


**Giving the Gift of Reading:**

The Progression of Oral & Written Language & How to Foster it in a Montessori Environment

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"The World is full of magical things,  
Patiently waiting for our senses,  
to grow sharper."

William Butler Yeats, Irish Poet  
1865-1939

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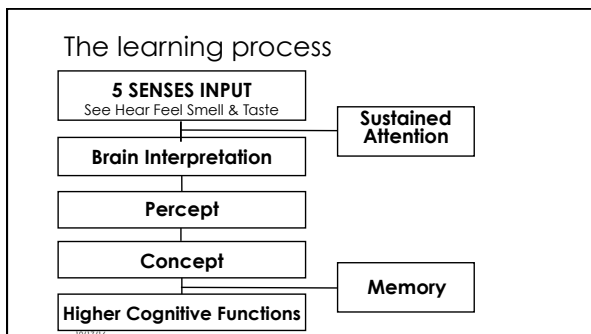
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## The gift of reading

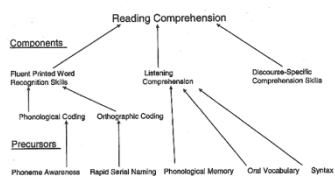


FIGURE 6.1. Reading comprehension: Cognitive components and their precursors.

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## Oral Language Development




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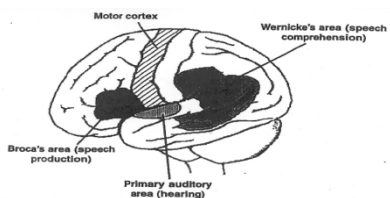
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## Areas of the Brain related to Language Development



From Introduction to Communication Disorders, 2nd ed. (p.97), M.N. Hedge, 1995

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## The Development of Oral Language

### Speech and Language

#### Oral Language

- Receptive
- ✓Listening
- ✓Processing
- ✓Understanding

- Expressive
- ✓Form
- ✓Function
- ✓Content

#### Speech

- Articulation
- ✓Disorder
- ✓Delay

- Voice

- Fluency

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## The Development of Oral Language

Age	Stage of Development
0-3 months	crying, cooing
3-9 months	babbling
9-12 months	echolalia
12 months, 1 year	first word

Vocabulary develops from birth – 5 years  
 Enters 1<sup>st</sup> grade : 2,500 – 5, 000 word vocabulary  
 Now, child seeks to refine grammar and usage

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## The Preschool Profile

### 12 Months:

- Makes different vowel sounds
- Makes different vowel and consonant combinations
- First word
- Vocalizes to the person who talks to him – dawning of social skills and function of communication




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## The Preschool Profile

### 24 Months:

- Asks for item by name
- Answers: "What's that?" with name of object
- 2-3 word phrases "more juice"

### 36 Months:

- Asks questions
- Answers: "Where is it?" with prepositional phrases
- Answers: "What do you do with a ball?"
- Tells about something with functional sentences: "me go store"




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## The Preschool Profile

### 48 Months:

- Answers: "Which one do you want?"
- Answers: "If-what" & "what-when"
- Answers questions about function: "What are books for?"
- Tells grammatically correct sentences.

### 60 Months:

- Asks "how" questions
- Answers verbally to "Hi" and "How are you?"
- Tells something using past and future tense
- Tells about something using conjunctions to string thoughts together.




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## The Preschool Profile

### 72 Months:

- Child will have acquired basic grammatical structures including plurals, verb tenses & conjunctions.
- Following this developmental ability, child practices with increasingly complex descriptions and conversations.




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## The Development of Oral Language

Words  
Phrases – Sentences  
Following Directions  
Associations  
Synonyms  
Antonyms  
Definitions  
Multiple Definitions  
Language of Reasoning

From simple  
to  
complex




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## Multiple Definitions




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## Language of Reasoning




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## Early Signs of Oral Language

- Delay in articulation of sounds
- Delay of syntax or word order

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## Early Signs of Oral Language

- Difficulty attending to spoken language
- Example: Not interested in circle time, either because of attention problems or difficulty understanding what's being said.




