

**Performance Standards for Adventures in Language
Program I - Beyond Words – ages 2 to 6**

**Performance Standard
1304.21(b)(2)(ii)**

Rationale: Children acquire and develop communication skills through observation and practice. They learn verbal and nonverbal means of communicating needs, thoughts, and feelings by imitating the behaviors of others.

Guidance: Adults encourage language development by engaging children in a variety of songs, stories, poems, books, and games.

Adults develop realistic expectations of children's speech and language by:

- Engaging children in the use of verbal and nonverbal methods of communication;
- Using descriptive language and behaviors during routine activities . . . to build a foundation for the use of language; and
- Responding to young children's first attempts at conversation by expanding on their vocalizations or gestures.

**Performance Standard
1304.21(a)(1)(i)**

(a) Child development and education approach for all children.

(1) In order to help children gain the social competence, skills and confidence necessary to be prepared to succeed in their present environment and with later responsibilities in school and life, grantee and delegate agencies' approach to child development and education must:

(i) Be developmentally and linguistically appropriate, recognizing that children have individual rates of development as well as individual interests, temperaments, languages, cultural backgrounds, and learning styles;

Rationale: Abilities, interests, temperaments, developmental rates, and learning styles vary among children. The program environment, therefore, is arranged to accommodate a variety of children's needs and strengths, and to stimulate learning across all domains of development: social, emotional, cognitive, and physical.

Guidance: Program responsiveness to individual children is accomplished through comprehensive curriculum and by providing various materials, activities, and experiences that support a broad range of children's prior experiences, maturation rates, styles of learning, needs, cultures, and interests. Adults respect diversity among children by being responsive to children's cues — being especially sensitive to the development of growing infants and toddlers, and the need to design activities reflective of the observed stages and interests of children. Toward that end, the following strategies are useful:

- Supply a variety of materials and planned activities designed to encourage individual and group play;
- Provide continuous opportunities for children of all ages and abilities to experience success;
- Increase the complexity and challenge of activities, as children develop; and
- Observe children carefully to identify their preferred ways of interacting with the environment, taking into account their
 - skills in handling objects and materials,
 - frequency of conversation,

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**Performance Standard
1304.21(a)(3)(i)(E)**

(E) Supporting and respecting the home language, culture, and family composition of each child in ways that support the child's health and well-being; and

Rationale: Incorporating the home language and culture throughout the curriculum supports the development of social competence and demonstrates respect for the values and beliefs of the family. Understanding and respecting the culture, social background, religious beliefs, composition, and childrearing practices of each family supports social and emotional development.

Guidance: Adults give children a sense of acceptance of diversity by:

- Fostering each child's language development, including Standard American Sign;
- Using strategies to sustain and expand the home language, while children are in the process of learning English;
- Learning key words from the child's home language and their English equivalents; and
- Providing books and materials that reflect families' home languages and culture, as well as that of others in the community.

**Performance Standard
1304.21(a)(4)(iii)**

(iii) Promoting interaction and language use among children and between children and adults; and

Rationale: Children develop language skills by communicating with others; and they use verbal and nonverbal communication to share feelings and to express ideas.

Guidance: Adults model communication by listening, by engaging in conversation, and by providing interesting experiences that extend language skills and vocabulary. Adults provide a climate in which children communicate effectively by:

- Respecting children's developing skills in English and in their home language;
- Understanding the language development of young children, including the importance of supporting the home language;
- Using simple, clear sentences when conversing with an infant or toddler, and using more complex language with older children;
- Using a variety of strategies for children to learn new and interesting vocabulary, and to expand their language skills through songs, games, poems, and stories from their own and from other cultures;
- Modeling appropriate language use, such as complete sentences and correct grammar; and
- Expanding upon, rather than correcting, children's speech.