

Language Development



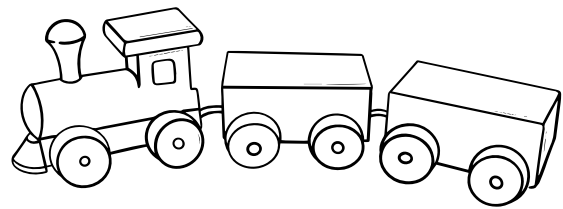
Language development is all about children learning the structure of language from the world around them. From the time a child is born, they are learning what it means to be a communicator. We see at the earliest stages, a child holding the gaze of their caregiver during feeding time all the way to them sharing with you about their first day of school. Language development looks like you talking about dinner as you cook, the happy babbling as your child plays, having conversations, and singing songs together. During the first five years of life, language is rapidly developing as young children build on the information they have gained from their surroundings, how they interpret language around them, and who they are as communicators.

LANGUAGE MILESTONES	
Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds eye contact with you. • Cooing and babbling. • Takes turns making sounds back and forth. • Lifts arms to be picked up. • Waves hello and bye-bye. • Looks at a familiar object when you name it.
Toddlers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follows one step-directions without gestures, such as "give it to me." • Says two words together like, "more milk." • Points to things in a book when you ask them, "where is the bear?" • Says around 50 words. • Says words like "I", "me", or "we".
Preschoolers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask "who", "what", "where" or "why" questions like "where is mommy/daddy?" • Says first name when asked. • Talks about at least one thing that has happened during their day. • Can answer simple questions like, "what is a coat for?" • Keeps a conversation going with more than 3 conversational exchanges.

*If your child is not meeting the expected developmental milestones then he may benefit from a developmental screening.

Activities to help promote language development:

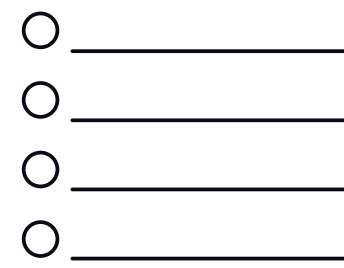
Infants:



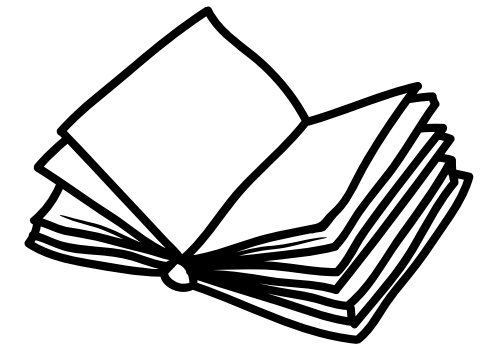
Talk about play objects, demonstrate what they do/what sound they make.



Play "peek-a-boo" or "pat-a-cake"



Talk your child through their daily activities, whether this be diaper changing or meal time.

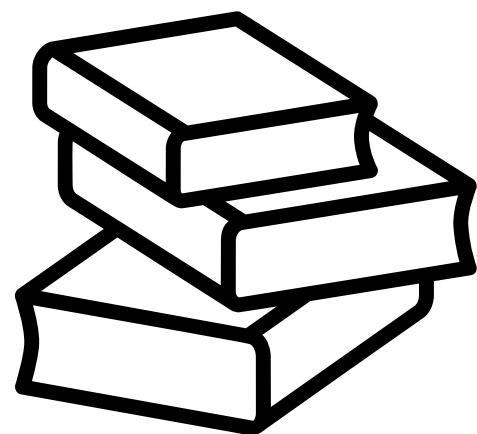


Read books, sing songs and recite nursery rhymes!

