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Promoting Early Language Development

Colleen Morgan, MA, CCC-SLP
Pediatric Speech-Language Pathologist
October 20, 2021



Outline

- Introduction
- Communication milestones
- Facilitating speech and language development
- Wrap-Up
- Questions

“Popcorn is prepared in the same pot, in the same heat, in the same oil and yet... the kernels do not pop at the same time” - Anonymous



Communication Milestones: Receptive Language

1 Year

- Follows one-step directions
- Looks for common objects, when named

2 Years

- Points to some body parts
- Responds to simple questions
- Points to common objects and actions in a book

3 Years

- Understands opposites
- Follows 2-3 step directions

4 Years

- Knows early academic language
- Sequences familiar tasks

5 Years

- Understands temporal concepts
- Responds to complex "wh" questions

Communication Milestones: Expressive Language

1 Year

- Names common objects and actions
- Vocabulary of 1-10 words

2 Years

- Combines words into 2-3 word phrases
- Uses at least 200 words

3 Years

- Uses complete, simple sentences
- Conjugates verbs in present and past tense and uses pronouns

4 Years

- Uses compound and complex sentences
- Tells a simple story

5 Years

- Tells a well-sequenced story
- Initiates and continues conversations frequently

Communication Milestones: Pragmatic Language

1 Year

- Gives objects to request
- Repeats sounds or actions to get attention

2 Years

- Shows excitement to be around others, but plays parallel to other children
- Shows defiant behavior

3 Years

- Engages in short conversations
- Recognizes and shows concern for emotions in others

4 Years

- Engages in extended pretend/make-believe play
- Talks about things that they've done and things that they like

5 Years

- Wants to please and be like friends
- Engages in extended conversations with familiar and unfamiliar people

3 year-old conversation

CDC Learn the Signs Act Early (<https://youtube/dIFBFObuVIM>)

Supporting Language Development: Conversation

- Think about your interaction style with your child
 - Child-directed vs. adult-directed
- Considerations:
 - When does my child communicate the most?
 - What activities do we enjoy doing together?
 - What is their attention span?

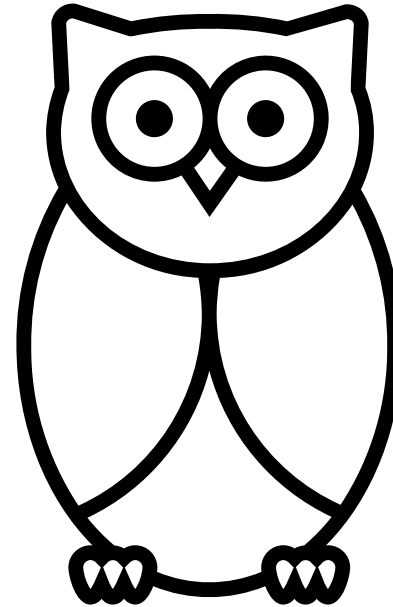
Hanen Centre (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GfexMrx6agl>)

