South Carolina Early Learning Standards

Language Development and Communication (LDC)

Learning to Communicate

1 **Children understand communications from others.** LDC-1

Infants Birth to 12 months

a Engage in individual and reciprocal sound exploration and play (make "raspberries" or other sounds with someone). LDC-1A

b Show interest in voices, and focus on speech directed at them. LDC-1B

c Respond to different tones in speech directed at them. LDC-1C

d Respond to simple requests ("Come here."or "Do you want more?"). LDC-1D

Younger Toddlers 8 to 21 months

e Respond to others by using words or signs. LDC-1E

f Respond appropriately to gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, and some words that show emotions. LDC-1F

g Follow simple directions and/or visual cues ("Put your pillow on the mat." "Please sit by me."). LDC-1G

Older Toddlers 18 to 36 months

h Respond when others talk to them, using a larger variety of words or signs. LDC-1H

i Respond appropriately to gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, and some words that show emotions. LDC-1I

j Follow two-step directions with visual cues if needed ("Pick up the paper and put it in the trash." "Get your cup and put it on the table."). LDC-1J

Younger Preschoolers 36 to 48 months

k Show understanding of increasingly complex sentences. LDC-1K

l With prompting and support, respond to requests for information or action. LDC-1L

m Follow simple multistep directions with visual cues, if needed. LDC-1M

Older Preschoolers 48 to 60+ months

n Show understanding of increasingly complex sentences. LDC-1N

o Respond to requests for information or action. LDC-1O

p Follow more detailed multistep directions. LDC-1P

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2 Children participate in conversations with peers and adults. LDC-2

Infants Birth to 12 months

a Respond differently to facial expressions and tones of voice. LDC-2A

b Pay brief attention to the same object the caregiver is looking at. LDC-2B

c Engage in turn-taking during social and vocal play with adults and other children (babbling, imitating facial expressions, repeating sounds from languages they hear). LDC-2C

Younger Toddlers 8 to 21 months

d Establish joint attention by looking at an object, at their caregiver, and back at the object. LDC-2D

e Respond to and initiate dialogue with another person. LDC-2E

f Use movement or behavior to initiate interaction with another person. LDC-2F

Older Toddlers 18 to 36 months

g Engage in short dialogues of a few turns. LDC-2G

h Ask questions or use verbal or nonverbal cues to initiate communication with another child or adult. LDC-2H

Younger Preschoolers 36 to 48 months

i Demonstrate an understanding that people communicate in many ways (gestures, facial expressions, multiple spoken languages, sign language, augmentative communication). LDC-2I

j Initiate and carry on conversations, and ask questions about things that interest them. LDC-2J

k With prompting and support, make comments and ask questions related to the topic of discussion. LDC-2K

Older Preschoolers 48 to 60+ months

l Express an understanding that people communicate in many ways (gestures, facial expressions, multiple spoken languages, sign language, and augmentative communication). LDC-2L

m Initiate and carry on conversations that involve multiple back and forth communications or turns between the persons involved in the conversation. LDC-2M

n Initiate and participate in conversations related to interests of their own or the persons they are communicating with. LDC-2N

o Participate in a group discussion, making comments and asking questions related to the topic. LDC-2O

p Show an appreciation for and can use humor appropriately. LDC-2P

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:hildren ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or larify something that is not understood. LDC-3

Infants Birth to 12 months

Emerging

Younger Toddlers 8 to 21 months

a Respond to simple statements and questions about pictures, play, people, and things that are happening. LDC-3A

Older Toddlers 18 to 36 months

b Answer simple questions (“What is she doing?” “What happened to the bear in the story?”). LDC-3B

c Use simple sentences or questions to ask for things (e.g., people, actions, objects, pets) or gain information. LDC-3C

Younger Preschoolers 36 to 48 months

d Answer longer questions using more detail. LDC-3D

e Use sentences or questions to ask for things (people, actions, objects, pets) or gain information. LDC-3E

Older Preschoolers 48 to 60+ months

f Answer more complex questions with an explanation (“I didn’t like camping out because it rained.” “Emily is my friend because she’s nice to me”). LDC-3F

g Ask specific questions to learn more about their world, understand tasks, and solve problems. LDC-3G

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4 Children communicate thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly. LDC-4

