

MOVEMENT & MOTOR SKILLS

Children in the Foundation year of school should be able to...

Use Their Body

- To pedal a small trike around objects and make U turns.
- Run around obstacles and turn corners with speed.
- Walk up and down stairs with alternate feet.
- Begin to bounce a large ball.
- Balance on one foot for the count of 10.
- Walk on tip toe and walk backwards.
- Begin to jump rope.
- Hop on one foot for several hops.
- Balance on a wide beam.
- Begin to skip on one foot.
- Catch and throw a beanbag.

Tips for Home

- Have your child help with household chores eg: setting the table, packing away toys or putting clean crockery and cutlery away. It's great for matching and sorting.
- Encourage your child to be as independent as possible in dressing, eating and grooming (ie: teeth brushing and hair brushing).
- Try and build some table activity time into your day, drawing, cutting and gluing. Use a wide variety of materials and writing implements to keep it interesting.
- Grab a ball and throw it, kick it, bounce it and catch it!
- Play some outside games, eg: skipping with a rope, races that involve hopping, skipping, jumping, running, and balancing.

Use Their Hands

- Draw a person and simple objects with a pencil.
- Fasten small buttons and use a zipper.
- Cut out large shapes with scissors.
- Screw and unscrew lids, nuts and bolts.
- Cut food with knife.
- Brush their own teeth.
- Colour in a simple picture.

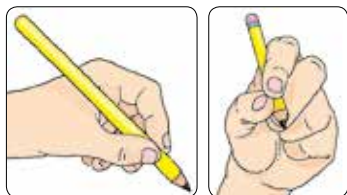
Make Sense of the World

- Know most of their colours.
- Use their eyes to follow moving objects.
- Count up to 10 objects aloud.
- Copy simple patterns.
- Differentiate differences in size.
- Complete an unfinished drawing.
- Start to notice when something is missing.

Causes for Concerns

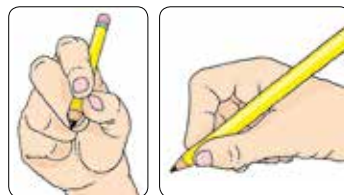
- Avoids or has difficulty with hand activities, eg: drawing, puzzles, scissor use.
- Difficulties with dressing or eating
- Stumbles or falls frequently or often bumps into people or objects.
- Has trouble keeping their eyes on what they are doing.
- Avoids or dislikes messy play or unexpected touch.
- Seems very busy and isn't able to calm or quiet self.
- Avoids or dislikes equipment that is fast moving or off the ground, eg: swings, roundabouts.
- Difficulty matching colours, sizes and shapes.

Good Pencil Grip



What makes it easier?

- Big pieces of paper.
- Big crayons, brushes and markers (larger tools ensure children use the right muscles and hand and finger position for the activity and are less likely to adopt incorrect grasps to control the tool).
- Use thick outlines.



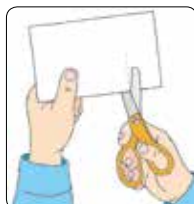
Good Posture



Tips:

- Sitting back in chair.
- Back straight and leaning slightly forward.
- Feet are flat on the floor.

Good Cutting Skills



Tips:

- Remember 'Thumbs Up' for both hands.
- Child holds the paper with their thumb on the top.
- Thumb in the top ring.

The First Year of School -

The Foundation Year

5 year olds

Language, Literacy and Motor Milestones



Life at Five! The five year old is characterised by energy and imagination. They are creative problem solvers who are very interested in how the world works and why things are so. By now their language skills are well developed. They use clear speech, complex language and have extensive vocabularies which will continue to grow over the next few years. They are able to use increasingly descriptive language to question, to explain and to inform. During this foundational year of school, they will extend their language skills into literacy, with a developing awareness of letters, sounds and a developing ability to read and spell in addition to an ability to discuss stories they have heard and retell stories or news. Fine and gross motor skills have also developed with the five year old able to write, paint and dress themselves including an ability to deal with zippers and buttons. Five year olds tend to be very active and increasingly enjoy social interactions particularly with other children. They are developing a social independence and ability to maintain friendships. They are able to play fairly in simple games which have rules and will engage in complex imaginary play.

