



Introduction to Language Development and Emergent Literacy Domains for Mobile Infants

Domain Components

- L1. Receptive Language
- L2. Expressive Language
- L3. Communication Skills
- L4. English Language Development for Dual Language Learners
- EL1. Engagement in literacy experiences and understanding of books and stories
- EL2. Phonological awareness
- EL3. Knowledge and use of books, print and letters

Here are some important things to know about young infants and their language development and emergent literacy:

- They use gestures to communicate their needs and wants. For example, they point, pull on a skirt or pants' leg, and shake their head "No."
- They can learn simple sign language for words such as "more", "eat", and "drink"
- They understand more words than they can say.
- They can follow simple directions such as "Bring me the ball," or "Show me your belly button, please."
- They create long, babbled sentences, then begin to repeat familiar words they hear.
- They recognize names for many familiar objects such as ball, doggy and keys.
- They use single-word expressions such as "doggy," "bye-bye," and "oh-oh," then begin to use two-word sentences such as "More milk," "Where Mommy?" or "Daddy go."
- They may say seven to twenty words that adults can understand. This usually occurs between 12 to 18 months.
- They actively participate in book reading experiences by pointing to pictures, sometimes naming what they see in the pictures, and turning pages.
- They join in rhyming activities such as songs and nursery rhymes, and in games.

By knowing these special things about mobile infants, families and caregivers can better understand how to support their language development and emergent literacy experiences.

Here is what happens when families and caregivers support the mobile infant's language development:

- They begin to understand what others are saying to them. (*Receptive Language*)
- They go from babbling to saying words. (*Expressive Language*)
- They use gestures, then they begin to use words to communicate with others. (*Expressive Language*)
- They are acquiring a love for literacy experiences such as stories, rhymes and songs.

Teacher Note: *Because Language and Emergent Literacy are so intertwined, they are combined in the Connecting with Infants curriculum.*



Connecting with Mobile Infants

LD Activity: "More, More, More! That's What I Want!"

Learning Goal: LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language)

You will need: A snack on a small plate
A cup with a lid and a pitcher of juice

Before you begin:

- Prepare the snack, such as favorite crackers or finger foods.
- Wash a child's hands and place her securely in a high chair.
- Sit next to the high chair.
- Place the snack and the juice cup on the high chair tray.

Try this! "Look, Listen and Say"

- Watch the child eating the snack. **(Look)**
- Listen for sounds of pleasure, such as "mmmm" and respond with something like, "Yes, Emma, that's yummy." **(Listen)**
- Respond with words if the child gestures or makes sounds for more food. Say, "Emma, what do you want? MORE?" **(Say)**
- Talk about the crackers when she points to them. You might say, "Emma, that's crackers. Do you want MORE crackers?"
- Continue to respond to her gestures with words. If she finishes the one you gave her and gestures for another, ask, "Emma, do you want another cracker? Here's MORE crackers for Emma" as you sign "more."
- Encourage the child by sharing your enthusiasm with the delight in your face and facial expressions.





Connecting with Mobile Infants

LD & EL Activity: “Read Me a Story”

Learning Goals: LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child’s home language)

EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences

EL 1.2 Engages in read-alouds and conversations about books and stories

You will need: A book such as *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown, illustrated by Clement Hurd

Before you begin:

- Make sure the child is alert and ready to listen to a story.
 - Sit in a rocker, a glider or on the floor and allow the child to sit in your lap or next to you.
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Try this!

- Show the child the book and say, “Angelo, I picked out a special book for us to read today. It’s a book about going to sleep.”
- Read the story in a quiet and soothing voice.
- Respond if the child attempts to babble, say a word, point to a picture or try to communicate in some other way about the book.
- Involve Angelo in pointing to or naming things in the book.
- Allow the child to hold the book and turn the pages if he is interested.
- Read the story with other children.
- Be prepared to read the same book over and over with the child. Children like repetition and things that are familiar. Also, introduce new books to children.

Teacher Note: *Other children may join you as you are sitting on the floor as you reading to Angelo. Some children may join you for a short time, then leave for another activity.*

Teacher Note: *Read books with children each day.*

Books to read with mobile infants:

Refer to the Introduction and Tips and Techniques: What to Look for in Books for Mobile Infants and Examples of Some Books for Mobile Infants for a list of books to read with children each day.





