



The Communication Trust
Every child understood

Speech, Language and Communication Progression Tool

Age 5-6

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Background

What are the Progression Tools?

This tool is part of a set of Speech, Language and Communication Progression Tools designed to help identify how children are progressing with their speech, language and communication skills at key ages. We know some children can have speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) that can impact on their ability to listen, understand and express themselves. However, it's not always easy to judge how well a child is progressing with these skills; children may have good skills in one area whilst struggling in others. They may be quiet, struggle to make friends or seem confused in lessons. Alternatively, their difficulties might be seen in other ways, such as poor behaviour or difficulties with literacy.

This Progression Tool aims to provide a way of determining where children are in relation to their age and provides more information about how these vital skills are progressing.

The Progression Tools are not a diagnostic tool and do not in any way replace the detailed speech, language and communication assessment carried out by a speech and language therapist that some children will need.

However, they will give you information to help you decide whether children would benefit from a targeted intervention or whether they need specialist assessment and support. They also enable you to give more detailed information as part of a speech and language therapy referral should this be necessary.

How were the tools developed?

They were developed by specialists in speech, language and communication in collaboration with mainstream class teachers, teaching assistants, SENCOs and school leadership teams. The content of the tools is based on The Communication Trust's *Universally Speaking* booklets. You can find out more about the booklets at www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/resources.

The Progression Tools were developed to support schools to find out in more detail about the speech, language and communication skills of individual pupils. The tools have been tested out in a number of mainstream schools, on a range of children. Teachers, speech and language therapists and support staff have used the tool and given feedback. Feedback from all practitioners has been invaluable in shaping and improving this final tool.

What do the Progression Tools look like?

There is a set of 9 Progression Tools, which highlights children's language skills at the following key ages of development: 3, 4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10 and 11 in primary school, and 11-12, 13-14 and 16-18 in secondary school. These are the ages at which research has given us the clearest information about expected milestones.

It's suggested that the Progression Tool relevant to the child's age is used in the first instance but if that is proving too challenging for the child the tool for a younger child can be used instead.

Each tool covers different aspects of speech, language and communication:

1. Understanding spoken language
2. Understanding and using vocabulary
3. Sentences
4. Storytelling and narrative
5. Speech
6. Social interaction

You can decide to do all aspects or selected areas, depending on your concerns. However, it's suggested that going through all aspects of speech, language and communication will give more detailed information, possibly highlighting areas of concern that may otherwise be missed.

For each aspect of speech, language and communication there are two types of information gathered: one through direct questions with the child and one by capturing your own observations or knowledge of the child.

How can they be used?

The tools can be used as part of a staged approach to help identify children with language needs. Research has shown these children are often under-identified or misidentified in schools as language difficulties can be difficult to spot.

A teacher's knowledge of typical language development is important for knowing what to expect in spoken language skills. This is because spoken language skills can have a direct impact on literacy and wider learning.

The *Universally Speaking* booklets can be a good starting point to look at the class as a whole to see how their language is progressing. The Progression Tools can be used as a step on from this to spend more time with individual children and determine in more detail their language strengths and needs.

Some schools have used the tool with whole class groups to help them understand the level of speech, language and communication skills across year groups. Others have trialled them with specific groups of children who have either gone on to have a targeted intervention or have been referred on to speech and language therapy.

Who should use them?

The tools are designed to be used by non speech and language specialists, such as teachers, teaching assistants or others who regularly work with children. We would recommend careful reading of instructions and familiarisation with the tool before using it directly with children. If in doubt, we would suggest seeking advice from a specialist, such as a speech and language therapist, or seeking training to ensure staff use the tool correctly.

Using the tool

The tool is designed so that you are able to work through the question sections easily with each child. You can then complete the scoring section, working out the child's total scores afterwards, when you are able to reflect on their answers. There is space for you to repeat the tool at a later date, allowing you to monitor progress. There are two columns next to the questions in each section.

Repeating the tool

There will be a tick icon above the columns for questions that require a tick icon rather than a written answer, see below.

