

# **Developmental Domain 3: Language Development, Communication, and Literacy**

## Social Communication **SC**

### Children demonstrate the ability to engage with and maintain communication with others.

- 1 Birth to 9 months **SC.1**
  - 1 Uses sounds, cries, facial expressions, and body language to convey needs **SC.1.1**
  - 2 Attempts to engage in early forms of turn-taking with caregiver, e.g., coos and stares at caregiver **SC.1.2**
  - 3 Smiles and uses other facial expressions to initiate interactions with caregiver **SC.1.3**
  - 4 Participates in back-and-forth communication, e.g., babbles back and forth and/or plays peek-a-boo with caregiver **SC.1.4**
- 2 7 months to 18 months **SC.2**
  - 1 Communicates and responds by grunting, nodding, and pointing **SC.2.1**
  - 2 Demonstrates understanding of a familiar sound or word, e.g., looks toward a caregiver after hearing name **SC.2.2**
  - 3 Responds with “yes” or “no,” using sounds, words, and/or gestures to answer simple questions **SC.2.3**
  - 4 Uses facial expressions, vocalizations, and gestures to initiate interactions with others **SC.2.4**
  - 5 Participates in simple back-and-forth communication, using words and/or gestures **SC.2.5**
- 3 16 months to 24 months **SC.3**
  - 1 Engages in short back-and-forth interactions with familiar others using verbal and nonverbal communication, e.g., says or signs “more” after each time a caregiver completes an action the child is enjoying **SC.3.1**
  - 2 Initiates and engages in social interaction with simple words and actions **SC.3.2**
  - 3 Connects gestures and/or sounds to comment about a familiar object, e.g., makes a crying sound after the caregiver hugs a baby doll and says, “Hush, baby” **SC.3.3**
  - 4 Pays attention to the person communicating for a brief period of time **SC.3.4**
  - 5 Demonstrates an understanding of turn-taking in conversations, e.g., asks and answers simple questions **SC.3.5**
- 4 21 months to 36 months **SC.4**
  - 1 Responds verbally to an adult’s questions or comments **SC.4.1**
  - 2 Begins to make formal requests or responses based on his or her context and culture **SC.4.2**
  - 3 Uses repetition to maintain the conversation and obtain responses from familiar others **SC.4.3**
  - 4 Communicates related ideas when in interactions with others **SC.4.4**

- 5 Uses “w” questions to initiate and expand conversations, e.g., “who,” “what,” “why” [SC.4.5](#)
  - 6 Initiates and engages others using meaningful objects or ideas, e.g., points out his/her artwork or favorite toy to a caregiver to begin conversing [SC.4.6](#)
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**Receptive  
Communication** RC

**Children demonstrate the ability to comprehend both verbal and nonverbal communication.**

**1** Birth to 9 months RC.1

- 1 Responds to sounds found in the environment, e.g., cries if hears a loud bang, will turn toward a familiar voice RC.1.1
- 2 Calms down when crying after hearing a soothing and familiar voice or receiving physical reassurance, e.g., a hug or gentle pats on back RC.1.2
- 3 Looks or turns toward the familiar person who says his or her name RC.1.3
- 4 Responds to gestures, e.g., waves hello after a familiar person waves to him or her RC.1.4

**2** 7 months to 18 months RC.2

- 1 Engages in joint attention with a caregiver, e.g., joins in looking at the same object or shifts gaze to where someone is pointing RC.2.1
- 2 Follows a one-step, simple request when a gesture is used RC.2.2
- 3 Responds appropriately to familiar words, e.g., hears the words “so big,” and puts arms in air RC.2.3
- 4 Understands approximately 100 words relevant to their experiences and cultural context RC.2.4

**3** 16 months to 24 months RC.3

- 1 Recognizes and demonstrates understanding of familiar pictures, people, and objects, e.g., says “mama” while pointing to mother RC.3.1
- 2 Understands simple commands and questions and can follow two-step requests with the support of gestures and prompting RC.3.2
- 3 Demonstrates understanding of familiar words or phrases by responding appropriately, e.g., sits in chair after hearing it is snack time RC.3.3
- 4 Points to body parts when prompted RC.3.4
- 5 Responds to personal pronouns, e.g., me, her, him RC.3.5

**4** 21 months to 36 months RC.4

- 1 Names most objects and people in a familiar environment RC.4.1
  - 2 Comprehends compound statements and can follow multi-step directions RC.4.2
  - 3 Demonstrates understanding of a story by reacting with sounds, facial expressions, and physical movement, e.g., laughing, widening eyes, or clapping RC.4.3
  - 4 Understands simple sentences or directions with prepositions, e.g., “Put cup in sink” RC.4.4
  - 5 Responds verbally and/or nonverbally to comments or questions while engaged in conversations with both peers and adults RC.4.5
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**Expressive  
Communication EC**

