

Routes for literacy – Oracy

Assessment activities/things to try

Column: Next steps A

Anticipate a repeating phrase in a very familiar story, sometimes vocalising for the final word or sound	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>In a very familiar story, rhyme or prayer, emphasise the end of a line or phrase by using intonation.</p> <p>Delay the final word for the learner's response, e.g. <i>'It wasn't too big and it wasn't too small it was just . . . (right).'</i></p>	<p>The learner tries to complete by vocalising, gesturing or animated facial expression.</p>

Show they understand spoken language (although they rely heavily on visual and other clues within the immediate context)	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>Observe carefully the spoken language the learner seems to respond to.</p> <p>Does the learner still respond:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if you avoid using gesture, eye pointing and body language? • if they can't see the thing or the person you are referring to? • if you use the language outside of their normal routine? 	<p>The learner responds appropriately with contextual support but struggles to do so without this.</p>

Show they understand a small number of words/signs for familiar objects or people	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>Observe the learner carefully in all circumstances in school and find out what they understand when in other environments – especially at home.</p>	<p>The learner looks at specific person or object when a conversation is focused on that person or object.</p> <p>The learner distinguishes between some objects or people when words/signs are used.</p>

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Assessment activities/things to try

Use a few very familiar words/signs or symbols	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
Observe the learner carefully in all circumstances in school and also find out what they might use in other environments – especially at home.	<p>The learner's vocalisations and/or signs are clear enough to be understood as (representing) specific words by those who know them well.</p> <p>and</p> <p>The word(s) and/or signs the learner uses are produced in appropriate contexts.</p> <p>and/or</p> <p>The learner gives a symbol as a token to obtain a highly desired item in more than one very structured context</p> <p>The learner uses a (combined) total of at least 10 different words, signs and/or symbols.</p>

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Use a combination of gestures and more formal communication (signs/speech) to seek attention, to say 'no' and to satisfy needs	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
Observe the learner carefully in all circumstances in school and find out how they communicate when in other environments – especially at home.	<p>The learner's communicative repertoire includes some words or signs but still relies on whole-body communication and gestures, often as the primary mode, with vocalisation being secondary:</p> <p>Look for the learner continuing to do the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taps/pulls an adult or turns an adult's head to gain their attention. • Sits down/refuses to move to indicate 'no'. • Reaches or points towards items they want. • Shows or takes item to an adult as a signal. • Takes an adult's hand and places it on item to make it work (e.g. <i>door handle</i>). • Nods and/or shakes head for 'yes'/'no'. • Waves to greet familiar person.

Take own turn in group turn-taking activity	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>The learner is able to take own turn in familiar everyday situation, e.g. <i>circle time</i>.</p> <p>Situation must be one where it is possible for the learner to come in 'out of turn'.</p>	<p>Waits for turn and comes in on cue either through seeing previous child has had turn or by watching for cue from an adult.</p>

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Assessment activities/things to try

Copy actions in simple action games (e.g. <i>Simon says . . .</i>), attempting an action of some kind when adult uses only words	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
Play 'Simple Simon' using a range of different actions. When the learner is 'warmed up' and you are sure they are following the actions and words, say 'Simon says [stand up/sit down].' but with no accompanying gesture or action.	The learner attempts to stand up/sit down in response to words only. (Be aware that they may be copying other learners.)

Point/eye point in response to 'show me . . . ' for a small range of familiar people and objects	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>In the presence of several very familiar people, ask the learner '<u>Where's</u> . . . (e.g. John)?' (sign the underlined word).</p> <p>Place three different, very familiar objects at a time within easy reach of the learner. (If they are using eye pointing, place yourself and the objects so you can easily distinguish the learner's choice).</p> <p>Ask them '<u>Where's</u> the . . . (e.g. <i>shoe</i>)?'.</p> <p>This item is about discovering whether the learner understands the (spoken) word for the target item; therefore ensure you do not sign, point or eye point to the target object yourself.</p>	<p>The learner points, gestures or eye points towards the person named. (from among at least three different people).</p> <p>The learner points, gestures or eye points towards the object named (from choice of three different objects).</p>

