



4-5 years



Typical Talk at Primary

Attention, Listening and Understanding

- Knows to look at who's talking and think about what they're saying.
- Listens to and understands instructions about what they are doing, without needing to look up.
- Understands 2 to 3 part spoken instructions: e.g. "Finish your picture, then sit on the carpet and look at a book."
- Can answer a 'How' or 'Why' question: e.g. "Why do we need sunhats on?" "To stop the sun burning our face."

Vocabulary

- Understands a range of related words to describe concepts: e.g. soon, early and late; soft, hard, and smooth.
- Knows words can be put into groups and can give common examples in them: e.g. Animals: dog, cat, horse...
- Uses words more specifically to make the meaning clearer: e.g. "I saw a funny monkey. It was a spider monkey."

Speech Sounds, Grammar and Sentence Building

- Says words clearly although may struggle with a few complex speech sounds, consonant blends or words with lots of syllables: e.g. 'Wabbit' for 'rabbit', 'bow' for 'blow', 'sketti' for 'spaghetti.'
- Uses well-formed sentences: e.g. "I played with Zoe in the park." but with some errors: e.g. "I falled down."
- Joins phrases with words such as: e.g. if, because, so, could.

Verbal Storytelling and Narrative

- Lists events with some detail: e.g. "I went nanny's. I had fat chips for tea. I played games on the pooter."
- Retells favourite stories - using some of their own words: e.g. ".....and she said what a nice mouth you got and the wolf said, 'I can eat you!' Gulp!"
- Describes events but not always joined together or in the right order: e.g. "I went on the top of the bus with dad. That big slide is scary. We taked the ball as well."

Conversations and Social Interaction

- Confidently starts and takes part in individual and group conversations.
- Joins in and organises co-operative role play with friends and can pretend to be someone else talking.
- Uses language to ask, negotiate, give opinions and discuss ideas and feelings: e.g. "Are we going to Nana's today? Can I take teddy with me? He will be sad by himself."



5-7 years



Typical Talk at Primary

Attention, Listening and Understanding

- Starts to ignore unimportant information.
- Is aware when a message is unclear and comments or asks for explanation.
- Understands complex 2 to 3 part instructions: e.g. "Finish your picture from yesterday then with a partner, choose one of the topic books and talk about it quietly on the carpet."

Vocabulary

- Compares words, the way they look, sound or mean: e.g. "There are two words 'sea' at the beach, and you 'see' with your eyes."
- Can guess the word from clues, or give others clues using shape, size, function, etc
- Uses newly learnt words in a specific and appropriate way: e.g. "Dad, you know when you have lots of lions together it is called a pride of lions."

Speech Sounds, Grammar and Sentence Building

- Speech is clear with occasional errors, especially with consonant blends
- Has good knowledge of sounds in words.
- Asks lots of questions to find out specific information including 'How' and 'Why'.
- Uses different ways to join phrases to help explain or justify an event: e.g. "I'm older than you so I will go first."

Verbal Storytelling and Narrative

- Tells stories that set the scene, have a basic plot and a sequence of events.
- Begins to be aware of what the listener already knows and checks: e.g. "You know where I live, right? Well, in that big house by the shop..."
- Accurately predicts what will happen in a story.

Conversations and Social Interaction

- Takes turns to talk, listen, and respond in two-way conversations and groups.
- Keeps to a topic but easily prompted to move on if it takes over.
- Copies others' language and begins to be aware of current peer language: e.g. says 'Cool', or 'Yeah right.'
- Uses and experiments with different styles of talking with different people.



7-9 years



Typical Talk at Primary

Attention, Listening and Understanding

- Listens to key information and makes relevant, related comments: e.g. "So all mammals are warm blooded, have fur or hair and their babies all drink milk."
- Identifies clearly when they haven't understood: e.g. "What's maize?" or "Get a blue what?"
- Able to infer meaning, reason and predict: e.g. "It's getting very hot in here," means open the window.

Vocabulary

- Uses a range of words related to time and measurement: e.g. century, calendar, breadth.
- Uses a wide range of verbs to express their thoughts, or about cause and effect: e.g. "I wonder what she's thinking," or, "If we run we should get there on time but we might arrive late."
- Joins in discussions about an activity using topic vocabulary: e.g. "I saw some chicken eggs hatching in the incubator on the farm last Friday."

Speech Sounds, Grammar and Sentence Building

- Speech is clear, uses words with three sounds together or words with lots of syllables: e.g. splash or string; rhinoceros or identical
- Uses regular and unusual word endings: e.g. walked or fell.
- Uses complex grammar and sentences to clarify, summarise, explain and plan: e.g. "So the bee collects the pollen from the stamen and then flies to another flower and pollinates it."

Verbal Storytelling and Narrative

- Stories have a good structure with a distinct plot, an exciting event, clear resolution and conclusion: e.g. "...and everyone got home safely which was great."
- Uses intonation to make storytelling and reports exciting and interesting.
- Adds detail or leaves information out according to how much is already known by the listener.

Conversations and Social Interaction

- Uses formal language when appropriate in some familiar situations: e.g. Showing a visitor around school.
- Understands conversational rules: e.g. Looks at listener to judge feedback. Gives more detail if needed.
- Uses tone of voice, stress on words and gestures naturally to add meaning.
- Uses language for full range of different reasons: e.g. complimenting, criticising, negotiating.



9-11 years



Typical Talk at Primary

Attention, Listening and Understanding

- Sustains active listening to both what is said and the way it is said.
- Follows longer instructions that are not familiar: e.g. "Put the stripy folder that's on top of the cupboard into the bottom drawer of my desk."
- Understands different question types: e.g. open, closed, rhetorical.
- Understands simple jokes and simple idioms, but can't really explain why they are funny or what they mean: e.g. You can't have your cake and eat it.

Vocabulary

- Makes choices from a wide and varied vocabulary: e.g. 'Leap' instead of 'jump', 'terrified' instead of 'frightened'.
- Uses sophisticated words but the meaning might not always be accurate: e.g. "My bedroom was meticulous."
- Knows that words can have two meanings and uses them appropriately. Can't always explain how they are linked: e.g. 'Hard' (rigid object and tough person).

Speech Sounds, Grammar and Sentence Building

- Uses long and complex sentence structures: e.g. "I will come with you only because it means you will stop going on at me."
- Uses questions to help conversations flow.
- Sentences average about 7 to 10 words - longer in stories than in conversation.
- Knows when a sentence is not grammatically correct and can explain rules of grammar.

Verbal Storytelling and Narrative

- Tells elaborate entertaining stories which are full of detailed descriptions.
- Everyday language is detailed and not always about their immediate experience.
- Incorporates a subplot in telling stories and recalling events, before resolving the main storyline.
- Uses complex joining words: e.g. meanwhile, therefore

Conversations and Social Interaction

- Uses different language depending on where they are, who they are with and what they are doing: e.g. Formal style with the headteacher in school; relaxed and informal with family at home; and 'cool' language with friends in the park.
- Communicates successfully; shares ideas and information, gives and receives advice, and offers and takes notice of opinions.
- Realises when people don't fully understand and tries to help