AAC Language Lab Stages Chart

AACLanguageLab.com

Liberator
A Prentke Romich Company

Language Stage	Description of Language	Expected Outcome
Stage One Talking with one word at a time	• The person speaks one word at a time • He or she learns to direct activities, request, and label	The person will speak one word at a time, and will increase vocabulary
Stage Two Talking with two and three word phrases	• The person learns more words • He or she begins to combine words to make phrases	The person will speak two and three word phrases in meaningful contexts.
Stage Three Building phrases and early sentences	• The person combines words in meaningful order • He or she begins using grammar endings for -ing verbs and plural nouns	The person will increase the number of words combined to speak in full sentences.
Stage Four Learning grammar and sentence structure	• The person begins to use whole sentences to ask questions and make negative statements • He or she learns common irregular past tense verbs such as "said", "saw", "went", and "told"	The person will be able to use "wh" words to ask questions. The person will show an understanding of actions that happened in the past by using common irregular past tense verbs.
Stage Five Using Sentences and phrases with more grammar endings	• The person uses more grammar endings • He or she learns how to make nouns plural • He or she learns to add "s" to third person present tense verbs and "ed" to past tense verbs	The person will use correct grammar endings for past and present tense verbs. The person will increase his or her ability to communicate in more complex whole sentences.
Stage Six Using correct grammar and syntax	• The person has an understanding of most grammar rules • He or she has the ability to speak spontaneously using whole sentences • Language continues to grow by adding vocabulary	The person has full communication skills to express his or her own thoughts. The person will continue to learn new words.

For more information on language stages and AAC, visit aaclanguagelab.com

---

Additional Resources for Parents

AAC Language Lab
aaclanguagelab.com
Free educational resources and teaching aids to support language development, vocabulary acquisition, and effective AAC use.

The Center for AAC and Autism
aacandautism.com
Online resource dedicated to building awareness of the power of AAC to change the lives of children with autism and other developmental disabilities that limit communication skills.

Realize Language ™
realizelanguage.com
Online service that gives parents and professionals powerful ways to monitor, measure, and maximize a child's use of an AAC device.

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
asha.org
The national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for more than 173,000 members and affiliates who are audiologists, speech-language pathologists, speech, language, and hearing scientists, audiology and speech-language pathology support personnel, and students.

Parent Resources from PRC

PRC has created a series of AAC & Your Child guides for parents. Visit our website at prentrom.com/parents or contact your PRC Regional Consultant at (800) 848-8008.

Visit prentrom.com for additional educational materials, to locate a PRC Consultant in your area, or to read inspiring stories of successful AAC users.

Liberator
A Prentke Romich Company

About Liberator

Our Customers
Liberator's philosophy is "our customer's success is our success". For most of us the power of speech is taken for granted but not being able to communicate verbally is usually a major obstacle in achieving full potential in educational, vocational, and personal pursuits. We believe everyone deserves a voice and our mission is to help our clients achieve their full potential in life.

Our Products
Our communication aids support a wide range of language solutions including Unity, easyChat, WordPower and text-based systems, are highly flexible, easy to program and backed by unrivalled warranty and support packages. Additionally we offer a comprehensive range of communication aids, adapted toys, learning and inclusion aids, switches, assistive technology and software we feel we provide the best support within the industry and offer:

* Training - by our experienced consultants.
* Assessments and Trials - free 2 week loans.
* Peace of mind - 30 day money back guarantee.
* Price Match - we will not be beaten on price.
* Extended warranties - Extend up to 5 years.
* Support - UK tech support including weekends.

© PRC

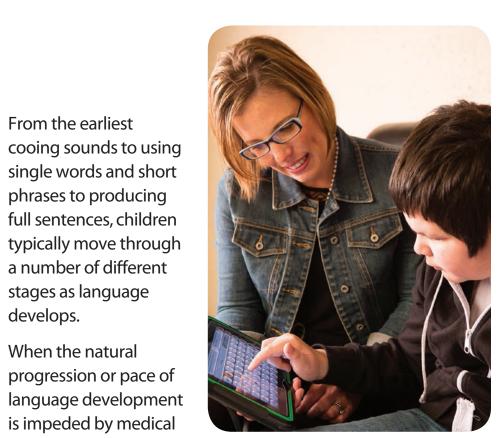---

AAC & Your Child

PARENT GUIDES

Understanding the Stages of Language Development

From the earliest cooing sounds to using single words and short phrases to producing full sentences, children typically move through a number of different stages as language develops.

When the natural progression or pace of language development is impeded by medical conditions that impact a child's ability to speak or learn language, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) strategies and tools, such as speech-generating devices, can provide valuable support.

Individuals who use AAC with emerging language start at the same place as children whose language develops normally and learn the same basic rules of language that can ultimately enable robust communication.

This guide can help you better understand the typical stages of language development and how you can support your child on the journey if he or she has a communication challenge that requires using an AAC device.