Use additional gesture(s)/word(s) to confirm meaning when communication has been misunderstood	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>Observe situations where the learner has attempted to communicate but the communicative partner is not clear what they mean (or pretends not to have understood).</p> <p>For example, when the learner asks for a specific item and they are given a different item.</p>	<p>The learner repeats vocalisation and/or gesture, or uses them with greater emphasis.</p> <p>The learner looks more earnestly at communicative partner and/or towards the (object or location) which is the focus of their communication.</p>

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Assessment activities/things to try

Point and vocalise to draw another's attention to an interesting event or object nearby	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
Observe the learner in a wide range of situations and with a range of people.	<p>The learner is proactive in noticing an event or object and drawing someone's attention to it. They point or use a clear eye-point and vocalise. (This may sound like an appropriate word.)</p> <p>Their communication merely points out the event or object, it is not designed to obtain it.</p>

Point to a desired item (visible but out of reach) and vocalise	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
Place items known to be favourites of the learner in locations where they can be seen but not independently reached.	The learner gains the adult's attention then points or clearly eye-points to indicate desired item. While doing so they vocalise. (This may sound like an appropriate word.)

Give a symbol/picture as 'token' for a desired item (doesn't distinguish representation)	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
Choose carefully a highly preferred item, prepare a symbol or picture and follow procedures for PECS Phase 1.	The learner gives the symbol or picture in order to get the item. (Gives to get but may not look at or recognise the symbol or picture.)

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Assessment activities/things to try

Column: Next steps B

Vocalise or press a switch to play a recorded ‘part’ when turn comes in a repeating ‘drama’/presentation	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>Choose a short speaking part (a word or short phrase) which recurs several times in a story, poem or drama. In collaboration with the learner, record this on a speaking switch (e.g. Big Mack switch or similar device).</p> <p>Rehearse pressing the switch to hear the part spoken.</p> <p>When learner is familiar with the story, cue them to play their part.</p>	<p>The learner says, and/or presses the switch to play their part at appropriate point(s). The learner anticipates their part and shows they understand it as an element of the story.</p>

Communicate mostly about familiar objects, people or pictures immediately present, but can also refer to their absence	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>For a small and familiar group of people, provide the learner with clear photographs of each person.</p> <p>The learner watches as one member of the group goes away/goes out of room. Ask the learner ‘Who’s gone?’.</p> <p>(A similar approach can be used with familiar objects and photos of them.)</p>	<p>The learner says who is present by naming them or pointing to/choosing between photos.</p> <p>The learner says name/selects photograph of person who is absent.</p>

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Assessment activities/things to try

Show they understand up to 50 words/signs/symbols and can use a sub-set of these – mostly in concrete contexts	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>Observe the learner's communication in a wide range of situations and record their understanding and use of key words/signs and/or symbols (especially in situations where contextual clues are controlled).</p> <p>Various checklists are available to support this, e.g. <i>the Makaton 'core' Vocabulary, Living Language (First Words), Derbyshire Language Scheme, etc.</i></p>	<p>The learner responds appropriately to a combined total of at least 50 words/signs or symbols used by others.</p> <p>The learner uses a combined total of at least 20 different words/signs or symbols in appropriate contexts.</p>

Use single words/signs/symbols and some two-part phrases, e.g. to signal repetition or recurrence (e.g. 'more crisp')	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>Observe and record the learner's expressive communication in a range of contexts. Are they beginning to use some combinations of words?</p> <p>The earliest combinations may be similar to the following.</p> <p>Greeting: 'Hi, Jo.', 'Bye, Ann.'</p> <p>Absence: 'Dad gone.'</p> <p>Recurrence: 'More crisp.'</p>	<p>The learner uses at least five two-part word/sign or symbol phrases.</p>

Listen/watch for cues that it is 'their turn' when turns do not simply 'go round the circle'	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>Choose a situation such as a group music activity where the learner is responsible for 'playing a part'.</p>	<p>The learner watches/listens for when to bang their drum, shake their tambourine, etc.</p>

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Assessment activities/things to try

Listen and respond appropriately to instructions accompanied by gestures (e.g. 'get your coat')	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
In a wide range of situations, observe whether the learner appears to understand simple phrases when used at the appropriate time within their everyday context, e.g. 'Get your coat', 'Dinner time', 'Sit on your chair', 'Put it there', 'Kick the ball', 'Get on the bus', etc.	The learner pays attention to what is said, notices visual clues and uses their knowledge of routines, thereby responding correctly to many simple contextualised requests.