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## Later Signs of Oral Language

- Difficulty following directions in class



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## Later Signs of Oral Language

- Difficulty in word retrieval, can't organize what they want to express
- Difficulty retaining information when presented orally – strategy is to use multisensory + language & repetition of precise language



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## Later Signs of Oral Language

- Difficulty figuring things out. Can repeat rote, but not able to manipulate information (problem solving)
- Difficulty reading or difficulty with reading comprehension



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## The Development of Oral Language

### Oral Language Development Curriculum

- Body
- Family
- Clothing
- House
- Community
- Geography
- Time
- Animals
- Plants
- Food

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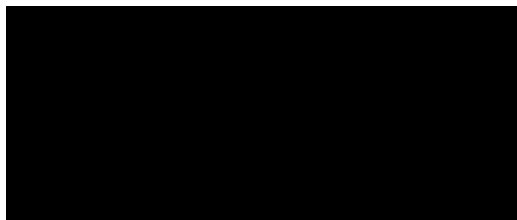
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## The Development of Oral Language



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## The Development of Oral Language

Teaching the language of everyday life, the environment, the world.

**Experience**

**Label – Attribute – Function**

**Category**

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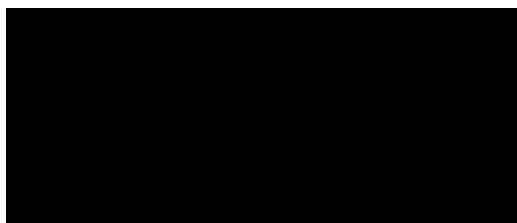
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## The Development of Oral Language



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### Tips for Talking

- Use a slower rate of speech
- Speak in shorter phrases/sentences
- Pause longer between sentences
- Give directions in shorter length and use more simple language
- Use visual whenever possible
- Allow time to process: count to 10
- Use a lot of repetitions
- Use of motor to enhance memory

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### Tips for Talking

Use the following as a guide for asking/answering ?s:

- If you ask an open ended question and the child does not respond after 10 sec:
  1. Ask the question again and give 2 choices If that does not work, then
  2. Ask a yes/no question
  3. Model the response or answer what the child should say If that does not work, then

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### From Oral Language to Literacy

- If oral language development is average or above average, the child is prepared to begin the written language process.

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## The gift of reading

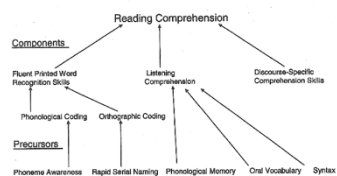


FIGURE 6.1. Reading comprehension: Cognitive components and their precursors.

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## Phonological Awareness & Rapid Automatic Naming




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## Quote from Lillard's Book: Montessori the Science Behind the Genius

"Research suggest that the quality of one's sensory discrimination capacities is influenced by by sensory experiences one has early in life.

Those experiences serve to organize cognitive structures in a manner that optimizes discriminatory capacity...

Since higher cognitive processes arise out of lower ones, cognitive organization early in development could have an important impact at higher levels of processing. A long held view...is that perception is the origin of all knowledge."

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## Phonological awareness



Attention to the sound structure in words.



Ability to segment and manipulate speech sounds.



"Phonological awareness is a crucial factor in predicting how easily young children will acquire reading."

Ulrich, "Phonological Awareness & Processing", MFTBLL, 2002.

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## Training the Ear to Perceive Sound

What does the Montessori environment offer to train auditory discrimination and perception of sound?




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## Hierarchy of Phonological awareness

Phonology is the awareness & recognition of sounds. **Training the ear to perceive sound is a critical 1st step:**



Characteristics of sound:

Loud/Soft      Fast/Slow      Tone: High/Low



Environmental Sounds:

Localization      Animals Objects



Human Speech Sounds:

Phonological Awareness Activities

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## Training the Ear to Perceive Sound

What more can we do?

- Pre-auditory activities
- Echoing sounds




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## Hierarchy of Phonological awareness

In each of the categories, **recognition precedes production**

- Rhyming
- Matching rhyme and alliteration
- Syllable blending & splitting
- Full phoneme segmentation
- Manipulation of phonemes

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## Hierarchy of PA - rhyming

- Starts with recognition:  
"Which words rhyme in this passage?"
- Move to generation:  
"Give me a word that rhymes with 'cat'."

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### Hierarchy of PA – rhyme & alliteration

- Starts with rhyme:
  - "Which two have the same rhyme?"
  - cat – mat – tap
  - "Which one is different?"
- Move to alliteration:
  - "Which two have the same beginning sound?"
  - no – nap – bit
  - "Which one has a different beginning sound?"

