

### Kindergarten Oral Language Development: Problem Solving

Developmental aspects	Emerging With direct support... 	Developing With guided support... 	Applying With minimal support... 	Extending 
The Child	With direct support may listen to and use language for play and collaborative learning. May not have enough language for conversation to be meaningful.	With guided support listens to and is beginning to use language for play and collaborative learning. Is beginning to participate in conversations.	With minimal support uses conventional language for play and collaborative learning. Is able to contribute to conversations.	Adjusts language use for play and collaborative learning. Uses language for a range of purposes and actively contributes to conversations.
<b>Knowledge of the Sounds of Language</b>				
Problem solving	With direct support may use language to problem solve.	With guided support uses language to problem solve.	With minimal support uses language to problem solve.	Without support uses appropriate language to problem solve.
The Support/Scaffolding*	<b>The Model:</b> showing, instructing, explaining, directing, making explicit, demonstrating, giving examples	<b>The Coach:</b> structuring, sequencing, focusing, cueing, guiding, organizing, supporting	<b>The Advisor:</b> suggesting, reminding, prompting, monitoring, asking for elaboration	<b>The Mentor:</b> extending, stretching, wondering aloud, exploring, "what if-ing"
*a variety of supports (teachers, peers, environmental, etc.) can be provided at any stage of development				

**Scenario:** Four students (three boys and one girl) have taken two tubs of plastic marble arches and marbles to the construction area in the classroom. They have decided to build a tall tower and to test out the speed of the marble tracks. Cooper has assumed the lead role in directing their play, and is the first to start building. Finn and Isaiah are following his directions. Eryn is unsure of her role in this group of boys. The students are problem solving as they work. Discussion so far has focused primarily on mathematical problems (symmetry, number concepts, fair shares). Compliance, respect and compromise are also being negotiated.

-  **Direct Support**
-  **Guided Support**
-  **Minimal Support**
-  **Without Support**

Eryn appears unfocused until Cooper provides direct support by giving her *explicit instructions* that help her to get involved. He says, "Eryn, find us the wheel piece and two red tracks." Then Isaiah counts the marbles and determines that there are not enough for the task. He *directs* Eryn to ask the teacher for eight more marbles.

The desired height of the structure is reached and the students take turns testing the marble tracks. A difference of opinion results regarding whose turn should be next. They wonder if Finn has taken two extra turns. The teacher provides guided support by *structuring* a process for the group to select a new person to go first and to follow around the circle in order after that. He *coaches* them through a new round of turns by *cueing* them to look and see who will be next after each person takes their turn.

When the students again experience difficulty with taking turns, the teacher provides minimal support by *suggesting* that they could build a second tower so everyone would have more turns. The group discusses this idea but rejects it. They experiment with a number of other solutions to their problem, including sending two marbles down the track at the same time. For this solution, two students each put a marble down when the third calls, "Go!"

Finn and Isaiah discover that the tower is lopsided. Without support, they *explore* possible solutions. They scaffold one another's thinking by *wondering aloud* and asking, "What if...," and eventually decide to match the pieces identically on each side so there will not be a gap at the top of the structure. They use the language of symmetry by talking about how each side of their structure needs to be the same.



 ...development may be viewed as an increasing capacity for self-regulation, not so much in the specifics of individual behaviours but in the child's ability to function more independently in personal and social contexts. Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000, p. 26, In *Children's Play: The Roots of Reading*, p. 164