Infants Birth to 12 months

a Repeat actions to communicate (lift arms to be picked up, point at desired toys). LDC-4A

b Make different sounds for different purposes (whimper when wet, cry loudly when hungry). LDC-4B

c “Babble” and pretend to talk using many sounds or signs from the languages used around them. LDC-4C

Younger Toddlers 8 to 21 months

d Communicate through facial expressions, sounds, and body movements. LDC-4D

e Expect others to understand them and show frustration, often through their behavior, if not understood. LDC-4E

f Use non-verbal gestures to express ideas and feelings. LDC-4F

Older Toddlers 18 to 36 months

g Communicate messages with expression, tone, and inflection. LDC-4G

h Use speech that is understood most of the time by familiar listeners. LDC-4H

Skip to main content

Younger Preschoolers 36 to 48 months

i Communicate messages with expression, tone, and inflection appropriate to the situation. LDC-4I

j Speak clearly enough to be understood by familiar adults and children. LDC-4J

Older Preschoolers 48 to 60+ months

k Use language and nonverbal cues to communicate thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and intentions. LDC-4K

l Adapt their communication to meet social expectations (speak quietly in library, speak politely to older relative). LDC-4L

m Speak clearly enough to be understood by most people. LDC-4M

n State point of view, likes and dislikes. LDC-4N

o Relay messages accurately. LDC-4O

p Express ideas in more than one way. LDC-4P

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5 Children describe familiar people, places, things, and events. LDC-5

Infants Birth to 12 months

Emerging

Younger Toddlers 8 to 21 months

a Act out familiar scenes and events, and imitate familiar people. LDC-5A

Older Toddlers 18 to 36 months

b Talk to themselves and others about what they are "working on," what they are doing, routines, and events of the day. LDC-5B

c Use dramatic play to act out familiar scenes and events and imitate familiar people. LDC-5C

Younger Preschoolers 36 to 48 months

d Talk to themselves and others about what they are "working on," what they are doing, routines, and events of the day. LDC-5D

e Describe experiences and create or retell short narratives. LDC-5E

Older Preschoolers 48 to 60+ months

f Describe experiences and create and/or retell longer narratives. LDC-5F

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6 Children use most grammatical constructions of their home language well. LDC-6

Infants Birth to 12 months

a Make different sounds for different purposes (whimper when wet, cry loudly when hungry). LDC-6A

b "Jabber" and pretend to talk using many sounds or signs from the languages used around them to communicate. LDC-6B

Skip to main content

Younger Toddlers 8 to 21 months

c “Jabber” and put together vocalizations in a way that sounds similar to the rhythm and flow of their home language. LDC-6C

d Use a few words to communicate (make requests and ask questions). LDC-6D

Older Toddlers 18 to 36 months

e Communicate in short sentences that follow the word order of their home language. LDC-6E

f Combine two and three words. LDC-6F

Younger Preschoolers 36 to 48 months

g Communicate in longer sentences and use more conventional grammar in their home language (plurals, tenses, prepositions). LDC-6G

h Make grammatical errors that follow language rules (say, “mouses” instead of “mice”). LDC-6H

Older Preschoolers 48 to 60+ months

i Speak in full sentences that are grammatically correct most of the time. LDC-6I

7 Children respond to and use a growing vocabulary. LDC-7

Infants Birth to 12 months

a Make specific sounds, facial expressions, and/or gestures for certain people and objects. LDC-7A

b Imitate sounds, words, and gestures. LDC-7B

c Recognize spoken or signed words for common items. LDC-7C

Younger Toddlers 8 to 21 months

d Show steady increase in words used (e.g., name family members and familiar objects). LDC-7D

e Imitate parts of familiar songs, chants, or rhymes. LDC-7E

f Respond to simple words and phrases that they hear often. LDC-7F

g Use several words to make requests (e.g., “done,” “wannit,” “please”) as well as to label people and objects. LDC-7G

Older Toddlers 18 to 36 months

h Use new words each day and have a word for almost all familiar people, objects, actions, and conditions (hot, rainy, sleepy). LDC-7H

i Participate in or repeat familiar songs, chants, or rhymes. LDC-7I

j Show they understand many new vocabulary words and a variety of concepts (big and little, in and out). LDC-7J

k Use proper nouns for people and things. LDC-7K

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Younger Preschoolers 36 to 48 months

l Repeat familiar songs, chants, or rhymes. LDC-7L

m Use more than one word for the same object and use words for parts of objects (e.g., dog, beagle, Rover; arm, leg). LDC-7M

n Make up names for things using words they know (e.g., dog doctor for veterinarian). LDC-7N

o Use many kinds of cues in the environment to figure out what words mean. LDC-7O

