

HWDSB

Learn more about...

Kindergarten Speech, Language & Early Literacy

By age four, most children can do the following:



Listening

- Follows directions with two or three parts (e.g. “Please get your hat and coat and meet me at the door.”)
- Answers simple what, where, who and why questions (e.g. “Why is the boy sad?”)
- Knows basic body parts and colours



Speaking

- Are understood most of the time by people who do not know them
- Speak in four to five word sentences
- Use endings on words like dogs, jumped, biking
- Ask lots of questions, like “what, where, why” (e.g. “Where is the dog going?”)
- Use speech sounds for their age, as shown below:



Sound and letter awareness

- Can name some letters of the alphabet
- Know the letters and sounds in their name
- Enjoy listening to and making rhymes



Storytelling and reading

- Look at books and pretend to read
- Listen to and show interest in stories
- Answer some questions about a book you have read together
- Tell you short stories about what they have done
- Know that the printed words in books have meaning but may not be able to read them yet
- Recognize own name in print
- Recognize some environmental print (e.g., Stop Sign, Tim Hortons sign)



Writing

- Draws, colours and scribbles
- Tries to write letters
- Tries to write own name

Ideas for talking and learning with your child:

Listening

- Point out and label the pictures in books you read together to practice familiar and new vocabulary
- Substitute easier vocabulary to help your child understand if needed (*e.g. big for large*)
- Give instructions in order (*e.g. "First put your toys away, then get your snack."*)
- Repeat and rephrase instructions when needed

Speaking

- Recite nursery rhymes and sing favourite songs to develop awareness of speech sounds
- Ask your child to find or draw pictures of words that start with a new sound
- Choose books that use words with the new sound
- Emphasize new sounds by saying them louder or stretching them out

Sound and letter awareness

- Point and make a comment to talk about how letters have names (*e.g. "This is the letter B."*)
- When sharing a book together, point to the letters and talk about the sounds you hear as you read the words
- Have fun rhyming words when talking and sharing a book together
- Talk about how many syllables and sounds you hear in a word

Storytelling and reading

- Read with animation and expression when sharing a story book together
- Ask questions about the story that your child can and wants to answer
- Talk about new and interesting words and what they mean in the story
- Re-read favourite story books and rhymes many, many times! It's fun!

Writing

- Point out your child's name in print
- Name the letters in your child's name as you point to them
- Encourage your child to print their name

