

## **Oral Language and Vocabulary Behaviors**

A solid foundation of oral language and vocabulary development is essential to the acquisition of early literacy skills. *BOP-K* embeds numerous activities into each lesson to promote and support growth in these areas. The following list is a reference for oral language and vocabulary behaviors typical of four- to six-year-olds that you may want to observe while working with the child. Opportunities to comment on growth and development in these skill areas during the assessment process are offered on the Summary forms for the Beginning Assessment and each Checkup lesson. If you have concerns related to oral language and vocabulary development, consult with other professionals such as the general education teacher and speech therapist or, for students who are learning English, a teacher of English language learners.

### **Social Language**

- Identifies household family members<sup>1</sup>
- Uses pronouns appropriately
- Repeats familiar jokes<sup>1</sup>
- Tells familiar story in own words<sup>1</sup>
- Keeps a conversation going with three or more back-and-forth turns<sup>2</sup>
- Explains rules of simple board or card game to others<sup>1</sup>
- Speaks audibly and expresses thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly<sup>3</sup>
- Usually stays on topic during a conversation
- Describes familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provides additional detail<sup>3</sup>

### **Classroom Skills**

- Answers “wh” questions with phrases or complete sentences (who, what, when, where, why)
- Answers simple questions about a book or story after you read or tell it to him<sup>2</sup>
- Asks and answers questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood during classroom activities<sup>3</sup>
- Follows multi-step verbal directions
- Follows directions given to the group
- Participates in group discussions<sup>1</sup>

## Grammar and Vocabulary

- Speaks in well-structured four- to six-word sentences<sup>1</sup>
- Uses compound sentences (I went to the store and Mom bought me a snack.)<sup>1</sup>
- Uses complex sentences (He wants to come in because ...) <sup>1</sup>
- Uses two to three different words to describe objects
- Asks the meanings of new or unfamiliar words

## Suggestions

- Record or transcribe an oral language sample.
- Observe the child’s conversations in different settings and with different conversation partners, including adults and peers.

<sup>1</sup> These items use information from Anderson et al. (2007, pp. 22–23).

<sup>2</sup> These items use information from National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities & Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2023).

<sup>3</sup> These items use information from National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers (2010).

## References

Anderson, S., Boigon, S., Davis, K., & DeWaard, C. (2007). *The Oregon project for preschool children who are blind or visually impaired* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Southern Oregon Education Service District.

National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities. (2023, June 6). *Important milestones: Your child by five years: Language/communication milestones*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/milestones-5yr.html>

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers. (2010, June 2). *Common core state standards for English language arts and literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects: Speaking and listening in kindergarten*. <https://learning.ccsso.org/common-core-state-standards-initiative>