



Your child's language from around 6 months old

A little about your child's language from 6 months old

- The world offers so much for your child to discover! Watch what your child looks at and put words to it. Discover all the exciting things, large and small, together!
- Your child is already communicating with you using facial expressions, sounds and movements. They will also soon begin to babble in a speech-like way.
- Your child soon begins saying their first expressions like 'look' and words such as 'mama' and 'papa'.
- Your child loves to talk to you, play and join in with simple movement games and nursery rhymes.

Talk about everything

Talk to your child about everything that happens and that captures their interest. Talk about food, clothes, what you can see and what your child does. Listen actively to your child, as that will encourage them to continue talking. Give your child plenty of time and attention!

Vary and repeat

Repeat your child's sounds, guess what they mean and put them into words. Wait till your child responds with sounds or movements before you continue. Your child will already be learning to take turns when speaking and to understand the connection between words and objects.

Play with language

Sing songs and nursery rhymes, play singing games. Use fingers and toes, squeak and hum and just have fun! Your library has books, songs and music that you can borrow and take home with you.

Talk-read together

When your child is able to follow your looks and pointing gestures, a baby book will be an exciting new discovery. Point to and explain the pictures. Take note of what your child is interested in. To start with that interest will be quite short, but your child's ability to focus will gradually improve.

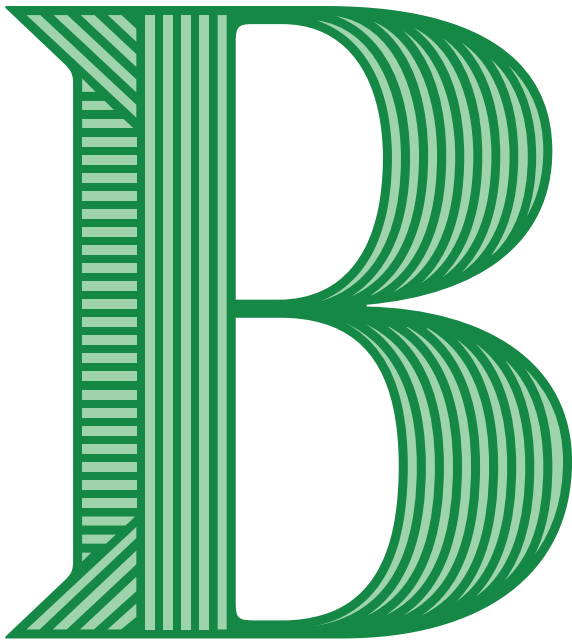
Speak your mother tongue

Talk, sing and read in your mother tongue. Most children in the world live in multilingual environments, and growing up with more than one language is only ever a plus.

Find out more

- Read more about Bokstart here: www.bokstart.se
- If you are concerned about your child's language development, contact your local child health centre. You can also discuss your child's language development with staff at the preschool.

The Swedish Arts Council has been given a government mandate to promote reading and stimulate language development in young children. Bokstart is a national literacy initiative aimed at parents and at adults who spend time around children.



Your child's language from around 1 year old

A little about your child's language from 1 year old

- Your child uses gestures and sounds to tell you things.
- The first words are about things in the here and now, such as 'ball', 'teddy' and 'look'.
- Your child understands more words than they can say, but needs your help with interpretation and commentary.

Follow your child's interests

You can use everything you see and do every day to develop your child's language. Put words to the things your child is showing an interest in right now. When your child says 'look' and points at a cat, you can answer: 'Yes, that's a cat. Do you like the cat?' Remember to wait for your child to respond.

Pay attention and listen

When you give your child your undivided attention and listen carefully, the child will feel that you think the message is important, whether the child is saying a word, pointing or communicating something in another way. Your responses teach your child that people take turns in a conversation.

Play with language

Sing songs and nursery rhymes, play singing games. Use fingers and toes, squeak and hum and just have fun!

Make up and tell stories

Tell your child what their teddy is doing or where the bus outside is heading. Talk about photos of relatives and friends. Your child needs to hear new words several times, in different contexts.

Read simple picture books

Now you can start using picture books. Start by looking at the pictures and pointing together. To begin with, it is easier if you just talk about the pictures, but eventually your child will be able to listen to the text in the book. Your library has tips on books to take home.

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Your child's language from around 18 months old

A little about your child's language from 18 months old

- At this age, many children understand around 200 common words.
- They use a number of words themselves, but the words can mean different things in different contexts.
- Some children start to put words together, such as 'mama car' or 'papa there'.

Talk to each other a lot

Talk about what you are doing in different situations. Tell your child what is happening and put what you are doing into words. Listen carefully to your child's thoughts and opinions. Give your child plenty of time.

Confirm and expand on what your child says

When you use your child's own words and then add new ones, you are helping your child to develop their language. A child will often use their own words. Don't correct your child, but use the right word so your child can hear what it is supposed to sound like.

Link words to your child's own world

It is easier to learn new things if you can link them to something your child already knows. If you see a picture of some trousers, you can point to your child's own trousers and say: 'You've also got trousers, just like the child in the book.'

Talk-read together

Your child will now enjoy many different books that you can talk about together. Ask open questions about what is happening in the books and link the action to your child's own experiences: 'What do you think...?' 'Do you remember...?'

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Your child's language from around 3 years old

A little about your child's language from 3 years old

- Many children will now understand several hundred words. They can put words together into sentences and are beginning to hold short conversations.
- Your child asks lots of questions and is beginning to understand how to use words and what you can do with them.
- Your child starts telling you about things that have happened to them and enjoys listening when you tell them something.

Discover letters and words

At preschool age, many children are curious about letters and words. Read and point to signage and packaging when your child shows an interest. You can also explore the signs and symbols around you and talk about what they mean.

Explain new words

Use new words for what happens and what you see as you go out and about. Explain words your child doesn't understand: 'the sea is like a kind of lake, only much bigger.' Or: 'when we go down to the beach, we paddle in the sea.'

Have a conversation

Talk about what has happened during the day. Follow up on something you know your child has done at preschool and invite your child to tell you more.

Most three-year-olds will not pronounce every word the way we adults do. When you hear a word

that sounds odd, if you say it correctly your child will eventually also say it right.

Read together

Get into the habit of reading for a little while every day. Many children have a favourite book they want to have read to them again and again. Picture books can now contain slightly more complicated stories, but talking your way through the story is still best.

Start a conversation about what the book is about and encourage your child to ask questions along the way. When your child asks a question, stop, listen and think together.

Remember that play is your child's way of learning. So play, read, sing and tell stories together. Nursery rhymes and songs are still entertaining. Reading books is the best way to learn new words!

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