

**Language Development  
4-5 years**

Age	What to expect	What you can do
4 years	<p>Comprehension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responds to name consistently and replies to name or request from another room</li> <li>• Colours, shapes and family words are now understood consistently</li> <li>• Of a variety of question types, i.e. who, what, where, when and how</li> </ul> <p>Vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On average a 4 year old would be using a variety of vocabulary from different groups, e.g. colours, people, sizes, shapes, toys, places and would be starting to use joining words.</li> </ul> <p>Grammar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses past tense, e.g. jumped</li> <li>• Has begun to use pronouns, although errors are still expected</li> <li>• Uses 's' to show possession, e.g. "mummy's ball"</li> <li>• Uses smaller words in a sentence, i.e. 'is', 'a', 'the'</li> </ul> <p>Sentence length:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 or more words are used consistently in spoken turns</li> <li>• Some grammar errors may still be present, "I ated the chocolate egg"</li> <li>• Responses to simple questions are detailed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model new words to your children, while you are talking to them, describing your daily activities, reading and signing</li> <li>• Use rhyming words and sing- a- long patterns with them</li> <li>• Expand on your child's phrase to include more words- helping them to build sentences</li> <li>• Ask open ended questions, where a longer response is required, e.g. " what did you do today"</li> <li>• Look through books, pictures and photos describing,</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes turns in conversations</li> <li>• Is beginning to give simple recounts/reports or ask longer 'why/how' questions</li> </ul> <p>Uses speech to: reason, negotiate, give predictions, express emotions and empathy and add/build imagination and develop characters in play</p>	<p>naming and sorting into categories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take turns asking each other questions and model correct responses</li> <li>• Play with your children, modelling events in pretend play, e.g. shopping or cooking play</li> <li>• Play with your children, modelling events in pretend play, e.g. shopping or cooking play</li> </ul>
5 years	<p>Comprehension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time, size and sequencing words</li> <li>• beginning to follow longer 2 step directions in a context, i.e. the home or classroom</li> </ul> <p>Vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less effort is required to learn new words, with vocabulary growing quickly during this year group.</li> <li>• On average a 5 year old would be using a variety of vocabulary from different groups, e.g. people, place, animal, clothing, action, letters, numbers, time, and transport words.</li> </ul> <p>Grammar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses irregular past tense, e.g. ate, ran</li> <li>• Uses pronouns, e.g. he, her, they</li> <li>• Uses contractions, e.g. isn't. wasn't</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to your children about the activities you are completing daily, teaching them new words relating to that activity or event, e.g. cleaning or working</li> <li>• Talk to your children about categories and how words fall into groups, e.g. types of flowers or types of animals</li> <li>• Listen to your children and when they talk, follow their lead and interests</li> <li>• Ask your children to describe their actions</li> <li>• Ensure your children know how to request help when they don't understand and that they will check for clarification</li> <li>• Give your children multistep directions in play, not only in activities of daily living</li> <li>• Talk to your children about: time and sequence, i.e. use the words: first or then</li> </ul>



Sentence length:

- Building sentences of longer than 5 words, with often more than one action one in the phrase, "I like to go to the school and play there."
- Is beginning to recount with more order and detail included
- Will tell a simple story, with characters and setting detail
- Uses social language and commenting without prompting, e.g. greetings or making requests for clarification
- Is building longer sentences with joining words (because, so, if...), e.g. "I want that bag 'cause I need it"

- Help your children understand stories and recount all parts of a story, including the hidden meaning or message of a story
- Get your children involved in completing tasks around the home, e.g. cleaning their room or food preparation
- Teach your children to follow the rules of games and shared Play



References

[www.asha.org/public/speech/development](http://www.asha.org/public/speech/development)

Paul, R. (2012) Language Disorders from infancy through to adolescence – 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Missouri: Elsevier Mosby