Connecting with Mobile Infants

LD & EL Activity: "Nursery Rhyme Time"

- Learning Goals:** LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language)
EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences
EL2.1 Notices and manipulates the sounds of language (*rhyme*)
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You will need: Nursery Rhyme book such as *Humpty Dumpty and Other Rhymes* by Iona Opie, illustrated by Rosemary Wells

Before you begin:

- Learn some nursery rhymes so that you can say them with the children throughout the day.

Try this:

- Say nursery rhymes to children often:
When you are changing their diaper
When you are preparing their lunch
When you are holding them in your arms and rocking them
When you put them in their crib for a nap
- Say the same rhymes over and over again because children enjoy things that are familiar to them.

Try this:

- Prop a nursery rhyme book in a standing position on the floor and leave it slightly open to help capture a child's attention.
- Move close to the child who shows interest in the book and say, "Let's read this book together."
- Select a rhyme such as "Jack and Jill"; a rhyme you think the child will enjoy.
- Introduce the rhyme by saying, "This is a story about Jack and Jill who are going to get some water."
- Read the rhyme to the child and repeat it if he seems to enjoy it.
- Repeat reading rhymes you have introduced to children and gradually add others.
- Incorporate saying and reading nursery rhymes into your daily routine.

Teacher Note: Refer to *Connecting with Infants: A Curriculum for Children from Birth to 18 Months: Introduction and Tips and Techniques*.



Connecting with Mobile Infants

LD Activity: "Singing Is Fun"

Learning Goals: LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language)
CA1.1 Explores through listening, singing, creating, and moving to music

You will need: CDs with music appropriate for mobile infants
CD player

Before you begin:

- Learn some songs that you think children will enjoy, for example:
Itsy Bitsy Spider
Wheels on the Bus
Old MacDonald Had a Farm
Where Is Thumbkin?
- Have a collection of CDs with songs you think your children will enjoy. See below for sources for CDs.

Try this:

- Sing short, simple familiar songs with children throughout the day:
When you are diapering and washing a child's hands
When you are rocking a child
When you are dressing children to go outside
When you are dancing around the room with a child
When children are napping (soft music)

Try these activities:

- Invite one or two children to listen with you for a few minutes to a song you play from a CD.
- Involve one or two children in playing simple rhythm instruments such as shakers, rattles, and maracas.

Teacher Notes:

- *Avoid playing music constantly. It becomes background noise that the children tend to ignore after a while. Also, if the music is loud, noise level in the room may increase.*
- *Play only music appropriate for young children. Adult music is for adults.*
- *Order CDs from school supply catalogs or search the CD/song title online to download or purchase.*
- *Add picture book versions of children's favorite songs and fingerplays to your book collection.*



Connecting with Mobile Infants

LD & EL Activity: "Making Animal Sounds"

- Learning Goals:**
- LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language)**
 - LD2.1 Uses increasingly complex vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure (in child's home language)**
 - EL1.1 Shows interest in literacy experiences**
 - EL1.2 Engages in read-alouds and conversations about books and stories**

You will need: A book about animals, either teacher-made or purchased (*Old MacDonald Had a Farm*)

Before you begin:

- Make or purchase a book about animals such as farm animals.

Try this:

- Show the book to a child and say, "This is a book about a cow and a dog and a cat. Let's read this book together."
- Begin to read the book with the child, making the sound for each animal.
- Follow up the reading by pointing to an animal and asking the child to name the animal. If she does not know the name of the animal, say "Annabelle, that's a duck. What sound does a duck make?"
- Encourage the child by saying, "Yes, a duck says quack, quack, quack."
- Continue this process of naming and making the sound for each animal in the book.
- Read the book again if the child seems interested.

Try these!

- Sing the song, "Old MacDonald Had a Farm" and involve the child in making the sound for each animal in the song.
- Read with children other books with familiar animals and ask children to identify the animal and the sound it makes.
- Post on the wall at children's eye level realistic pictures or photos of familiar animals. Join a child who is showing interest in the picture and invite them to identify the animal and the sound it makes.



