

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Young children are constantly and rapidly learning language.

Sometimes, it's hard to tell how much they really know—especially when they may not be saying much or anything at all!

It's common for children to comprehend more language than they produce, which can alleviate some concerns. Research shows that **strong comprehension skills are a better indication of a child's language development than their production skills.**



LOOKING FOR A FUN AT-HOME TEST TO SEE WHAT YOUR CHILD KNOWS?



THE “LOOKING WHILE LISTENING” TEST

THE WHAT

Also known as an **intermodal preferential-looking paradigm**, this is a reliable way to study children's language comprehension by combining both auditory and visual stimuli and seeing how your child responds.

THE HOW

- Supplies: 2 different objects or 2 toys.
 - Ensure they are both of equal interest to your child.
 - For example, let's say you are holding a banana and an apple.
- Place them side by side so your child can see.
- Say a word or phrase that describes one of the objects.
 - EX: “look, a banana!”
 - pay attention to where your child looks first!
- Repeat with different pictures / objects and continue to keep track of where your child is looking.

INTERPRETING RESULTS

If your child is consistently looking at the right object...

- They understand the relationship between the word and the object

If your child does not yet show a preference...

- They are still learning, and may not be able to make that connection yet!



TIPS/TRICKS

SET THE STAGE!



- **Create a calming, noise free environment with little to no distractions**
 - Remove any toys, clutter, or devices not needed for this experiment
- **Use printed images, real life objects, or images on a tablet**
 - There is a wide variety of mediums that could be used for this experiment. You can use anything you have access to and what you think your child will respond best to!

KEEP YOUR CHILD INTERESTED!

- **Use objects, people, or items you know that your child is interested in**
 - Children will become more excited and involved at the sight of their favorite objects
- **Encourage your child!**
 - Try to encourage your child no matter how they respond. Your kind speech, smiles and fun objects/pictures should keep your child engaged and excited!

DURING THE TEST: BE STRATEGIC

- **Keep your trials short!**
 - Kids have short span attentions, so keep it as brief as possible
- **Keep your language clear and concise**
 - Use warm and comfortable language that your child is familiar with to keep the atmosphere calm!
- **Be patient!**
 - Wait for your child to complete the processing process and try to encourage them as much as possible!

WAYS TO ENCOURAGE LANGUAGE

You play an important role in supporting your child's language development as a caregiver. Here are some simple ways to make supporting your child's language part of your daily routine.

HOW TO START

- Repeat key words and objects during everyday conversation.
ex: "Look at the ball! The ball is red."
- Read books together and pause to let your child fill in simple words.
ex: "Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see? I see a... (let your child respond)"
- Follow your child's interest and label what they are looking at.
ex: If your child points to a dog, you can say: "Yes, that's a dog. The dog is barking. Woof woof!"
- Offer simple choices to encourage your child to use words.
ex: "Do you want an apple or a banana for snack?"

GOALS

Language development takes time and it's perfectly normal for mistakes to happen, they are learning a brand-new skill! Be patient and start slow. Use a calm and encouraging tone to welcome a comfortable environment for your child to try new words and expressions.



UNIQUE LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND REFERRALS

As a caregiver, you know your child the best. If you're worried about your child's speech and/ or language development don't hesitate to seek professional advice.

What to know about your child's unique language development path.

Do learn about developmental milestones. Refer to a list of speech and language milestones by age.

Do understand that not all children are the same. By 12 months one child may be saying only one word and another child may be speaking about 10 or more.

Do seek professional assistance by setting up an appointment with your child's doctor to discuss concerns, when confirmed the doctor will make a referral for a speech and language evaluation.

Don't compare your child, another child may be advanced for his/or her age.

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION



MEANS A LOT!

WHAT DOES LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION SAY ABOUT LANGUAGE ACQUISITION?

+ AT HOME language comprehension test!

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