Older Preschoolers 48 to 60+ months

p Repeat familiar songs, chants, or rhymes. LDC-7P

q Use a growing vocabulary that includes many kinds of words to express ideas clearly. LDC-7Q

r Infer the meaning of different kinds of new words from the context in which they are used (for example, hear “sandals” and “boots” used to describe two pairs of shoes, and infer that the unfamiliar shoes must be sandals because they know that the other pair of shoes are boots). LDC-7R

s Distinguish between real and made up words. LDC-7S

Foundations for Reading

8 **Children develop interest in books and motivation to read.** LDC-8

Infants Birth to 12 months

a Pat and chew on tactile books. LDC-8A

b Look at pictures of faces and simple objects. LDC-8B

c Listen to simple and repetitive books, stories, and songs. LDC-8C

Younger Toddlers 8 to 21 months

d Engage in reading behaviors independently (choose books, turn pages but not always in order, tell the story). LDC-8D

e Show interest in books (e.g., tactile and picture books). LDC-8E

f Listen to simple and repetitive books, stories, and songs for a brief time. LDC-8F

g Carry books around, “name” them, and select books for adults to read out loud. LDC-8G

Older Toddlers 18 to 36 months

h Engage in reading behaviors independently (choose books, turn pages but not always in order, tell the story). LDC-8H

i Listen for short periods of time to storybooks, informational books, stories, poetry, songs, and finger plays. LDC-8I

Skip to main content

Younger Preschoolers 36 to 48 months

j Engage in reading behaviors independently (choose books, turn pages but not always in order, tell the story). LDC-8J

k Show an interest in books, other print, and reading related activities. LDC-8K

l Listen to and discuss storybooks, simple information books, and poetry. LDC-8L

Older Preschoolers 48 to 60+ months

m Engage in reading behaviors independently with increased focus for longer periods of time. LDC-8M

n Use and share books and print in their play. LDC-8N

o Listen to and discuss increasingly complex storybooks, information books, and poetry. LDC-8O

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9 Children develop book knowledge and print awareness. LDC-9

Infants Birth to 12 months

a Explore books and paper by tasting, mouthing, crumpling, banging, and patting. LDC-9A

b Look at pictures while cuddling with caregiver. LDC-9B

Younger Toddlers 8 to 21 months

c Turn pages (but not always in the right order); point to and label pictures in books; sometimes treat pictures as real (licking a picture of ice cream, rubbing "fur" of a cat in a book). LDC-9C

d Identify some environmental print and logos (favorite cereal box, a sign for a familiar store). LDC-9D

Older Toddlers 18 to 36 months

e Hold a book upright, turn some pages front to back (but not always in the right order), close book, and say, "done" or "the end." LDC-9E

f Demonstrate understanding of the need for and the uses of print (pretend to read a "grocery list" during play; say, "I want chicken" when looking at a menu). LDC-9F

g Demonstrate an understanding of realistic symbols such as photographs, and later, abstract symbols such as signs and environmental print (know which pictures stand for which activities on a daily schedule; say, "That means light" when looking at a symbol of a light bulb located over the light switch). LDC-9G

Skip to main content

Younger Preschoolers 36 to 48 months

h Hold a book upright while turning pages one by one front to back, but not always in order. LDC-9H

i With prompting and support, recognize print occurs in different forms and is used for a variety of functions (sign naming block structure, “message” on card for family member). LDC-9I

j Demonstrate an understanding that print and symbols can tell people what to do (to organize classroom activities—where to store things, when they will have a turn). LDC-9J

Older Preschoolers 48 to 60+ months

k Hold a book upright while turning pages one by one from front to back. LDC-9K

l Recognize print in different forms for a variety of functions (writing a message to friend, pointing to print and saying, “Those words tell the story,” or reading familiar signs in the environment). LDC-9L

m Recognize print and symbols used to organize classroom activities and show understanding of their meaning (put toys in box with correct symbol and name; check sign-up sheet for popular activity; check schedule to learn next activity). LDC-9M

n With prompting and support, run their finger under or over print as they pretend to read text. LDC-9N

o Demonstrate an understanding of some basic print conventions (the concept of what a letter is, the concept of words, directionality of print). LDC-9O

p Identify their name and the names of some friends when they see them in print. LDC-9P