Liberator
A Prentke Romich Company

www.liberator.co.uk

Language Stages: An Overview

Every language learner goes through steps in acquiring language skills that are marked by certain milestones. While the rate of progress varies, the order of the steps has been found to be consistent.

The Language Stages presented in this guide and detailed online in the AAC Language Lab (aaclanguagelab.com) have been compiled based on language development information gathered from a number of resources. Because the acquisition of new language skills flows gradually from stage to stage, it is not unusual to find skill development overlapping the stage divisions. The stages, therefore, provide a general structure but should not be interpreted rigidly.

The Role of Language Stages

The Language Stages framework helps speech-language pathologists (SLPs), educators, therapists, and family members identify a child's current language stage. This allows the therapy team and teachers to set stage-appropriate goals and objectives and tailor learning activities to help the child progress on the path to spontaneous and independent communication.

Understanding how children typically develop language skills also can help you provide learning activities at home that support each stage's learning objectives and your child's developing communication skills.

Stages 1 & 2:
The Beginner Communicator

Emergent communicators use single words and eventually short two- and three-word phrases to make requests, label, and direct activities.

Language Stage 1

Approx. Vocabulary Size: Up to 85 words

Average Number of Words in Sentence: Single words

Examples: go, that, help, more, stop

Language Objectives:
- Speak using single words
- Increase the number of words he or she uses meaningfully
- Speak single words to direct another person's actions
- Speak single words to express negatives
- Speak single words to express requests

Language Stage 2

Approx. Vocabulary Size: 75 to 200+ words

Average Number of Words in a Sentence: 2

Examples: want more, need help, all done, stop, don't

Language Objectives:
- Combine two and three words to make phrases
- Increase the number of words he or she uses meaningfully
- Increase the number of phrases he or she uses meaningfully
- Speak two and three word phrases to direct another person's actions
- Speak two and three word phrases to express negatives
- Speak two and three word phrases to express requests

Stages 3 & 4:
The Intermediate Communicator

The individual now uses phrases and early sentences and is learning more about grammar and sentence structure. The use of plural words, "-ing" words, and prepositions increases.

Language Stage 3

Approx. Vocabulary Size: 200 to 1,000 words

Average Number of Words in Sentence: 3

Examples: Mom coming in, dad helping, man riding, look it going, my cars

Language Objectives:
- Speak in simple complete sentences
- Increase the number of words used meaningfully
- Speak plural nouns correctly
- Use simple complete sentences to direct another person's actions
- Use negatives in simple sentences
- Use simple complete sentences to express requests
- Use "-ing" verbs to show action continuing in the present
- Use prepositions to show position
- Combine verbs ending in "-ing" with prepositions
- Use simple pronoun + verb phrases
- Use infinitives (to + verb) to complete statements
- Learn to use simple sentences to practice different reasons to communicate in order to expand functions of communication beyond basic requesting

Language Stage 4

Approx. Vocabulary Size: 1,000 to 2,000 words

Average Number of Words in Sentence: 3

Examples: I saw bird, Daddy's car, I fell down, it is hot, where is it? don't want

Language Objectives:
- Continue to speak in simple complete sentences
- Increase the number of words he or she uses meaningfully
- Ask simple who, what, when, where, why questions
- Ask questions using pronoun-verb phrases (interrogative reversal)
- Continue to use negatives in simple sentences
- Continue to use simple complete sentences to express requests
- Use common irregular past tense verbs to show action in the past
- Use linking verbs is and are correctly
- Use adjectives in simple sentences to describe things
- Use negative pronoun + verb phrases

Stages 5 & 6:
The Advanced Communicator

The advanced communicator's language continues to grow with the expansion of vocabulary and full sentences increasingly reflect the proper use of correct grammar and word order.

Language Stage 5

Approx. Vocabulary Size: 2,000 to 3,000 words

Average Number of Words in Sentence: 4

Examples: Mom is coming in. Dad will help me. Look at it go. Those are my cars.

Language Objectives:
- Continue to speak in simple complete sentences
- Increase the number of words he or she uses meaningfully
- Continue to use simple complete sentences to express requests
- Use articles "a" and "the" appropriately
- Use past tense linking verbs "was" and "were" correctly
- Use past tense verbs ending in "-ed" correctly
- Use verbs ending in "s" to agree with third person subject in sentences
- Add "s" to nouns to show possession
- Express future actions by using "going to" and "will"

Language Stage 6

Approx. Vocabulary Size: 3,000 + words

Average Number of Words in Sentence: 6

Examples: That's the box they put it in. Where's a pencil I can use? I wanted you to turn it. He's mad because I won.

Language Objectives:
- Continue to speak in simple complete sentences
- Increase the number of words he or she uses meaningfully
- Continue to use simple complete sentences to express requests
- Use subordinating conjunctions to speak or write complex sentences
- Use reflexive pronouns correctly
- Use indefinite pronouns correctly
- Ask negative questions using pronoun-verb phrases
- Use contractions such as isn't and wasn't correctly