**Children demonstrate the ability to understand and convey thoughts through both nonverbal and verbal expression.**

- 1 Birth to 9 months **EC.1**
    - 1 Cries to signal hunger, pain, or distress **EC.1.1**
    - 2 Uses smiles and other facial expressions to initiate social contact **EC.1.2**
    - 3 Coos and uses physical movements to engage familiar others **EC.1.3**
    - 4 Babbles and experiments with all types of sounds (two-lip sounds: “p,” “b,” “m”) **EC.1.4**
    - 5 Combines different types of babbles **EC.1.5**
    - 6 Begins to point to objects in his/her environment **EC.1.6**
  - 2 7 months to 18 months **EC.2**
    - 1 Babbles using the sounds of the home language **EC.2.1**
    - 2 Creates long, babbled sentences **EC.2.2**
    - 3 Uses nonverbal communication to express ideas, e.g., waves bye-bye, signs “more” when eating **EC.2.3**
    - 4 Utters first words; these words are for familiar objects and people, e.g., “mama,” “bottle” **EC.2.4**
    - 5 Names a few familiar objects in his/her environment **EC.2.5**
    - 6 Uses one word to convey a message, e.g., “milk” for “I want milk” **EC.2.6**
  - 3 16 months to 24 months **EC.3**
    - 1 Uses more words than gestures when speaking **EC.3.1**
    - 2 Repeats overheard words **EC.3.2**
    - 3 Has a vocabulary of approximately 80 words **EC.3.3**
    - 4 Begins to use telegraphic speech , consisting of phrases with words left out, e.g., “baby sleep” for “The baby is sleeping” **EC.3.4**
  - 4 21 months to 36 months **EC.4**
    - 1 Speaks in three-word utterances, e.g., “I want ball” **EC.4.1**
    - 2 Begins to use pronouns and prepositions, e.g., “He took my toy” and “on the table” **EC.4.2**
    - 3 Makes mistakes, which signal that he or she is working out complex grammar rules **EC.4.3**
    - 4 Uses adjectives in speech, e.g., “blue car” **EC.4.4**
    - 5 Uses simple sentences, e.g., “I want the yellow cup” **EC.4.5**
    - 6 Has a vocabulary of more than 300 words **EC.4.6**
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**Children demonstrate interest in and comprehension of printed materials.**

- 1 Birth to 9 months [EL.1](#)
  - 1 Shows awareness of printed materials, e.g., stares at a picture in a book [EL.1.1](#)
  - 2 Reaches out to grasp and mouth books [EL.1.2](#)
  - 3 Uses multiple senses to explore books, e.g., explores books with different textures [EL.1.3](#)
  - 4 Uses hands to manipulate printed materials, e.g., attempts to turn pages of a board book, grasps objects in hands [EL.1.4](#)
  - 5 Points or makes sounds while looking at picture books [EL.1.5](#)
  - 6 Focuses attention while looking at printed materials for brief periods of time [EL.1.6](#)
- 2 7 months to 18 months [EL.2](#)
  - 1 Points to pictures in a book and reacts, e.g., smiles when sees a picture of a dog [EL.2.1](#)
  - 2 Initiates literacy activities, e.g., gestures toward a book or attempts to turn pages of a paper book or magazine [EL.2.2](#)
  - 3 Imitates gestures and sounds during activities, e.g., hand actions during singing, babbles as caregiver reads book [EL.2.3](#)
  - 4 Increases ability to focus for longer periods of time on printed materials [EL.2.4](#)
  - 5 Grasps objects and attempts to scribble, e.g., makes a slight mark with a crayon on a piece of paper [EL.2.5](#)
- 3 16 months to 24 months [EL.3](#)
  - 1 Turns the pages of a board book, one by one [EL.3.1](#)
  - 2 Points to familiar pictures and actions in books [EL.3.2](#)
  - 3 Repeats familiar words in a book when being read to [EL.3.3](#)
  - 4 Begins to anticipate what may happen next in a familiar book, e.g., generates sounds and movements and/or uses words for pictures [EL.3.4](#)
  - 5 Randomly scribbles [EL.3.5](#)
  - 6 Identifies a favorite book and signals familiar others to read with him or her, e.g., brings the book over, or points and gestures [EL.3.6](#)
- 4 21 months to 36 months [EL.4](#)
  - 1 Imitates adult role when engages with printed materials, e.g., pretends to read a book or newspaper to stuffed animals or dolls [EL.4.1](#)
  - 2 Participates in early literacy activities independently, e.g., sits in a reading nook and browses through the pages [EL.4.2](#)
  - 3 Recites parts of a book from memory [EL.4.3](#)
  - 4 Scribbles in a more orderly fashion and begins to name what he or she has drawn [EL.4.4](#)

- 5 Expresses what happens next when reading a familiar book with a caregiver, e.g., uses gestures, words, and/or sounds [EL.4.5](#)