



English - Communication

(spoken language)

Progression document

Early Years Foundation Stage

The table below outlines the most relevant statements taken from the Early Learning Goals in the EYFS statutory framework and from the development Matters age ranges for three and four-year-olds and reception to match the programme of study for spoken language. The most relevant statements for spoken language are taken from the following Areas of Learning:

- Communication and Language • Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Understanding the World • Expressive Arts and Design

Spoken Language			
Listening Skills			
Three and Four-year-olds	Communication and Language		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy listening to longer stories and can remember much of what happens. • Pay attention to more than one thing at a time, which can be difficult. • Start a conversation with an adult or a friend and continue it for many turns.
	Expressive Arts and Design		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen with increased attention to sounds.
Reception	Communication and Language		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how to listen carefully and why listening is important. • Listen to and talk about stories to build familiarity and understanding. • Listen carefully to rhymes and songs, paying attention to how they sound. • Listen to and talk about selected non-fiction to develop a deep familiarity with new knowledge and vocabulary.
	Expressive Arts and Design		Listen attentively, move to and talk about music, expressing their feelings and response.
ELG	Communication and Language	Listening, Attention and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions. • Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding. • Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

	Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Self-Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.
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Following Instructions			
Three and Four-year-olds	Communication and Language		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand a question or instruction that has two parts, such as “Get your coat and wait at the door.”
	Personal, Social and Emotional Development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember rules without needing an adult to remind them.
ELG	Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Self-Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.
		Managing Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.
Asking and Answering Questions			
Three and Four-Year-Olds	Communication and Language		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand a question or instruction that has two parts, such as “Get your coat and wait at the door.” • Understand ‘why’ questions, like: “Why do you think the caterpillar got so fat?”
Reception	Communication and Language		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions to find out more and check they understand what has been said to them.

ELG	Communication and Language	Listening, Attention and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions. • Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.
		Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer explanations for why things happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate.

Drama, Performance and Confidence		
Three and Four-Year-Olds	Communication and Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to express a point of view and debate when they disagree with an adult or friend, using words as well as actions.
	Personal, Social and Emotional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show more confidence in new social situations. • Develop appropriate ways of being assertive.
	Expressive Arts and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create their own songs, or improvise a song around one they know.
Reception	Communication and Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retell the story, once they have developed a deep familiarity with the text, some as exact repetition and some in their own words. • Learn rhymes, poems and songs.

	Expressive Arts and Design		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch and talk about dance and performance art, expressing their feelings and responses. • Sing in a group or on their own, increasing matching the pitch and following the melody. • Explore and engage in music making and dance, performing solo or in groups.
ELG	Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Managing Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of a challenge.
	Expressive Arts and Design	Being Imaginative and Expressive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sings a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs. • Performs songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and (when appropriate) try to move in time to music.

Vocabulary Building and Standard English

Three and Four-Year-Olds	Communication and Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a wider range of vocabulary. • Develop their communication, but may continue to have problems with irregular tenses and plurals, such as 'runned' for 'ran' and 'swimmed' for 'swam'. • Use longer sentences of four to six words.
	Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in extended conversations about stories, learning new vocabulary.
	Understanding the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about what they see, using a wide vocabulary.

Reception	Communication and Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn new vocabulary. • Use new vocabulary throughout the day. • Articulate their ideas and thoughts in well-formed sentences. • Develop social phrases. • Use new vocabulary in different contexts.
ELG	Communication and Language	Speaking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary. • Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.
	Literacy	Comprehension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary. • Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role play.

Speaking for a range of purposes

Three and Four-year-olds	Communication and Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to express a point of view and debate when they disagree with an adult or friend, using words as well as actions. • Start a conversation with an adult or a friend, and continue it for many turns. • Use talk to organise themselves and their play: “Let’s go on a bus... you sit there... I’ll be the driver.”
	Personal, Social and Emotional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play with one or more other children, extending and elaborating play ideas. • Develop appropriate ways of being assertive. • Talk with others to solve conflicts. • Talk about their feelings using words like ‘happy’, ‘sad’, ‘angry’ or ‘worried’.

	Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in extended conversations about stories, learning new vocabulary.
	Understanding the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk about what they see, using a wide range of vocabulary. Explore and talk about different forces they can feel. Talk about the differences between materials and changes they notice. Know that there are different countries in the world and talk about the differences they have experienced or seen in photos.
	Expressive Arts and Design •	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take part in simple pretend play, using an object to represent something else even though they are not similar. Begin to develop complex stories using small world equipment, such as animal sets, dolls and dolls houses, etc.
Reception	Communication and Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask questions to find out more and to check they understand what has been said to them. Describe events in some detail. Use talk to help work out problems and organise thinking and activities, and to explain how things work and why they might happen. Develop social phrases. Listen to and talk about stories to build familiarity and understanding. Retell the story, once they have developed a deep familiarity with the text, some as exact repetition and some in their own words. Use new vocabulary in different contexts. Listen to and talk about selected non-fiction to develop a deep familiarity with new knowledge and vocabulary.
	Personal, Social and Emotional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Express their feelings and consider the feelings of others.
	Understanding the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk about their immediate family and community. Name and describe people who are familiar to them. Comment on images of familiar situations in the past. Compare and contrast characters from stories, including figures from the past. Describe what they see, hear and feel whilst outside.
	Expressive Arts and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch and talk about dance and performance art, expressing their feelings and responses.

ELG

Communication and Language	Listening, Attention and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their meanings.• Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.	
	Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.• Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems where appropriate.• Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.	
	Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Managing Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.
	Literacy	Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.• Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role play.
		Word Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.
Understanding the World	Past and Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps.• Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and (when appropriate) maps.	
	People, Culture and Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps.• Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and (when appropriate) maps.	

Participating in Discussion

Three and Four-year-olds	Communication and Language		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to express a point of view and debate when they disagree with an adult or friend, using words as well as actions.
	Literacy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in extended conversations about stories, learning new vocabulary.
Reception	Communication and Language		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate their ideas and thoughts in well-formed sentences.
ELG	Communication and Language	Listening, Attention and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions, when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions. • Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teachers and peers.
		Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.
	Literacy	Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role play.

Essentials Curriculum - Threshold concepts

Listen carefully and understand

This concept involves understanding how to engage with what others are saying.

Develop a wide and interesting vocabulary

This concept involves building a rich, sophisticated vocabulary with which to express oneself.

Speak with clarity

This concept involves understanding that an audience needs to understand what is being said.

Tell stories with structure

This concept involves understanding how to keep an audience engaged through structured speech.

Hold conversations and debates

This concept involves understanding how to engage with others.

The national curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing.

Aspect	Years 1 - 6
<p>Spoken Language</p> <p>Statutory</p> <p>These statements apply to all years. The content should be taught at a level appropriate to the age of the pupils. Pupils should build on the oral language skills that have been taught in preceding years.</p>	<p>All pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers ● ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge ● use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary ● articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions ● give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings ● maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments ● use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas ● speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English ● participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates ● gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s) ● consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others ● select and use appropriate registers for effective communication.
<p>Spoken Language</p> <p>Non-statutory</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pupils should be taught to develop their competence in spoken language and listening to enhance the effectiveness with which they are able to communicate across a range of contexts and to a range of audiences. ● They should have opportunities to work in groups of different sizes – in pairs, small groups, large groups and as a whole class. ● Pupils should understand how to take turns and when and how to participate constructively in conversations and debates. ● Attention should also be paid to increasing pupils’ vocabulary, ranging from describing their immediate world and feelings to developing a broader, deeper and richer vocabulary to discuss abstract concepts and a wider range of topics, and to enhancing their knowledge about language as a whole. ● Pupils should receive constructive feedback on their spoken language and listening, not only to improve their knowledge and skills but also to establish secure foundations for effective spoken language in their studies at primary school, helping them to achieve in secondary education and beyond.

The following document is Mayflower’s interpretation of how the statutory and non-statutory spoken language guidance can be broken down to show the progression of skills and knowledge for Key Stage 1 and 2. This is organised through the Essential Curriculum concepts for Key Stage 1 and 2.

