word sentences. Holds a simple conversation. Talks about pictures and storybooks.
3 ½ - 4 years	5	Uses possessive pronouns (his, her, their). Uses irregular plurals (e.g. feet) Uses “wouldn’t, shouldn’t, can’t” Makes inferences. Using comparatives (e.g. bigger than...) Regular past tense (“ed”) Using conjunctions “because”	800 – 1500 words Describing events that have already happened. Talks while pretending to be a toy e.g. Buzz talking to Woody.
4 – 4 ½ years	6	Using conjunctions (e.g. when, so, if).	Uses complex language with vast vocabulary that is generally grammatically correct. Beginning to tell part of a story in sequence.
4 ½ - 5 years	7	Using irregular past tense (e.g. slept, sat, drove)	Stories are spoken in sequence with some plot but no main point or resolution. Able to sequence a story using 3 pictures. Asks what a new word means.
5 - 5 ½ years	8	Uses complex verbs such as ‘could have been’ and ‘will be going’.	Uses 2000+ words. Predicting what will happen next.
5 ½ - 6 years	9	Uses more questions word ‘when, how’ Uses persuasion (e.g. can I go outside because it’s stopped raining?)	Average sentence length 6 to 8 words. Talks about future events. Knows full name, address and birthday. Can argue their point of view.

Speech sounds

Age	Step	Speech sounds	Phonology
1 ½ - 2 years	1	p, b, m, h, w, n, t, d should be heard in the initial position of a word. Says all vowels correctly.	Misses off sounds in the middle or end of words. Is understood by

			parents 25% of the time.
2-2 ½ years	2	m, p, b spoken in final position of word. h at beginning of a word.	Experiments with voice e.g. volume and pitch. Words are shortened Whispers
2 ½ - 3 years	3	Using k/c, g at the beginning of a word.	Misses unstressed parts of words e.g. (gui)tar. Is understood by parents 50-75% of the time.
3 – 3 ½ years	4	Using s and f at the beginning of words. Using 'ng' at the end of words. Uses some blends e.g. br, sm, mp (bump) but some substitutions made e.g. boon for spoon.	Final consonants used regularly.
3 ½ - 4 years	5	Most consonants established. y at the beginning of a word. s may still be dentalised (lisped).	Omissions and substitutions are rare. Is understood by parents 75-100% of the time.
4 – 4 ½ years	6	j, sh, ch, l and z at the beginning of a word.	Normal rate, rhythm and intonation.
4 ½ - 5 years	7	Some errors still being made. Some blends are simplified.	Clapping syllables in name. Knows the initial sound of words.
5 – 5 ½ years	8	r and th at the beginning of a word. Easily understood by siblings, friends and strangers.	Can identify rhyming words Can identify sounds at the ends of words. Can segment any word into syllables by clapping.
5 ½ - 6 years	9	Speech sounds like an adult and is easily understood by everyone.	Varies tone of voice and inflection. Can substitute sounds in words e.g. bat/rat, hat/hit, rag/rat. Knows the answer to how many syllables in a word e.g. banana.

Oro-motor

Age		
1 ½ - 2 years	1	Can chew coarsely chopped table food, raw fruit and veg at the side of their mouth. Can chew with lips closed. Uses a spoon to eat and may need assistance. Can clean lips with tongue.
2-2 ½ years	2	Can use an open cup with no spillage. Can suck from a straw. Chews with no food or saliva loss.
2 ½ - 3 years	3	Can chew all textures including meat, dried fruit, etc. – the same food as the rest as the family. Can grade jaw opening to receive food. No drooling.
3 – 3 ½ years	4	Can chew all textures including meat, dried fruit, etc. – the same food as the rest as the family. Can move tongue from side to side, up and down. No drooling.
3 ½ - 4 years	5	Can chew all textures including meat, dried fruit, etc. – the same food as the rest as the family. No drooling.
4 – 4 ½ years	6	Can chew all textures including meat, dried fruit, etc. – the same food as the rest as the family. No drooling.
4 ½ - 5 years	7	Can repeat a sequence of p-t-k rapidly. Can chew all textures including meat, dried fruit, etc. – the same food as the rest as the family. No drooling.
5 – 5 ½ years	8	Good range, speed and strength of movement in the jaw, lips and tongue Can chew all textures including meat, dried fruit, etc. – the same food as the rest as the family. No drooling.
5 ½ - 6 years	9	Can chew all textures including meat, dried fruit, etc. – the same food as the rest as the family. No drooling.