Toddlers:



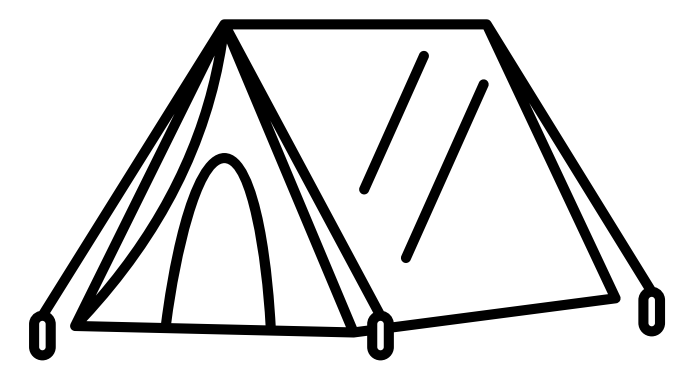
Sing! Itsy Bitsy Spider; Twinkle Twinkle Little Star; Baby Shark; Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes.



Read to your child and ask your child to point to the different characters in the story.

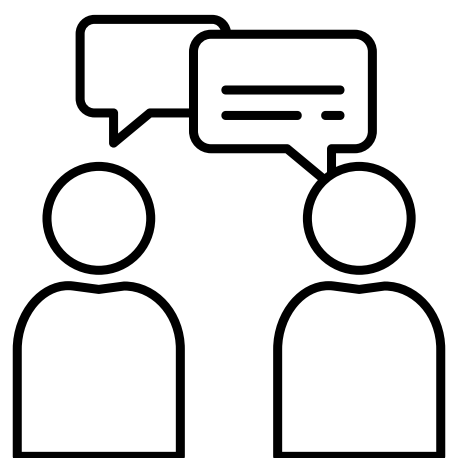


Go on a scavenger hunt around the house, talk about each item on the list and where it might be.

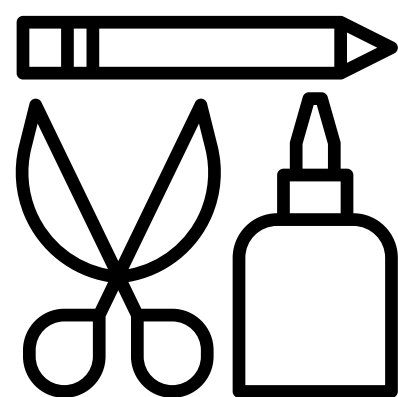


Have a make-believe camping trip: pretend fish, hide from bears, and roast marshmallows over the fire.

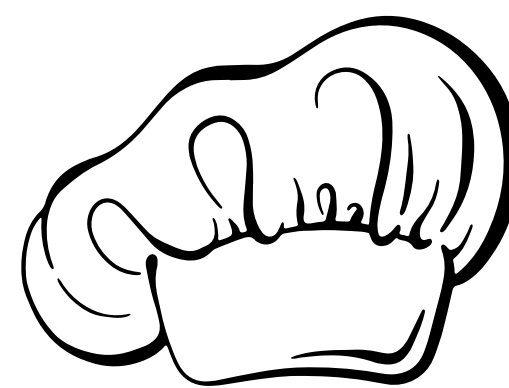
Preschoolers:



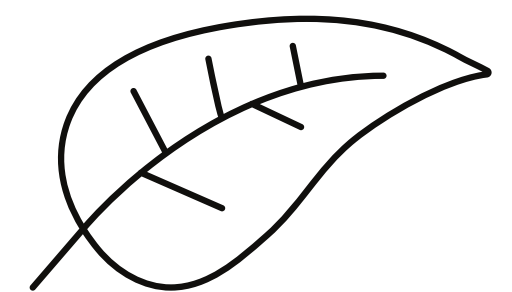
Talk with your child about their day, ask them, "What did you play with today?"



Write a creative story together and then make artwork for your story!



Let your preschooler help you cook! Ask questions like, "what comes next?", "where does it go?", "who is going to eat it?"



Play outside. Go on nature walks and count flowers or collect leaves. Let your child lead!

*For more ideas check out the CDC's *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* campaign online.