



Treasuring Childhood: My Firsts!

Watch your child's language grow! At any age or stage, you can create a treasure chest from an empty shoebox or cardboard box to keep special mementos from throughout your child's life. Keep this page in your child's treasure chest.

My first babbles

My first words

My first books

My first sentence

My first rhyme

My first made-up story

My first _____

My first _____

My first _____

Watch Language Blossom!

Your little one can respond to sounds 10 weeks before birth! And from day one, with your voice, you have a special power to help your child develop language. As you talk, read, and sing to your child, you're sparking connections that help to grow and strengthen the areas in her brain responsible for language development.



Children have so many firsts in their lives, and that's especially amazing when it comes to developing language.

A newborn is learning to...

- communicate through crying

So you can: Comfort your child and tune into his different cries to learn what each one means.

A 6-month-old child is learning to...

- babble
- use different sounds

So you can: Speak the special language of “parent-ese,” using short, sing-songy sentences, longer vowel sounds, and a high pitch. Their brains are trying to connect words to objects, and “parent-ese” will get their attention and help them slowly understand.

A 12-month-old child is learning to...

- understand certain words
- respond to their name

So you can: Use lots of gestures, pointing, and exaggerated facial expressions as you communicate with your child.

A 24-month-old child is learning to...

- remember words for songs
- ask questions
- speak in 2-3 word sentences

So you can: Name things that are around you to help build your child's vocabulary, and respond to her questions with simple, thoughtful answers.

At age 2 children are learning to...

- repeat your words and phrases
- point to things in pictures when they are named

So you can: Give your child a play phone to practice having conversations, and point out pictures and words in books as you read to him.

At age 3 children are learning to...

- recognize the first letter of their name
- have a simple (2-3 sentence) conversation

So you can: Practice the alphabet with your child to help him learn letters, and encourage him to use his imagination to have conversations with stuffed animals and dolls in pretend play.

At age 4 children are learning to...

- know and write their own name
- tell a story

So you can: make up stories together as you go about your day. You might make up a story about the bus driver on your morning commute, or the rubber duckie at bath time!

At ages 5 & 6 children are learning to...

- rhyme
- talk about the future

So you can: Talk with your child about what she would like to be when she grows up, and make up simple rhymes during your daily routines (“Let's think of all the words that rhyme with cat.”).