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### Hierarchy of PA – syllable blending

- Starts with compound words:
 

(air) (port)	(car) (pool)
~ airport	~ carpool
- Move to syllables:
 

(nap) (kin)	(drag) (on)
~ napkin	~ dragon

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### Hierarchy of PA – syllable splitting

- Starts with compound words:
 

cupcake	baseball
(cup) (cake)	(base) (ball)
- Move to two syllable words:
 

Monday	athlete
(mon) (day)	(ath) (lete)
- Move to multi-syllable words:
 

rectangle	animal	particular
(rec) (tan) (gle)	(an) (i) (mal)	(par) (tic) (u) (lar)

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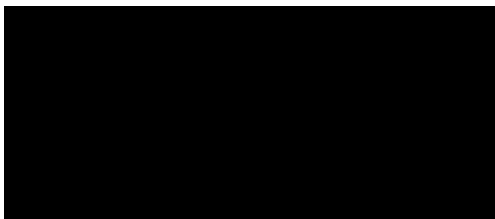
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### Hierarchy of PA - phoneme segmentation




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### Hierarchy of PA - phoneme segmentation




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### Hierarchy of PA – manipulation of phonemes

- Deletion of initial phonemes  
"Give me "cat" without the "k" sound = "at"
- Deletion of final phonemes  
"Give me "cat" without the "t" sound = "ca"
- Move to exchanging sounds\*  
"Give me "cat". Change the "t" to "p". What is my word?" = "cap"

*\* This is the 1st transition from phonological training to spelling.*

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## Manipulation of Phonemes




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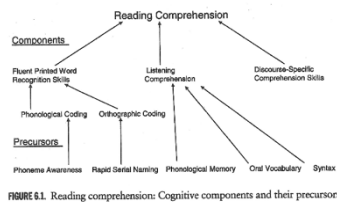
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## The gift of reading




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## Rapid automatic naming

- One key contributor is fluent printed word recognition, especially in the early years of reading instruction
- Foundation is in RAN of color, shape, color and shape, as these are qualities of visual perception
- Then move on to RAN of orthographic: letters, word families, words

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Rapid automatic naming

Color:  

Shape: 

Color & Shape:  

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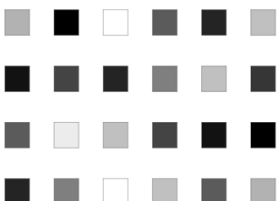
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Rapid automatic naming




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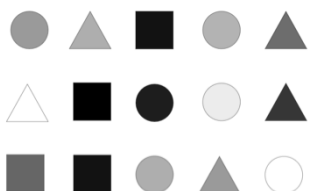
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Rapid automatic naming




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## The gift of reading

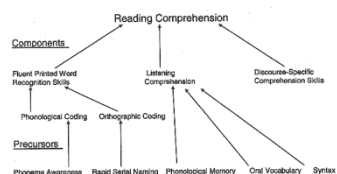


FIGURE 6.1. Reading comprehension: Cognitive components and their precursors.

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## Written Language Development




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## The sequence of written language

Human beings were not born to read. It took our species roughly 2,000 years to make the cognitive breakthroughs necessary to learn to read; a process that we expect children to acquire in roughly 2,000 days. (Wolf, 2007)

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## The sequence of written language

Stephen Pinker, a cognitive scientist, states:

**Children are wired for sound, but print is an optional accessory that must be painstakingly bolted on.** (Wolf, 2007)

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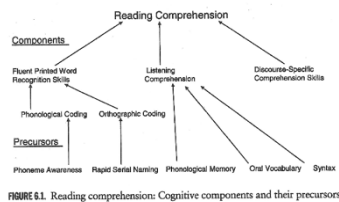
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## The gift of reading




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## The sequence of written language

- To acquire this unnatural process, children need instructional environments that support this remarkable invention of our species.
- Acquiring such ability takes a systematic process of instruction – both for those whose brains are poised to acquire it and for those who have brain systems that are organized differently. (Bishop, 2002)

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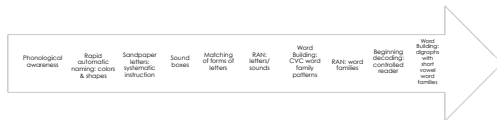
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## The sequence of written language



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## The sequence of written language

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"The World is full of magical things,  
Patiently waiting for our senses,  
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William Butler Yeats, Irish Poet  
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