

SPEECH & LANGUAGE MILESTONES

A parent-friendly snapshot from preschool through elementary school

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

These are selected examples from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), not a checklist or a diagnosis. Children develop at different rates. School-grade examples describe skills ASHA lists for the end of that grade, not a required skill at a particular birthday. Jett Speech Therapy currently serves ages 5 and up.

AGES 4–5: APPROACHING SCHOOL

- Tells stories with characters and a setting, connecting ideas with words such as “and.”
- Understands and uses location words such as “behind” and “between.”
- Produces most consonants correctly; speech is understandable in conversation.

BY THE END OF KINDERGARTEN

- Follows one or two simple directions in a row and understands stories.
- Retells a story or talks about something they did; takes turns in conversation.
- Speaks clearly enough that most people understand them.

BY THE END OF FIRST GRADE

- Follows two- or three-step directions in a row.
- Tells and retells stories that make sense and shares ideas in complete sentences.
- Asks and answers who, what, when, where, and why questions.

BY THE END OF THIRD GRADE

- Pays attention in groups and understands grade-level information.
- Joins group discussions, stays on topic, and takes turns in conversation.
- Summarizes a story and explains what they learned in school.

BY THE END OF FIFTH GRADE

- Listens and draws conclusions in different classes.
- Takes part in class discussions and summarizes main points.
- Plans and delivers a speech suited to an audience.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS

Missing one example does not by itself indicate a disorder. If you have concerns about your child's communication, talk with a licensed speech-language pathologist. An individualized evaluation can help clarify strengths and needs.

SOURCES AND FURTHER READING

ASHA, Communication Milestones: 4 to 5 Years

<https://www.asha.org/public/developmental-milestones/communication-milestones-4-to-5-years/>

ASHA, Your Child's Communication: Kindergarten, First Grade, Third Grade, Fifth Grade

<https://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/communicationdevelopment/>

A NOTE

This guide is general educational information, not individualized medical or therapeutic advice. If you have concerns about speech or language, a licensed speech-language pathologist can evaluate your specific situation. Jett Speech Therapy currently serves clients ages 5 and up, virtually, throughout California.