How to Use...

This booklet has been designed to give an overview of the language, literacy and motor milestones to be expected in a child of 5 years old in the Foundation year of schooling. Please keep in mind however, that every child's development is unique and complex and a child may not follow these developmental milestones exactly. Although each child may develop skills at different rates, there is a predictable sequence of development. It is therefore important to consider the individual child when using these milestones.

Use these milestones and the associated tips and activity ideas to:

1. Gain a sense of your child's strengths and areas requiring development.
2. Get tips for helping your child to develop strong language, literacy and motor skills.

REMEMBER: Always join in activities with your child. It is more fun to play together plus your child will learn so much more!

A Note on Screen Time...

Technology is a big part of our world today, however it is very important for a child's language, literacy and physical development that screen time is limited and children are encouraged to engage in a variety of activities. Overuse of technology limits a child's imagination and creativity and can lead to delays in attaining developmental milestones in the areas of language, literacy and motor skills.

If You Have Concerns...

It is recommended that if your child has not attained the skills outlined for his/her age, that a school-based meeting be scheduled. If you have concerns regarding oral language or literacy skills, consult a Speech Pathologist. If you have concerns regarding motor skills, consult an Occupational Therapist. Research clearly states that the earlier intervention commences the better the outcomes for the child.



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ORAL LANGUAGE SKILLS

Speaking

By 5 years, children should be **extremely verbal**, talking to their peers, to adults and within the classroom learning environment. 5 year olds should be able to...

- Speak clearly and be understood by anyone, including strangers.
- Use over 2000 different words.
- Use sentences of 6-8 words.
- Tell news or stories without any assistance.
- Explain why something happened.
- Use joining words (but, because, and, so) to connect ideas.
- Ask 'why' and 'how' questions.

For a full overview of the development of speech sounds and how to help a child who is difficult to understand, refer to the PLD sheet <http://pld-literacy.org/product/speech-sound-development-milestones-fact-sheet/>

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Choose medium length stories with simple repetitive events and stories which contain an introduction, middle and conclusion.

	BOOK TITLE	AUTHOR
Ideal for Narrative Retell Tasks	A Lion In The Night	Pamela Allen
	Bear Hunt	Anthony Browne
	Rosie's Walk	Pat Hutchins
	Russell The Sheep	Rob Scotton
	The Gruffalo	Julia Donaldson and Alex Scheffler
	The Very Hungry Caterpillar	Eric Carle
	Where The Wild Things Are	Maurice Sendak
Textless Picture Books	Who Sank The Boat?	Pamela Allen
	You'll Wake The Baby	Catherine Jinks
	Are You Hungry?	Tina Burke
	Fly Little Bird	
	The Big Turnip	Raymond Briggs

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS	SUPPORTING THE UNDERSTANDING OF QUESTIONS
How did you feel?	If a child has difficulty understanding a question: 1. Repeat the question using visual cues to support (e.g. pictures and gestures). 2. Rephrase the question or ask it in a different way. 3. Give two alternatives for the child to choose between. 4. Model the correct answer.
What happened next?	
What else could you use?	
How can we tell?	
What could we use? Why?	
Why can't we?	

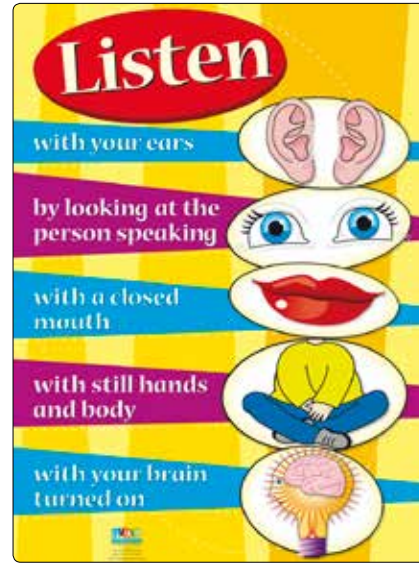
Tips for Home

- Talk with your child and explain what any new words mean.
- Give your child instructions to follow within daily activities.
- Read stories and ask questions about the book. Re-read the same books with your child.
- Encourage your child to retell stories using their own words. You can teach your child to do this by:
 1. On one day re-telling the story using the pictures yourself.
 2. On the next day re-telling the story with the child, the adult tells one page then the child tells one page.
 3. Finally ask the child to re-tell the story in their own words.
- Make up stories using the pictures in textless books.

