

DID YOU KNOW AT 3 YEARS OLD I CAN...

Language Development

- Repeat words or sounds
- Follow simple storylines from pictures or books
- Sing and carry a tune
- Learn short rhymes and songs
- Speak clearly enough that strangers can understand me
- Use words to express how I feel
- Name most familiar things
- Understand words like "in," "on," and "under"
- Participate in "back and forth" conversations

I like to listen to short, familiar stories, so read to me daily. Help expand my vocabulary by adding new information to my sentences. "Yes, that is a flower. It is a bright, red flower." This will help me learn how to form sentences. You can also encourage me to tell you a story during reading time. This builds my creativity and vocabulary and gives me a sense of responsibility.

Encourage my imagination and creativity by playing make-believe with me, reading me stories, and letting me finger paint or draw on paper. Allow me to practice my developing literacy skills by giving me crayons and pencils and paper to write on.

Cognitive Development

- Understand the concept of now, soon, and later
- Ask who, what, when, where, and why questions
- Put together a six-piece puzzle
- Copy shapes with my crayons
- Recognize everyday sounds
- Match objects and pictures
- Identify primary colors like red, green, blue, and yellow
- Count one to three objects out loud
- Choose between two different choices
- Build towers of more than 6 blocks



Encourage me to count objects out loud, and help me if I need it. I can also learn my first and last names and begin to learn my parents' names. Help me learn colors by comparison. ("Yes, the school bus is yellow like a banana.")

Physical Development

- Throw and kick a ball
- Climb upstairs and downstairs while alternating my feet
- Walk, jump, gallop, tiptoe, and run short distances
- Walk backward or sideways
- Pedal a tricycle

Show me how to hop like a frog, waddle like a duck, gallop like a horse, and run like a cheetah. This will help me connect learning with fun while encouraging physical activity. Make sure I am fed healthy meals. Limit the amount of juice I drink because it has a lot of sugar. I should have an appropriate serving of fruits and vegetables each day. To prevent me from overeating, allow me to stop eating once I am full and do not force me to make a "happy plate."



Social/Emotional Development

- Accept suggestions
- Follow simple directions
- Imitate and observe your actions
- Play with other children (I still like to play alone. I do not cooperate or share well yet, but I am learning how.)
- Take turns in games

Give me choices and let me choose. (Let me choose between two different shirts to wear to school or two different healthy options for a snack.) Model appropriate behaviors, like wearing a seatbelt or talking to others respectfully.

Self-Help Skill Development

- Put on my own shoes, but I cannot tie the laces yet
- Use the toilet
- Undress myself and need help dressing
- Feed myself (I am still a messy eater!)
- Open doors by myself
- Wash my hands by myself
- Brush my teeth by myself
- Help you with simple chores

Be patient while toilet training. I am beginning to learn to use the toilet by myself (boys may learn later than girls). I may still have accidents or wet the bed at night. Encourage my independence by buying clothes that I can pull on and off by myself.

Teach me how to brush my teeth each day, and make sure it is part of my daily routine. Even though I will lose my baby teeth, this will establish a healthy, daily routine and keep my gums healthy.

Teach me basic safety rules like looking both ways before I cross the street and holding a caregiver's hand while crossing the street or walking in parking lots. Also, teach me not to talk to strangers, unless they are community helpers (like a police officer or firefighter).

Play this "My Baby Bumblebee" fingerplay with me:

I'm bringing home my baby bumblebee (cup hands, bouncing them to the beat)

Won't my mommy be so proud of me

I'm bringing home my baby bumble bee

Ouch! It stung me! (open hands and look)

I'm squashing up my baby bumblebee (squash it with hands to the beat)

Won't my mommy be so proud of me

I'm squashing up my baby bumblebee

EEEW! It's all over me! (open hands and look)

I'm wiping off my baby bumblebee (wipe hands on legs)

Won't my mommy be so proud of me

I'm wiping off my baby bumblebee

Look! All clean! (open hands and show)



Teach me a new song!

*Five little monkeys swinging in a tree,
Teasing Mr. Alligator, "You can't catch me!"
Along comes Mr. Alligator as quiet as can be
And SNAPS that monkey right out of that tree.
Four little monkeys swinging in a tree...
(Continue until there are no monkeys left)
Away swims Mr. Alligator as full as can be.*

Here are some books that I may enjoy:

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin Jr.

The Pout Pout Fish by Debra Diesen

The Poky Little Puppy by Janette Sebring Lowrey

The Runaway Bunny by Margaret Wise Brown

I Love You Through and Through by Bernadette Rossetti Shustak

The Very Hungry Caterpillar and others by Eric Carle

Miss Mary Mack and the Lady with the Alligator Purse by Mary Ann Hoberman

Max's Breakfast and others by Rosemary Wells

Sleep helps me grow and develop. I should get 10–13 hours of sleep a day.

There are games you can make for me using things from around the house, like a **color-match game**.

Materials

- markers
- paper
- construction paper
- scissors (adult use only)

Instructions

1. Color squares in different colors on a piece of paper.
2. Cut out squares of different colored construction paper to match.
3. Show me how to match the colored squares to the colors on the paper, making it a game.

Make a bowling game for me!

Save paper towel rolls. You can even let me decorate using markers and construction paper!

Set them up and allow me to roll and knock them down with a paper ball from scratch paper or old newspaper—or let me use a soft ball.

Safety note: Any toys or materials that can fit inside a paper towel roll can be choking hazards for infants and toddlers. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, any object handled by young children should be at least 1.25 inches in diameter and 2.25 inches long.

Remember that each child develops at his or her own rate, and this handout is meant only as a guide of what to expect of your child's development at this age.

For more information about parenting and developmental milestones, contact your county Extension office or visit **extension.msstate.edu**.

References

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