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10 Children comprehend and use information presented in books and other print media. LDC-10

Infants Birth to 12 months

Emerging

Younger Toddlers 8 to 21 months

a Listen to and repeat parts of simple and repetitive books, stories, songs, and finger plays. LDC-10A

b Allow entire short book to be “read” with willingness to look at most pages. LDC-10B

c Make appropriate sounds when looking at pictures (say, “Quack, quack” when looking at a duck, “Vrrrrooom” when looking at a car). LDC-10C

Skip to main content

Older Toddlers 18 to 36 months

d Chime in on a repeated line in a book while being read to by an adult. LDC-10D

e Pretend to read familiar books from memory; repeat familiar phrases while looking at a book. LDC-10E

f Begin to relate personal experiences to events described in familiar books. LDC-10F

g Answer simple questions about stories. LDC-10G

h Imitate the special language in storybooks and story dialogue (repetitive language patterns, sound effects, and words from familiar stories). LDC-10H

Younger Preschoolers 36 to 48 months

i Imitate the special language in storybooks and story dialogue with some accuracy and detail. LDC-10I

j With prompting and support, use books and other media that communicate information to learn about the world by looking at pictures, asking questions, and talking about the information. LDC-10J

k Use their knowledge of the world (what things are, how things work) to make sense of stories and informational texts. LDC-10K

l Relate personal experiences to events described in familiar books, with prompting and support. LDC-10L

m Ask questions about a story or the information in a book. LDC-10M

n With prompting and support, discuss storybooks by responding to questions about what is happening and predicting what will happen next. LDC-10N

Older Preschoolers 48 to 60+ months

o Imitate the special language in storybooks and story dialogue with accuracy and detail. LDC-10O

p Use informational texts and other media to learn about the world, and infer from illustrations, ask questions and talk about the information. LDC-10P

q Use knowledge of the world to make sense of more challenging texts. LDC-10Q

r Relate personal experiences to an increasing variety of events described in familiar and new books. LDC-10R

s Ask more focused and detailed questions about a story or the information in a book. LDC-10S

t Discuss storybooks by responding to questions about what is happening and predicting what will happen next. LDC-10T

u Discuss storybooks by responding to questions about the beginning, middle, and end of the story. LDC-10U

11 Children develop phonological awareness. LDC-11

Skip to main content

Infants Birth to 12 months

a Imitate and take turns with caregivers making different sounds. LDC-11A

Younger Toddlers 8 to 21 months

b Focus on and enjoy playing with repetitive sounds, words, rhymes, and gestures. LDC-11B

c Vocalize familiar words and sounds. LDC-11C

Older Toddlers 18 to 36 months

d Participate in rhyming games. LDC-11D

e Notice sounds that are the same and different. LDC-11E

f Participate in experiences using rhythmic patterns in poems and songs using words, clapping, marching, and/or using instruments. LDC-11F

Younger Preschoolers 36 to 48 months

g Participate in experiences with songs, poems, and books that have rhyme and wordplay, and learn words well enough to complete refrains and fill in missing words and sounds. LDC-11G

h Repeat rhythmic patterns in poems and songs using words, clapping, marching, and/or using instruments. LDC-11H

i Play with the sounds of language and begin to identify rhymes (make up silly-sounding words, repeat rhyming words). LDC-11I

Older Preschoolers 48 to 60+ months

j Distinguish between similar sounding words (e.g. tree and three). LDC-11J

k Enjoy rhymes and wordplay with songs, poems, and books and sometimes add their own variations. LDC-11K

l Repeat a variety of rhythmic patterns in poems and songs using words, clapping, marching, and/ or instruments to repeat the rhythm or beat syllables. LDC-11L

m Play with the sounds of language, identify a variety of rhymes, create some rhymes, and recognize the first sounds in some words. LDC-11M

n Associate sounds with specific words, such as awareness that different words begin with the same sound. LDC-11N

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12 Children begin to develop knowledge of the alphabet and the alphabetic principle. LDC-12

Infants Birth to 12 months

Emerging

Younger Toddlers 8 to 21 months

Emerging

Older Toddlers 18 to 36 months

a Demonstrate an interest in letters by asking about and/or naming some of them. LDC-12A

Skip to main content

Younger Preschoolers 36 to 48 months

b Demonstrate an interest in learning the alphabet. LDC-12B

c Recognize letters of the alphabet as a special category of print, different from pictures, shapes, and numerals. LDC-12C

d Recognize and name some letters of the alphabet, especially those in their own name. LDC-12D