Understanding / Listening

By 5 years, children should have a receptive vocabulary (understanding) of over 10,000 words and be able to...

- Follow 3-step instructions, eg: "Get your book, put it in your bag and then put your bag by the door."
- Follow instructions containing the words 'first', 'last' and 'after'.
- Understand opposites (hot/cold, top/bottom, fat/thin), and location words (next to, between, front, back, beside, in front, behind).
- Understand humour and laugh at jokes.
- Answer questions of increasing complexity



For more information about comprehension development and tips for helping a child to understand and answer questions, refer to the PLD sheet <http://pld-literacy.org/product/comprehension-development-fact-sheet/>

Causes for Concerns

- A small vocabulary.
- Only uses short sentences or sentences with grammatical errors.
- Can not retell an event or simple story even with support.
- Difficulty following instructions with two or more steps.
- Difficulty answering how, when and why questions.
- Child's speech is difficult to understand.
- Poor conversation and social skills.
- Does not enjoy listening to stories.
- Short attention span.

LITERACY SKILLS

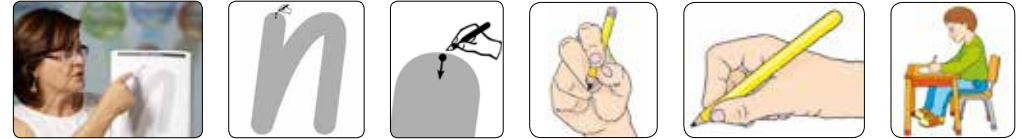
Many parents wonder if their child's reading skills are developing at the normal rate. While there are individual differences, there is a general progression of skill development.

During the Foundation year, children should be able to...

- Learn to recall the alphabetic letter sounds with accuracy and with speed.



- Learn to write the letters of the alphabet with correct starting points, pencil grip and posture.



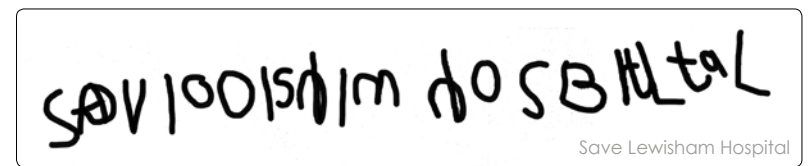
- Learn to "sound out" and read simple words. The easiest type of reading words are regular CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant words).



- Learn to spell simple words using playdough, wiki stix and magnetic letters as well as in writing.



- Learn to write independently initially in a phonetic manner and also to be able to read writing back to an adult.



- Learn the first 25 sight words: at, in, it, on, and, a, I, from, with, this, that, for, is, his, as, was, to, be, he, of, have, are, the, they, you.

- Demonstrate comprehension skills and discuss books read or that have been read to them.

Tips for Home

- Make the letters of the alphabet out of play dough. Talk about the sound each letter makes and use them to form simple words.
- Point out letters and simple words (i.e. 2-3 letters) in books and help your child to sound them out and read them.
- Spell simple 2-3 letter words with magnetic letters (or cut out letters from magazines).
- Encourage your child to write letters, their name and simple words. Show them how to make the letters correctly (i.e. where to start; which way the curve goes).
REMEMBER – always form letters from top to bottom (NEVER bottom to top) and left to right (NEVER right to left).
- Encourage your child to draw and write their own stories and news.

Causes for Concerns

- Do not know the letters of the alphabet or the sounds they make.
- Cannot identify the beginning sound in simple words (e.g. 'sun' starts with /s/).
- By the end of the year cannot 'sound out' regular 2 and 3 letter words (e.g. in, cat).
- Cannot answer questions about stories that have been read to them.
- Cannot write letters.