

# Helping Kids Discover and Develop Language

## 5 Years

- 1. The child uses sentences that sound almost like an adult.**
- 2. The child can follow group directions** (eg. “All the boys get a toy”) and **long verbal directions** (e.g. “When papa arrives, tell him I’m outside and help him with his suitcase.”)
- 3. The child can understand directions involving “if ... then”** (eg. “If you’re wearing runners, then line up for gym.”)
- 4. The child develops time concepts.**  
SUGGESTIONS:
  - Talk about routine events and when they occur (eg. “You ate breakfast this morning.”)
  - Use a calendar to talk about what happened on that day and to talk about events that are coming up or that have passed (eg. birthdays, holidays)
  - After reading a story, talk to your child about what happened at the beginning, middle and end
  - Talk about time in general terms (eg. “This morning, at 8:30, I drove you to school.”)
- 5. The child understands “right” and “left”.**  
SUGGESTIONS:
  - Talk about body parts in terms of right and left (eg. “Lift your left foot.”)
  - write “left” and “right” on your child’s shoes
  - sing the “Hokey Pokey” song
  - Play “Mother May I” using right and left instructions
  - Give directions such as “run to the right”, “walk to the left” in play and when dancing
- 6. The child can count to ten.**  
SUGGESTIONS:
  - Count objects, fingers, toes
  - Sing “Ten Little Monkeys Jumping On the Bed”
  - Children’s television shows such as Sesame Street frequently present numbers and counting in a way that appeals to children
- 7. The child uses past, present and future verb tenses** (i.e. Describes past, current, future events in detail).  
For example, the child may say: “I walked.”, “I am walking.”, and “I will walk.”  
SUGGESTIONS:
  - Talk about up-coming events and things that you and your child will be doing (eg. “Tomorrow, we will go see Uncle Vic.”)
  - Talk about things your child did when he/she was 4 and things that he/she will do when 6 or 7 years of age.
- 8. The child understands much of adult conversation including some common sayings such as “Time to hit the sack.”**  
SUGGESTIONS:
  - Give an explanation for the saying until you are convinced that your child understands it (eg. “Time to hit the sack. Time to go to bed.”)
  - Take time to talk with your child. Talk About things that interest your child.