

Play and Language Development: Westby Play Scale

Play	Language
Stage 1- 9 to 12 months - Awareness that objects exist when not seen; finds toy hidden under scarf - Means-end behavior-crawls or walks to get what he wants; pulls string toys - Does not mouth or bang all toys-some used appropriately	- No true language; may have performative words, (words associated with actions or the total situation) - Exhibits the following communicative functions: request and command
Stage II-15 to 17 months - Purposeful exploration of toys; discovers operation of toys through trial and error; uses variety of motoric schemas - Hands toy to adult if unable to operate	- Context dependent single words, for example, child may use the word “car” when riding in a car, but not when he sees a car; words tend to come and go in a child’s vocabulary - Exhibits following communicative functions: request, command, interactional, personal, protesting, label, response, greeting
Stage III-17 to 19 months - Autosymbolic play, for example, child pretends to go to sleep or pretends to drink from cup or eat from spoon - Uses most common objects and toys appropriately - Tool-use (uses stick to reach toy) - Finds toys invisibly hidden (when placed in box and box emptied under scarf)	- Beginning of true verbal communication - Words have the following functional and semantic relations: recurrence, existence, nonexistence, rejection, denial, agent, object, action or state, location, object or person associated with object or location
Stage IV—19-22 months - Symbolic play extends beyond the child’s self - Plays with dolls; brushes doll’s hair, feeds doll a bottle, or covers with blanket - Child performs pretend activities on more than one person or object; for example, feeds self, a doll, mother, and another child - Combines two toys in pretend play, for ex, puts spoon in pan or pours from pot into cup	- Refers to objects or persons not present - Beginning of word combinations with the following semantic relations: agent-action, action-object, agent-object, attributive, dative, action-locative, object-locative, possessive
Stage V-24 months - Represents daily experiences; plays house-is the mommy, daddy, or baby; objects used are realistic and close to life size - Events short and isolated; not true sequences; some self-limiting sequences-puts food in pan, stirs, and eats - Block play consists of stacking and knocking down	- Uses earlier pragmatic functions and semantic relations in phrases and short sentences - The following morphological makers appear: present progressive on verbs, plurals, possessives

Sand and water play consist of filling, pouring, and dumping	
Stage VI- 21/2 years - Represents events less frequently experienced or observed, particularly impressive or traumatic events: doctor/nurse/sick child or teacher/child - Events still short and isolated. Realistic props still required. Roles shift quickly	- Responds appropriately to WH questions in context: - Asks wh questions, generally puts “wh” at beginning of sentence - Responses to why questions inappropriate expect for well-know routines, such as, “Why is the doctor here?.”baby sick” - Asks why, but often inappropriate and does not attend to answer
Stages VII-3 years - Continues pretend activities of Stages V and VI, but now the play has sequence. Events are not isolated, for example, child mixes cake, bakes it, serves it, washes dishes - Sequence evolves, not planned - Compensatory toy..re-enactment of experienced events with new outcomes - Associative play	- Uses past tense, such as “I ate the cake..I walked” - Uses future aspect (particularly “gonna”) forms, such as “I’m gonna wash dishes.”
Stage VIII-3 to 31/2 years - Carries out play activities of previous stages with a doll house and Fisher Price toys (barn, garage, airport, village) - Uses blocks and sandbox for imaginative play. Blocks used primarily as enclosures for animals and dolls - Play not totally stimulus bound. Child uses one subject to represent another	Descriptive vocabulary expands as child becomes more aware of perceptual attributes. Uses terms for the following concepts (not always correctly: <i>shapes, sizes, colors, texture, spatial relationships, gives dialogue to puppets and dolls, metalinguistic language use, uses indirect requests (Mommy lets me have cookies for breakfast), changes speech depending on listener</i>
Stage IX-3/12 to 4 years - Begins to problem-solve events not experienced. Plans ahead. Hypothesizes - Uses dolls and puppets to act out scenes - Builds 3-dimensional structures with blocks which are attempts at reproducing specific structures child has seen	- Verbalizes intentions and possible future events: - Uses modals (can, may, might, will, would, could) - Uses conjunctions (and, but, if, so, because) (full competence for modals doesn’t develop until 10-12 years of age) - Begins to respond appropriately to why and how questions that require reasoning about perception
Stage X-5 years - Plans sequence of pretend events - Organizes what he needs-both objects and other children	Next, last, while, before, after (full competence doesn’t develop until 10-12 years of age)

• Coordinates more than one event occurring at a time • Highly imaginative. Sets the scene without realistic props. • Full cooperative play	
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- Play is correlated with cognitive development up until 3;0-3;6
- After 3;6-4;0, you will not use play to assess cognition
- Is it an overall developmental delay or is delay specific to speech/language (no underlying cognitive issues)