Respond appropriately to simple requests involving changing the location of objects or transferring them to people	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>Position items (a) on the table directly in front of the learner and items (b) a little further away.</p> <p>Items (a): spoon, pen, key. Items (b): box, cup.</p> <p>Ask the learner to, for example, 'Put the key in the cup' or other combination of two key words. Replace all items each time.</p> <p>Using any of the items above, ask the learner to give a named item to a particular familiar person (from a choice of two or three).</p>	<p>The learner responds appropriately to words only (when all gestures or other contextual clues are omitted).</p> <p>The learner responds appropriately to words only (when all gestures or other contextual clues are omitted).</p>

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Assessment activities/things to try

Repeat/copy words and imitate speech patterns/intonation	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
Observe the words a learner uses. Are they 'echoed' from what they have heard others say?	The learner repeats words which are clearly those of others.
Encourage the learner to look at your mouth/lips/tongue while listening to sounds you make, including repeating sounds, e.g. 'la, la, la', using higher and lower pitch, saying particular words.	The learner attempts to copy a vocal model.

Use single words/signs and a growing number of brief phrases (e.g. 'all gone', 'drink please') mostly to express their own wishes or needs	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
Observe and record the learner's expressive communication in a wide range of contexts.	The learner uses words/signs, for a range of purposes but spontaneous use still mainly focuses on need satisfaction.
Analyse and discuss as a team the purpose(s) for which they use words/signs/symbols?	
Some early purposes for communication are: – to seek attention – to satisfy a need – to say no – to interact with another person for the pleasure of interacting – to manipulate another person through negative behaviours – to comment on something of interest in a shared activity.	

Give a symbol/picture to obtain a matching desired item	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
Prepare symbols or pictures and follow procedures for PECS Phase 3.	The learner chooses the correct symbol on most occasions from an array of at least three familiar symbols or pictures and gives to communicative partner with intent to obtain desired item.

Routes for literacy – Oracy

Assessment activities/things to try

Column: Next steps C

Make an attempt at representing things/animals in familiar situation	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
In a familiar context (such as a movement/ dance lesson) ask learners to 'be a bear' or 'be a tiger', be 'a mouse', 'be a dog'.	<p>The learner represents two different animals differently in some way.</p> <p>Representation does not need to accurately convey characteristics of animal concerned, the point is that the learner attempts to represent different animals differently.</p>

Make an attempt at representing simple emotions on request with prompting	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>Use simple social stories illustrated with pictures, e.g. <i>'Mary dropped her doll and it broke. How did Mary feel?'</i>, <i>'Can you show me how Mary would feel?'</i>.</p> <p>Choice of pictures can be used to scaffold 'pretending to be Mary'.</p>	The learner responds in any way which demonstrates some understanding of Mary's emotional state in the story.

Communicate about familiar stories and symbolic play, as well as people, places and events from their wider experience	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
Observe the learner's communication in a wide range of situations. Ask the learner what they do and who they know outside of school.	The learner's communication includes reference to people, places, times and events beyond their immediate context.
Ask the learner to say something about a story.	The learner is able to say something about (an imaginative situation in) a story.
Listen to the learner's use of language during play.	The learner uses words for symbolic play (e.g. <i>'dolly sleeping'</i> , <i>calling a stick a 'gun'</i>).

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Assessment activities/things to try

Understand and use 50 or more words/signs/symbols	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
Observe the learner's communication in a wide range of situations and record their understanding and use of key words/signs and/or symbols (especially in situations where contextual clues are controlled).	The learner is able to use a combined total of at least 50 words/signs or symbols. They use these in ways appropriate to the context.

Regularly use two- and three-word phrases to communicate interests, comment, give information and ask questions	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
Observe and record the learner's expressive communication in a range of contexts. Do they express themselves frequently in two and three-word phrases? Do they sometimes put four key concepts together?	The learner uses a range of two and three word/sign or symbol phrases, as well as some more complex patterns involving four key words/signs or symbols.
Observe the range of purposes for which the learner communicates.	The learner uses language both to seek and to provide information.

