



LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT IS A STRONG PREDICTOR OF READING SUCCESS

Children learn language as they interact with responsive adults and when they experience language used in meaningful context.

As infants begin to babble they learn the basic sounds of their family's primary language or languages.

Toddlers begin to understand that words have meaning, and they can have their needs met and communicate their ideas by using words. At first, children use one-to-two-word sentences and later they seem to automatically understand and use grammatically correct phrases and sentences to express themselves.

As they mature, young children learn the rules for communicating effectively in a variety of situations whether they are asking for something, talking to their friends or telling a story.

Children who are continually exposed to spoken language increase their ability to use language and increase the size of their vocabulary.

Studies have shown wide ranges in the size of a three-year-old child's vocabulary based on their family's economic standard.

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Children of professionals have an average vocabulary of 1,116 words. He /She speaks about 382 words per hour.

Children of working families have an average vocabulary of 749 words. He/She speaks about 216 words per hour.

A child of a family on public assistance, has an average vocabulary of 525 words. He/She speaks about 149 words in an hour.

The more words a child can use in his/her speech the more ways the child has to organize ideas.

The child also gains in learning more about letter/sound correspondence and the natural flow of the language which helps a child decide if what he/she has just read makes sense.

There are several ways parents and classroom teachers can promote language development and increase a child's vocabulary.

- Read aloud daily
- Encourage children to extend conversations by asking questions which require the child to continue talking. For example, "Tell me about..., What happened next?What do you think...?"
- Encourage children to re-tell stories
- Encourage children to tell you about their day.
- Discuss a wide range of topics
- Model the use of new and unusual words
- Discuss the meanings of words
- Encourage children to justify their thinking
- Encourage pretend play and don't hesitate to play often with your child their family's economic standard.



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Children's language abilities are enhanced by the quality and amount of individual and small group conversations.

The National Research Council states "The more children know about language ... the better equipped they are to succeed in reading."

Book Corner