Use the first column to score the questions the first time you use the tool. Use the second column when you repeat the tool (this is optional).

res. Now point to the pictures I am talking		
	✓	✓
our chips		
	/4	/4
	/5	/5

The tool includes:

- This reference booklet, containing:
 - Background and other information
 - Summary table
 - Direct questions that are carried out with the child (for reference)
 - Observations section (for reference)
 - Scoring guidance
 - Profile charts for individuals and groups (for reference)
- In addition to the reference booklet, all pages that you need to write on have been included separately. These 5 'items' are in greyscale form so that they can be photocopied easily for each child. These include:
 - Summary table (item 1)
 - Direct questions that are carried out with the child (item 2)
 - Observations section (item 3)
 - Profile chart for individuals (item 4) and groups (item 5)

Practical steps to using the tool

1. Decide which tool to use (based on the child's age)
2. Use the summary table (item 1), direct questions (item 2), observations section (item 3) and the profile chart (item 4) included in the greyscale documents
3. Work through the direct questions with the child - some questions can be marked immediately with a ✓; for other questions, you need to write down what the child says
4. Carry out the observations / complete observations section based on your knowledge of the child
5. Use scoring guidance as outlined below to see how the child has done
6. Transfer scores to summary table (item 1) and profile chart (item 4)

For direct questions, staff should talk to children on a one-to-one basis and note down their responses on the form. There is information with each question to support administration of the tool;

- Statements relating to what children should be able to do based on developmental norms for their age are at the beginning of each section in white text
- What adults need to say or ask the child is in **bold**
- Additional information or guidance for staff administering the tool is in *italics*

The observations section asks more general questions about how the child communicates in other situations, such as in the classroom. This is to be completed by a member of staff who knows the child and who is able to make realistic judgements through observations or knowledge of the child.

Special note - The questions are based on what all children should be able to do by the time they are between 5 and 6 years old. It can be surprising for staff if children don't do well or struggle to answer particular questions, though the tool is designed to help highlight the language children are able to understand and use.

The mixture of direct questions and observations ensures a more balanced and realistic judgement of the child's language skills.

Prompting

For some of the questions, you may find that the child needs additional support to answer correctly. For example, you may wish to repeat the question if this helps the child to provide a response. It is also acceptable to give the child an example if they are struggling to answer the question. If you do need to give the child any additional support (such as repeating the question) you should write this down in the score section next to the relevant question.

Scoring

- Guidance is given to work out a score for each question
- Scores are added together to give a total score for each aspect of language
- These totals can be summarised in the summary table and / or plotted on to the profile chart