Concept	By the end of Year 1,	By the end of Year 2,
<p>Listen carefully and understand This concept involves understanding how to engage with what others are saying.</p>	<p>Children can... listen to others in a range of situations and usually respond appropriately. understand instructions with more than one point in many situations.</p>	<p>Children can... listen carefully and respond with increasing appropriateness to what has been said, e.g. make a helpful contribution when speaking in a small group. fully understand instructions with more than one point in many situations and independently seek clarification when a message is not clear. attempt to follow instructions before seeking assistance.</p>
<p>Develop a wide and interesting vocabulary This concept involves building a rich, sophisticated vocabulary with which to express oneself.</p>	<p>use appropriate vocabulary to describe their immediate world and feelings. think of alternatives for simple vocabulary choices.</p>	<p>start to use subject-specific vocabulary to explain, describe and add detail. suggest words or phrases appropriate to the topic being discussed. start to vary language according to the situation between formal and informal. usually speak in grammatically correct sentences.</p>
<p>Speak with clarity This concept involves understanding that an audience needs to understand what is being said</p>	<p>speak clearly in a way that is easy to understand. organise their thoughts into sentences before expressing them. describe their immediate world and environment.</p>	<p>speak confidently within a group of peers so that their message is clear. talk about themselves clearly and confidently. offer ideas based on what has been heard.</p>
<p>Tell stories with structure This concept involves understanding how to keep an audience engaged through structured speech.</p>	<p>retell simple stories and recounts aloud. speak in front of larger audiences. to take part in a simple role play of a known story.</p>	<p>verbally recount experiences with some added interesting details. practise and rehearse reading sentences and stories aloud. take on a different role in a drama or role play and discuss the character's feelings. recognise that sometimes speakers talk differently and discuss reasons why this might happen.</p>
<p>Hold conversations and debates This concept involves understanding how to engage with others</p>	<p>begin to ask questions that are linked to the topic being discussed. To answer questions on a wider range of topics (sometimes may only be oneword answers). recognise when it is their turn to speak in a discussion. recognise that different people will have different responses and that these are as valuable as their own opinions and ideas.</p>	<p>show that they are following a conversation by asking relevant and timely questions. answer questions using clear sentences. begin to give reasoning behind their answers when prompted to do so. give enough detail to hold the interest of other participant(s) in a discussion. engage in meaningful discussions that relate to different topic areas. remain focused on a discussion when not directly involved and be able to recall the main points when questioned.</p>

Concept	By the end of Year 3,	By the end of Year 4,
<p>Listen carefully and understand</p> <p>This concept involves understanding how to engage with what others are saying.</p>	<p>Children can...</p> <p>listen carefully and usually respond appropriately, mostly staying on topic, to adults and peers.</p> <p>follow instructions in a range of unfamiliar situations.</p> <p>recognise when it is needed and ask for specific additional information to clarify instructions.</p>	<p>Children can...</p> <p>listen carefully and respond appropriately to adults and peers.</p> <p>stay on topic and are active listeners.</p> <p>follow multi-step instructions in different/unfamiliar situations.</p>
<p>Develop a wide and interesting vocabulary</p> <p>This concept involves building a rich, sophisticated vocabulary with which to express oneself.</p>	<p>use vocabulary that is appropriate to the topic and/or the audience.</p> <p>recognise powerful vocabulary in stories/texts that they read or listen to and begin to try to use these words and phrases in their own talk.</p> <p>discuss topics that are unfamiliar to their own direct experience.</p>	<p>regularly use interesting adjectives, adverbial phrases and extended noun phrases in speech.</p> <p>know and use language that is acceptable in formal and informal situations with increasing confidence.</p> <p>recognise powerful vocabulary in stories/texts that they read or listen to, building these words and phrases into their own talk in an appropriate way.</p>
<p>Speak with clarity</p> <p>This concept involves understanding that an audience needs to understand what is being said.</p>	<p>speak in front of large and small audiences.</p> <p>organise what they want to say so that it has a clear purpose.</p>	<p>use intonation when reading aloud to emphasise punctuation.</p> <p>adapt their ideas in response to new information.</p>
<p>Tell stories with structure</p> <p>This concept involves understanding how to keep an audience engaged through structured speech.</p>	<p>begin to give descriptions, recounts and narrative retellings with added details to engage listeners.</p> <p>rehearse reading sentences and stories aloud, taking note of feedback from teachers and peers.</p> <p>speak regularly in front of large and small audiences.</p> <p>participate in role play tasks, showing an understanding of character by choosing appropriate words and phrases to indicate a person's emotions.</p>	<p>give descriptions, recounts and narrative retellings with specific details to actively engage listeners.</p> <p>use intonation when reading aloud to emphasise punctuation.</p> <p>practise and rehearse sentences and stories, gaining feedback on their performance from teachers and peers.</p> <p>take on a specific role in role-play/drama activities and participate in focused discussion while remaining in character.</p> <p>discuss the language choices of other speakers and how this may vary in different situations.</p>
<p>Hold conversations and debates</p> <p>This concept involves understanding how to engage with others</p>	<p>ask questions that relate to what has been heard or what was presented to them.</p> <p>begin to offer support for their answers to questions with justifiable reasoning.</p> <p>engage in discussions, making relevant points or asking relevant questions to show they have followed a conversation.</p> <p>take account of the viewpoints of others when participating in discussions.</p>	<p>generate relevant questions to ask a specific speaker/ audience in response to what has been said.</p> <p>regularly offer answers that are supported with justifiable reasoning.</p> <p>engage in discussions, making relevant points and ask for specific additional information or viewpoints from other participants.</p> <p>debate issues and make their opinions on topics clear.</p> <p>begin to challenge opinions with respect.</p> <p>engage in meaningful discussions in all areas of the curriculum.</p>