Connecting with Mobile Infants

LD Activities: “Book about Me”

- Learning Goals:** **LD1.1** Understands and responds to language (in child’s home language)
EL3.1 Responds to features of books and print (*book knowledge*)
SS.1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community

What you need: photographs of the child and family
drawing or photograph of a favorite toy
card stock or construction paper
markers, glue
clear plastic sleeves or clear plastic adhesive paper, yarn or metal rings

Before you begin

- Ask each child’s family for pictures of the child, family members, pet and house.
- Create a drawing, take a photo, or cut out a picture from school supply catalog of the child’s favorite toy.
- Create a booklet by inserting pictures and drawings in clear plastic sleeves or by gluing pictures onto card stock or construction paper and cover with clear plastic adhesive paper. Punch holes and bind with yarn or metal rings.
- Create a cover page with a title such as “A Book about (child’s name).”
- Place the child in your lap and read the book with her. Talk with the child about each page. Invite the child to say who or what she sees on each page.
- Read the story again if the child is interested.

Try these variations:

- Take photos of the child in the classroom and make a book about the child’s day in the classroom and read the book with the child.
- Make a book about “My Friends” by taking photos of all the children in the group. Read the “My Friends” book with individual children or in small groups. Encourage children to point to themselves and to other children.

Teacher Notes:

- *The book about the child’s day in the classroom supports these Learning Goals:*
SE3.1 Shows awareness of self as unique individual
SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community
*The “My Friends Book” also supports Learning Goal: **SS1.1 Demonstrates positive connection to family and community** (learning community)*



Connecting with Mobile Infants

LD Activity: “Where Is My...?”

Learning Goal: LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child’s home language)

You will need: Child’s favorite books or small toys

Before you begin:

- Notice when the child is looking for something such as his stuffed dog.
 - Take this opportunity to encourage a conversation about familiar objects.
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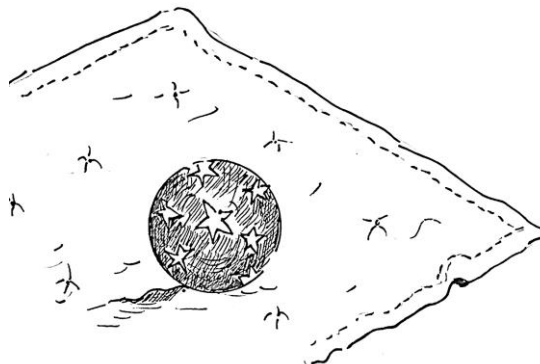
Look, Listen, Say!

- Respond to the child’s cues such as pulling on your pants’ leg or repeating the same word. For example, if he says “doggy”, ask, “Marcus, do you want your doggie?” “Where’s your brown doggie?” “Come help me find it.”
- Continue helping him look for his doggy and asking him questions about it. Say, for example, “Did you leave your doggy on your cot?”
- Describe what you are doing. Say, for example, “It’s not on your cot.” “Let’s look in your cubbie.”
- Celebrate when the lost item is found. “Yeah! We found it!” “Marcus found it!”

Try this variation of this activity!

- Repeat the activity with other objects the child can name; for example, ball or book.

Teacher Note: Notice how the child responds to your questions and comments. Does he look at or go to his cot when you ask, “Did you leave your doggy on your cot?” Did he point toward his cubbie when you said, “Let’s look in your cubbie.”





Connecting with Mobile Infants

LD Activities: "Following Directions" "Finding Objects"

Learning Goal: LD1.1 Understands and responds to language (in child's home language) (follows directions)

You will need: You and a mobile infant

Before you begin:

- Observe your children to know which ones are ready to follow directions

Try this:

- Say to a child, "Grace, go get the baby doll and bring it to me." When the child brings the doll to you, say, "Thank you, Grace. You brought the baby doll to me."
- Say to the child, "The baby is cold. Please get her blanket and bring it to me." Again, thank the child for bringing the blanket to you and wrap the doll in the blanket.
- Invite the child to "Wave bye-bye to mommy." "Blow Grandpa a kiss."
- Think of different simple directions you can give to a child that will increase her ability to listen and follow directions.

Try this Finding Objects Activity:

- Invite a child or two or three children to join you in a selected area of the room.
- Point to the ball on the shelf and ask a child who knows a lot of words to tell you what it is. If the child responds "Ball," repeat, "Yes, Makiah, that's a ball."
- Have a child with a limited vocabulary point to an object, you name it and encourage the child to repeat the name of the object.
- Take advantage of different opportunities throughout the day for children to learn the names of objects in their environment.

Teacher Note: *The Naming Object activity helps children increase their vocabulary and to connect words to objects.*