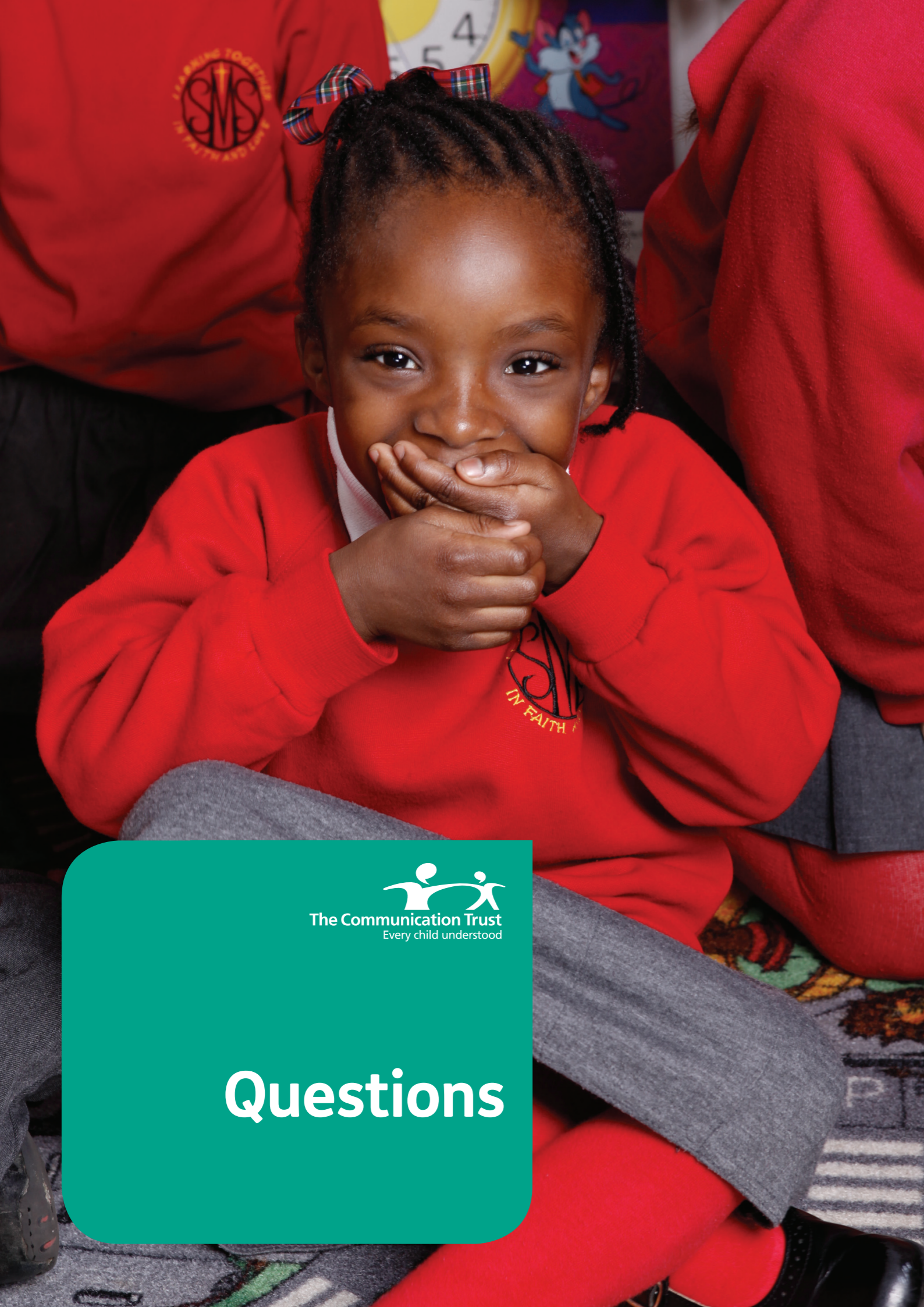
Although examples are given to support marking and scoring, it is impossible to give every response a child might make. It is useful therefore to have a look at what they are expected to be able to do; this is stated at the beginning of each question. Use this, the guidance and the examples to help you score the answers.

It would be useful to read through the specific scoring guidelines starting on page 29 before you use the tool.

Special note - Remember that all children of this age should have at least this level of ability if they are at age appropriate levels. The questions have been carefully developed and tested to ensure they are at the right level for each specific age.

Scoring

Step 1	<p>Direct questions can be marked in two ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Some items can be marked correct with a ✓ which can be done immediately as you present the questions to the child ● Other items need you to write down what the child says as you will mark this after the test is complete 	To be completed with the child on a one-to-one basis
<p>Special note: You should write down what they say as accurately as possible. It is important not to add words, but to write down just the words they say. For example, if they say, 'me go shop', don't be tempted to write 'me go to the shops', 'I go shop' or even 'me go shops'. Often when we know children well, we interpret what they mean. However, for this task it's important to write just the words they say.</p>		
Step 2	Complete the observations questions (optional)	To be completed by a member of staff who knows the child and who is able to make realistic judgements through observations or knowledge of the child
Step 3	For those questions you marked with a ✓, add up how many they got right for each question	To be completed after the questions (without the child present)
Step 4	<p>Check out the specific scoring guidelines</p> <p>Once the items above are marked, consult the specific scoring guidelines to identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How to work out scores for these direct questions ● How to score the items where you write down their responses ● How to work out the final score for each area of language. See p31 for details 	To be completed after the questions (without the child present)
Step 5	Add up total scores for each aspect of language	To be completed after the questions (without the child present)
Step 6	Copy their total scores on to the summary table and the profile chart	To be completed after the questions (without the child present)




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Questions

Progression Tool summary table

Name of child	Date
Date of birth	Age
Questions completed by	
Observations completed by	
Gender	
First language	

Score Summary	Date		Date repeated	
	Questions	Observations	Questions	Observations
Total understanding score				
Total vocabulary score				
Total sentences score				
Total narrative score				
Total speech score				
Total social interaction score				