Tell/show others what will happen next with some support and can report simply what has just happened	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
In a situation of changeover between activities.	<p>The learner correctly selects symbol for next activity and shows to others to indicate what will happen next.</p> <p>The learner uses simple communicator spontaneously to indicate that an event has just happened, or to tell themselves that it is about to happen.</p> <p>The learner must be giving information at a basic level, rather than asking for something.</p>

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Assessment activities/things to try

Initiate a 'conversation' and repeat words or phrases if not understood	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
Observe the learner's communication in a wide range of situations.	The learner (sometimes) proactively initiates a conversation or changes the topic to something of interest to them.
Pretend to misunderstand the learner's utterance.	The learner uses language to repair a misunderstanding, <i>e.g. by repeating what they said or by elaborating.</i>

Listen and respond to others in familiar contexts, asking questions to obtain simple/specific information	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
During circle time, learners take turns to tell news.	The learner waits to listen to another person's contribution in a discussion or conversation.
Adult prompts: 'What do you think of John's news?'	The learner comments on another person's contribution.
Adult prompts: 'What shall we ask John?'	The learner asks 'where' and 'what' and 'which' questions.
Teaching strategies (to move learner to this step)	
In a structured group situation, <i>e.g. for a topic looking at animals and their habitats</i> , provide learners with sets of pictures showing animals and their habitats. Model a question format such as 'Where does a fish live?' or 'What lives in a nest?' or 'Which animal has wings?'. When all have had a turn at answering, give one learner the role of asking the questions. Then pass the role around the group, so that all have the chance to ask a question in a format that has been modelled.	

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Assessment activities/things to try

Respond appropriately to simple requests involving attributes (e.g. <i>'big'</i> , <i>'dirty'</i>), possessives (e.g. <i>'my'</i> , <i>'your'</i>) and prepositions (e.g. <i>'in'</i> , <i>'on'</i> , and <i>'under'</i>)	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>For 'big' or 'dirty'</p> <p>Place the following four items in front of the learner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – big plate, small plate, big cup, small cup <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – clean plate, dirty plate, clean cup, dirty cup. <p>Ask learner to, for example, 'Give me the little box' or 'Give me the dirty plate', etc.</p> <p>Replace all items each time before asking again and provide no visual clues.</p> <p>For 'in', 'on' and 'under'</p> <p>Position items (a) on the table directly in front of the learner and items (b) a little further away.</p> <p>Items (a): sweet, brick, key. Items (b): box, cup.</p> <p>Ask the learner to, for example, 'Put the key in the cup' or 'Put the sweet under the box'. Replace all the items each time.</p>	<p>The learner gives the appropriate item or places it appropriately for each instruction.</p>

Ask for additional information within a structured activity and incorporate in a new response	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>In an activity such as food technology or enterprise where a shopping list needs to be made, arrange things so that the learner has to ask what items are in stock and then tell someone which items need to be bought.</p>	<p>The learner asks for information, e.g. <i>'Have we got eggs?'</i>.</p> <p>The learner listens to response.</p> <p>The learner formulates a new response, e.g. says <i>'We need eggs'</i>.</p>
Teaching strategies (to move learner to this step)	
<p>Use photos of items to reduce memory load. Assign supporting roles to other learners. For instance, one learner could pick photos of items from a pile and add them to a list, another could look for items in the cupboard.</p>	

Routes for literacy – Oracy

Assessment activities/things to try

Use words/signs and phrases for a range of purposes	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>Observe and record the learner's expressive communication in a wide range of contexts.</p> <p>For what purpose(s) do they use words/signs/symbols?</p> <p>For example, to express:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – specific information – an observation – an opinion – an evaluation – a question. 	<p>The learner uses words/signs for a variety of purposes to express their response to different activities across the curriculum.</p>

Find symbol/picture for desired item and add to phrase on sentence strip or tablet computer	
Assessment activities/things to try	Things to look for
<p>Prepare pictures or symbols and make available in ‘PECS’ book or in pc or tablet computer software.</p> <p>Pictures or symbols include ‘I want’ as well as preferred items.</p> <p>(PECS Phase 4)</p>	<p>The learner chooses picture or symbol for ‘I want’ from an array of pictures or symbols, places it in correct location on sentence strip then chooses a picture or symbol for the preferred item and places this in correct location on sentence strip. Gives strip to communicative partner.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Creates two-symbol phrase on pc or tablet computer.</p>