Symbolic Play

Age		
1 ½ - 2 years	1	Holds cup to own mouth to drink. Pushes truck backwards and forwards. Imitates adult behaviours in play e.g. puts toy phone to ear and has a pretend conversation, brushes own hair.

		Adult allowed to play alongside the child
2-2 ½ years	2	Looks for objects to 'go with' others e.g. logs and a truck Puts an object on the car to 'drive' it. Simple two part play sequences develop e.g. doll has milk and is then put to bed. Children might tell each other what to do (e.g. Martha go down the slide) but not play cooperatively. When child closes their eyes they believe that no one can see them.
2 ½ - 3 years	3	Shares but this does not come naturally. Plays alongside other children. Toys are given a life e.g. child makes doll brush its own hair or drink from its own cup.
3 – 3 ½ years	4	Enjoys pretending to be different characters. Develops imagination and fantasy play. Fleetingly joins in play with other children. Takes turns appropriately
3 ½ - 4 years	5	Plays co-operatively and takes turns with other children.
4 – 4 ½ years	6	Prefers to play with other children rather than adults. Dresses up. Loves adventure and trying new things. Develops friendships.
4 ½ - 5 years	7	Plays simple tabletop games. Beginning to understand games with rules. Play can still change rapidly. Plans and shares aims in play. Sorts objects in more than one way (e.g. shape and then size) Shows imagination and ability to adapt (e.g. uses a box as a bed and then as a car).
5 – 5 ½ years	8	Using reasoning to solve a task. Understands fair play.
5 ½ - 6 years	9	Understands reality versus fantasy. Interested in games with rules e.g. sport. Needs to win and may change the rules to suit self.

Social Communication

Age		
1 ½ - 2 years	1	Imitates adult-like conversation e.g. pretending to use a phone. Interacts by requesting information using simple questions e.g. what's that? Initiates pretend play e.g. gives a cup for mummy to drink. Responds to requests from adults e.g. cuddle teddy. Takes turns in conversation. Completes actions (e.g. "give me five").

2-2 ½ years	2	<p>Uses particular words to prompt discussion with adult (e.g. Rosa's bone). "Please" is used for requests. Participates in small group activities with adult support (e.g. ring a ring a roses). Play is symbolic (e.g. brushing doll's hair). Refers to absent people and objects. Little interaction with other children. Uses facial expression to express emotion. Asks for help using 2 or more words (e.g. help me mummy, open it Daddy). Notices a change in wording of familiar rhyme or song.</p>
2 ½ - 3 years	3	<p>Takes turns in a game (e.g. hide and seek). Recites rhymes. Acts out songs (e.g. wind the bobbin up). Engages in make-believe activities e.g. pretending to be a dog. Expresses feelings verbally e.g. happy and sad. Initiates conversation.</p>
3 – 3 ½ years	4	<p>Asks questions (e.g. "can you...?", "would you...?"). Asks permission of others (e.g. can I have a go?). Talks about friends – makes a special friend. Shows affection to younger siblings.</p>
3 ½ - 4 years	5	<p>Expresses empathy. Can be bossy and refuses to obey. Takes part in role-play (e.g. mummy, daddy, baby). Makes predictions (e.g. I think....). Talks about past events. Friends becoming more interesting than adults.</p>
4 – 4 ½ years	6	<p>Plays in groups of 2 to 5 children. Makes hints (e.g. those smell good, I like crisps) Talks about future events. Retells simple stories. Imaginary fears may develop – dark, injury, etc.</p>
4 ½ - 5 years	7	<p>Gives instructions to peers. May lie and use toilet humour. Holds adult's attention (e.g. "you know what?") States beliefs and opinions. Tells jokes, although may miss the punch line.</p>
5 – 5 ½ years	8	<p>Expresses a range of emotions/feelings. Wants to be liked and accepted by friends Increasing aware that others may have different feelings.</p>
5 ½ - 6 years	9	<p>Negotiates (e.g. if I eat this can I watch some tv?). Maybe hurt by criticism, blame or punishment. Understands what's right or wrong e.g. from the News.</p>