Concept	By the end of Year 5,	By the end of Year 6,
<p>Listen carefully and understand This concept involves understanding how to engage with what others are saying.</p>	<p>Children can... listen carefully, making timely contributions and asking questions that are responsive to others' ideas and views, e.g. participate in a collaborative project where they listen to the ideas of others and adapt these to meet the needs of the group. follow complex directions/multi-step instructions without the need for repetition.</p>	<p>Children can... make improvements based on constructive feedback on their listening skills. follow complex directions/multi-step instructions in unfamiliar situations without the need for repetition.</p>
<p>Develop a wide and interesting vocabulary This concept involves building a rich, sophisticated vocabulary with which to express oneself.</p>	<p>regularly use interesting adjectives, adverbial phrases and extended noun phrases in speech. know and use language that is acceptable in formal and informal situations with increasing confidence. recognise powerful vocabulary in stories/texts that they read or listen to, building these words and phrases into their own talk in an appropriate way.</p>	<p>use relevant strategies to build their vocabulary. use adventurous and sophisticated vocabulary in speech, which is always appropriate to the topic, audience and purpose speak audibly, fluently and with a full command of Standard English in all situations. use a broad, deep and rich vocabulary to discuss abstract concepts and a wide range of topics. confidently explain the meaning of words and offer alternative synonyms.</p>
<p>Speak with clarity This concept involves understanding that an audience needs to understand what is being said.</p>	<p>plan and present information clearly with ambitious added detail and description for the listener. communicate across a range of contexts and to a range of audiences. give descriptions, explanations, presentations and narratives for different purposes begin to use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas.</p>	<p>gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s). communicate confidently across a range of contexts and to a range of audiences. give well-structured descriptions, explanations, presentations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings. use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas.</p>
<p>Tell stories with structure This concept involves understanding how to keep an audience engaged through structured speech.</p>	<p>narrate stories with intonation and expression to add detail and excitement for the listener. use feedback from peers and teachers (and from observing other speakers) to make improvements to performance. combine vocabulary choices, gestures and body movement to take on and maintain the role of a character.</p>	<p>participate confidently in a range of different performances, role play exercises and improvisations (including acting in role). gain, maintain and monitor the interest of the listener(s). To select and use appropriate registers for effective communication.</p>
<p>Hold conversations and debates This concept involves understanding how to engage with others</p>	<p>ask questions which deepen conversations and/or further their knowledge. understand how to answer questions that require more detailed answers and justification. develop, agree to and evaluate rules for effective discussion; follow their own rules in small groups and whole-class conversations. engage in longer and sustained discussions about a range of topics. ask questions, offer suggestions, challenge ideas and give opinions in order to take an active part in discussions. participate in debates/arguments and use relevant details to support their opinions and add humour where appropriate.</p>	<p>regularly ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge. articulate and justify answers with confidence in a range of situations. maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments with confidence. consider and evaluate different viewpoints, adding their own interpretations and building on the contributions of others. articulate and justify arguments and opinions with confidence. offer an alternative explanation when other participant(s) do not understand. make reference back to their original thoughts when their opinions have changed and give reasons for their change of focus.</p>

At Mayflower, teachers model and encourage children to use sentence stems to articulate their discussions, thinking and learning. Our progression of sentence stems to support the development of pupils' discussion and debating skills is outlined in the table below. While the table highlights key sentence stems for each year group, it does not restrict them to only these examples. Black text indicates where a sentence stem is recapped from a previous year group to continue children's progression of learning.

Sentence stems for 'Arguing and expressing opinions' taught through the concept 'Holding conversations and debates'			
EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
I agree with / I disagree... I think/don't think... I like the way...	I agree with / I disagree... I think/don't think... I like the way... Yes / no because... I do/don't like....because I agree/disagree with because... It is right/wrong because... I think/don't think that because...	Yes / no because... I do/don't like....because I agree/disagree with because... It is right/wrong because... I think/don't think that because... I believe that... In my opinion... However/Also...	Yes / no because... I do/don't like....because I agree/disagree with because... It is right/wrong because... I think/don't think that because... I believe that... In my opinion... However/Also... An argument for/against is... I understand but/however... Building on what you're saying...
Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	
An argument for/against is... I understand but/however... Building on what you're saying... I understand/appreciate your point of view, however... However, I think/see it differently because... Most people would argue that... After hearing all the evidence...	I understand/appreciate your point of view, however... However, I think/see it differently because... Most people would argue that... After hearing all the evidence... The main reason for believing this... My first/second reason... Perhaps some people would argue... However, I would point out...	The main reason for believing this... My first/second reason... Perhaps some people would argue... However, I would point out... I am convinced... Given that... Based on fact... Having analysed...	