OWL

O- Observe

W- Wait

L- Listen



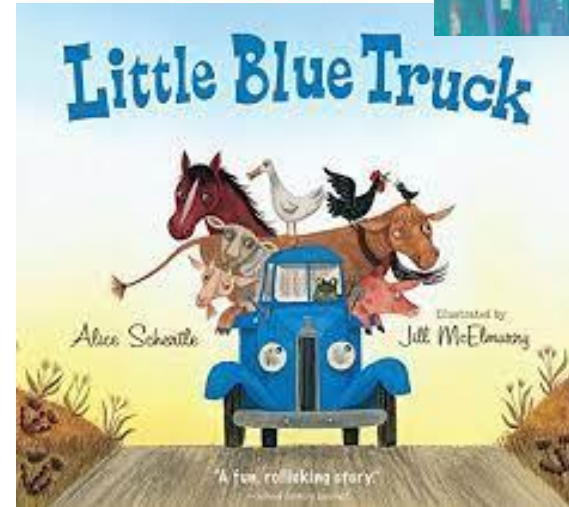
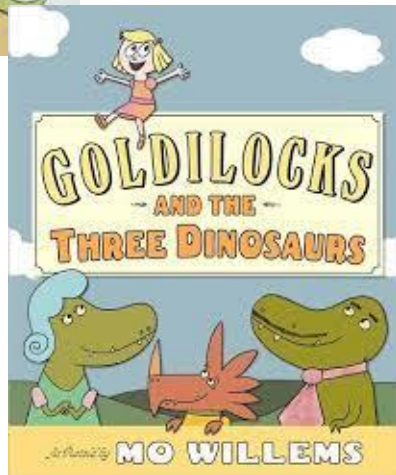
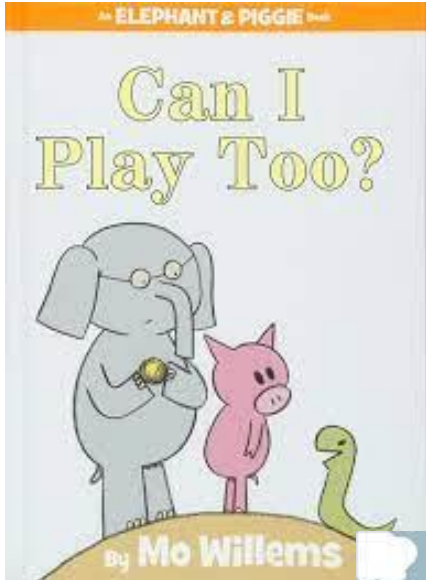
Where to OWL?

- Think back to your list of where your child communicates most
 - In the kitchen
 - In the bathtub
 - At the playground or on a walk
 - When playing with familiar or new toys
 - When you're getting your child dressed

Supporting Language Development: Book Reading

- Choose books that are about **topics your child enjoys**
- Try to choose **books with a story**, where you can comment on events and emotions (rather than labeling books)
- Don't worry about the language level of a book, **you can always modify!**
- If your child knows a story, **let them try to "tell it"** or point out items of interest
- For early book lovers: Repetition is your friend!
- For well developed readers: Surprise is your friend!

Some book recommendations:



Hanen Centre (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YoJ0EhVUpE4>)



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Children with language delays and disorders will likely need more support, beyond naturalistic teaching

Less is More!

- Limit distractions in the environment
 - Goal: 10-15 minutes a day of **screen-free, child focused time**
 - **Bring toys out selectively** (try 2-3 options at a time, with the rest put out of reach)
- Limit Language
 - Try to produce one step of language above what your child is producing
 - Use **adult constructions, just simplified**
 - Use comments, but **limit questions**

Additional ways to support language development:

- Speak in the **language you are most fluent in**
- Make sure you have your child's attention, **be face-to-face** and get on their level whenever possible
- Provide **visual supports** as much as possible
- **GO SLOW:** leave lots of space and pauses between your statements
- When in doubt, **follow your child's lead**
 - **Imitation can be a powerful way to engage**

Looking for more information?

- Communication Milestones: Birth to age 5 years
 - CDC Learn the Signs Act Early: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html>
- Hanen Parent Training Books
 - Available through online retailers or www.hanencentre.org
 - It Takes Two to Talk (for children with a language delay or disorder)
 - More Than Words (for children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder Diagnosis)
 - Free sample pages of It Takes Two to Talk
(https://www.acer.org/files/It_Takes_Two_Samples.pdf)
- American Speech- Language & Hearing Association Toolkit
 - <https://identifythesigns.org/communicating-with-baby-toolkit/>

Community Resources

- DC Public Library: Book from Birth Program (<https://www.dclibrary.org/booksfrombirth>)
- Imagination Library (<https://imaginationlibrary.com/usa/>)
- DC Strong Start (Birth to 3 services)
 - <https://osse.dc.gov/service/strong-start-dc-early-intervention-program-dc-eip>
- DC Child Find (Age 3 and up)
 - <https://osse.dc.gov/publication/dceip-child-find>
- Children's National Hearing & Speech Department (202-476-5600)

Questions?



Thank You!



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