Assessment of Language Development

Name: __________________________ Age: ______ Date: __________

Examiner’s Name: __________________________

Instructions: Mark a plus (+) or a check (✓) if the child does exhibit the behavior, a minus (−) or a zero (0) if the child does not exhibit the behavior, and an S if the child exhibits the behavior sometimes. This form can be used during informal observation or completed by a parent or knowledgeable caregiver. Because children develop at different rates, avoid using strict application of the age approximations. The time intervals are provided only as a general guideline for age appropriateness.

0–6 Months

— Frequently coos, gurgles, and makes pleasure sounds
— Uses a different cry to express different needs
— Smiles when spoken to
— Recognizes voices
— Localizes to sound
— Listens to speech
— Uses the phonemes /b/, /p/, and /m/ in babbling
— Uses sounds or gestures to indicate wants
— Responds to no and changes in tone of voice

7–12 Months

— Understands no and hot
— Responds to simple requests
— Understands and responds to own name
— Recognizes words for common items (e.g., cup, shoe, juice)
— Babbles using long and short groups of sounds
— Uses a large variety of sounds in babbling
— Imitates some adult speech sounds and intonation patterns
— Uses speech sounds rather than only crying to get attention
— Listens when spoken to
— Uses sound approximations
— Begins to change babbling to jargon
— Uses speech intentionally for the first time
— Uses nouns almost exclusively
— Has an expressive vocabulary of one to three words
— Uses characteristic gestures or vocalizations to express wants

13–18 Months

— Imitates individual words
— Uses adult-like intonation patterns
— Uses echolalia and jargon
— Omits some initial consonants and almost all final consonants
— Produces mostly unintelligible speech
— Follows simple commands
— Receptively identifies one to three body parts
— Has an expressive vocabulary of three to 20 or more words (mostly nouns)
— Combines gestures and vocalization
— Makes requests for more of desired items

19–24 Months

— Uses words more frequently than jargon
— Has an expressive vocabulary of 50–100 or more words
— Has a receptive vocabulary of 300 or more words
— Starts to combine nouns with verbs and nouns with adjectives
— Begins to use pronouns
— Maintains unstable voice control
— Uses appropriate intonation for questions
— Is approximately 25–50% intelligible to strangers
Asks and answers “What’s that?” questions
Enjoys listening to stories
Knows five body parts
Accurately names a few familiar objects
Understands basic categories (e.g., toys, food)
Points to pictures in a book when named

2–3 Years
Speech is 50–75% intelligible
Understands one and all
Verbalizes toilet needs (before, during, or after act)
Requests items by name
Identifies several body parts
Follows two-part commands
Asks one- to two-word questions
Uses two- to four-word phrases
Uses words that are general in context
Continues use of echolalia when difficulties in speech are encountered
Has a receptive vocabulary of 500–900 or more words
Has an expressive vocabulary of 50–250 or more words
Exhibits multiple grammatical errors
Understands most things said to him or her
Frequently exhibits repetitions—especially starters, “I,” and first syllables
Increases range of pitch
Uses vowels correctly
Consistently uses initial consonants (although some are misarticulated)
Frequently omits medial consonants
Frequently omits or substitutes final consonants
Uses auxiliary *is* including the contracted form

Uses some regular past tense verbs, possessive morphemes, pronouns, and imperatives

Maintains topic over several conversational turns

**3–4 Years**

Understands object functions

Understands opposites (stop-go, in-out, big-little)

Follows two- and three-part commands

Produces simple verbal analogies

Uses language to express emotion

Uses four to five words in sentences

Repeats six- to 13-syllable sentences accurately

May continue to use echolalia

Uses nouns and verbs most frequently

Is conscious of past and future

Has a receptive vocabulary of 1,200–2,000 or more words

Has an expressive vocabulary of 800–1,500 or more words

May repeat self often, exhibiting blocks, disturbed breathing, and facial grimaces during speech

Increases speech rate

Speech is approximately 80% intelligible

 Appropriately uses *is*, *are*, and *am* in sentences

Tells two events in chronological order

Engages in long conversations

Sentence grammar improves, although some errors still persist

Uses some contractions, irregular plurals, future tense verbs, and conjunctions

Consistently uses regular plurals, possessives, and simple past tense verbs

Uses an increasing number of compound or complex sentences 

(continues)
4–5 Years

- Imitatively counts to five
- Continues understanding of spatial concepts
- Has a receptive vocabulary of 10,000 or more words
- Counts to 10 by rote
- Listens to short, simple stories and can answer questions about them
- Answers questions about function
- Uses adult-like grammar most of the time
- Grammatical errors primarily in irregular forms, reflexive pronouns, adverbial suffixes, and comparative/superlative inflections
- Has an expressive vocabulary of 900–2000 or more words
- Uses sentences of four to eight words
- Answers complex two-part questions
- Asks for word definitions
- Speaks at a rate of approximately 186 words per minute
- Reduces total number of repetitions
- Significantly reduces number of persistent sound omissions and substitutions
- Frequently omits medial consonants
- Speech is usually intelligible to strangers even though some articulation errors may persist
- Accurately tells about experiences at school, at friends’ homes, etc.

5–6 Years

- Follows instructions given to a group
- Asks how questions
- Uses past tense and future tense appropriately
- Uses conjunctions
- Has a receptive vocabulary of approximately 13,000 words