Older Preschoolers 48 to 60+ months

e Demonstrate an interest in learning the alphabet. LDC-12E

f Show they know that letters function to represent sounds in spoken words. LDC-12F

g Recognize and name many letters of the alphabet, especially those in their own name and in the names of others who are important to them. LDC-12G

h Make some sound-to-letter matches, using letter name knowledge (notice the letter B with picture of ball and say, “Ball”; say, “A-a-apple.”). LDC-12H

i Associate sounds with the letters at the beginning of some words, such as awareness that two words begin with the same letter and the same sound. LDC-12I

Foundations for Writing

13 Children use writing and other symbols to record information and communicate for a variety of purposes. LDC-13

Infants Birth to 12 months

Emerging

Younger Toddlers 8 to 21 months

a Make marks, scribble, and paint (e.g., cover easel paper with big crayon or paint marks, make marks with marker or crayon). LDC-13A

Older Toddlers 18 to 36 months

b Pretend to write in ways that mimic adult writing (e.g., scribble on paper while sitting with caregiver who is writing, hold phone to ear and make marks with pencil). LDC-13B

Younger Preschoolers 36 to 48 months

c Represent thoughts and ideas through marks, scribbles, drawings, and paintings (draw a picture of something they did during the day, indicate what they want for lunch with a mark under the picture of the food they want). LDC-13C

d With prompting and support, communicate their thoughts for an adult to write. LDC-13D

e Engage in writing behaviors that imitate real-life situations (e.g., make marks to take food order during pretend restaurant play). LDC-13E

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Older Preschoolers 48 to 60+ months

f Represent thoughts and ideas in drawings and by writing letters or letter-like forms. LDC-13F

g Incorporate representations of signs, logos, or other commonly used symbols into their drawing or writing to communicate the messages that they convey. LDC-13G

h Communicate their thoughts for an adult to write. LDC-13H

i Independently engage in writing behaviors for various purposes (e.g., write symbols or letters for names, use materials at writing center, write lists with symbols/ letters in pretend play, write messages that include letters or symbols). LDC-13I

j Engage in discussions regarding different purposes (enjoyment, information) and forms of writing (narrative, informational, and opinion). LDC-13J

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14 Children use knowledge of letters in their attempts to write. LDC-14

Infants Birth to 12 months

Emerging

Younger Toddlers 8 to 21 months

Emerging

Older Toddlers 18 to 36 months

Emerging

Younger Preschoolers 36 to 48 months

a Begin to use letters and approximations of letters to write their name. LDC-14A

b Distinguish letters from different kinds of drawings/graphics. LDC-14B

c Show they know that written words are made up of particular letters (point to the first letter of their own name, find the first letter of their own name in a list of letters). LDC-14C

Older Preschoolers 48 to 60+ months

d Use known letters and approximations of letters to write their own name and some familiar words. LDC-14D

e Try to connect the sounds in a spoken word with letters in the written word (write “M” and say, “This is Mommy.”). LDC-14E

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15 Children use writing skills and conventions. LDC-15

Infants Birth to 12 months

Emerging

Younger Toddlers 8 to 21 months

a Hold marker or crayon with their fist. LDC-15A

b Dot or scribble with crayons, may progress to vertical lines. LDC-15B

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Older Toddlers 18 to 36 months

c Explore a variety of tools that can be used for writing. LDC-15C

d Scribble and/or imitate an adult's marks with markers, crayons, paints, etc. LDC-15D

e Transition from holding a crayon or marker in their fist to holding it between thumb and forefinger. LDC-15E

Younger Preschoolers 36 to 48 months

f Use a variety of writing tools and materials with purpose and control (pencils, chalk, markers, crayons, paintbrushes, finger paint, computers). LDC-15F

g Make marks they call "writing" that look different from drawings (vertical series of marks for a "grocery list," horizontal line of marks for a "story"). LDC-15G

h Play with writing letters and make letter-like forms. LDC-15H

Older Preschoolers 48 to 60+ months

i Use a variety of writing tools and materials with increasing precision. LDC-15I

j Imitate adult writing conventions that they have observed (write groups of letter-like forms separated by spaces, try to write on a line, press Enter key on computer after typing a series of "words"). LDC-15J

k Use some conventional letters in their writing. LDC-15K