

Lead Examiner Report 1901

January 2019

**BTEC Level 3 National in
Children's Play, Learning and
Development**

**Unit 2: Developing of Children's
Communication, Literacy and
Numeracy skills
(31598H)**

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What is a grade boundary?

A grade boundary is where we set the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade, at Distinction, Merit and Pass.

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the external assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries – this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark is for a particular grade.

When our experts set the grade boundaries, they make sure that learners receive grades which reflect their ability. Awarding grade boundaries is conducted to ensure learners achieve the grade they deserve to achieve, irrespective of variation in the external assessment.

Variations in external assessments

Each external assessment we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries for each assessment, because then it would not take accessibility into account.

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, are on the website via this link:

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Unit 2 – Development of Children's Communication, Literacy and Numeracy Skills (31598)

Grade	Unclassified	Level 3			
		N	P	M	D
Boundary Mark	0	12	25	39	54

Introduction to the Overall Performance of the Unit

Examiners commended centres for their hard work in preparing their learners and taking heed to the comments made in previous reports. The work produced on the whole was of a satisfactory standard, however there was evidence, during this series that showed learners sometimes put too much unnecessary detail into their responses.

Centres need to encourage learners to make succinct points in response to the tasks or otherwise learners tend to penalise themselves by running out of time. It was noted that a few centres were providing their learners with additional sheets of plain paper which were not authorised. If additional sheets are needed these must be the authorised additional sheets which are provided by Pearson and they must be fully completed.

Centres should increasingly make more use of the case study, it is designed to provide learners with a good idea of what they should research to complete the three tasks.

Centre should also encourage the learners to address the information which is required for each task; as an example, additional language needs were appearing in Activity 1 as opposed to Activity 2.

Individual Questions

The following section considers each question of the paper, providing examples of learner responses and a brief commentary on the rationale behind the marks given.

Activity 1

All questions relate to the task brief which provides the information for learners to apply when responding to the activity. This section is always based upon an Ofsted Report which the early years setting has received. Learners are asked to produce a report in response to the Ofsted report. They are required to:

- further develop systems of observation and assessment of each child to plan for the next steps in all areas of their learning and to monitor their progress to complement their development.
- review how staff can support the two to three-year-old children in their development of speech, communication and language.
- further link speech, communication and language to the children's cognitive development.

The first part of activity 1: 'further develop systems of observation and assessment of each child' was, unfortunately by some learners, ignored or skimmed over. As a result, responses could not be assessed any higher than Level 2 mark band as not all the activities had been addressed. In contrast other learners presented some good work for the second aspect which was supported by Vygotsky.

In general the second part of the activity was addressed well, with responses showing ways in which staff can support two to three year olds in development of speech language and communication. Some learners however tended to diverge into providing activities here, however in general it was pleasing to note that the work was age related.

The final part of the activity involved links to cognitive development, with the more able learners linking this to Information Processing Theory or the work of Piaget. It is essential that learners refer to theory within this section, however the theory should be linked to the activity. Examiners have noted that a number of learners appeared to be including theory which was not linked to the activity. Credit could not be given to Skinner in this section as it had very little if any relevance, whereas learners who

referred to Piaget and Information Processing in relation to cognitive and Bruner's LASS theory and/or Chomsky's theories in the final aspect of the activity were credited positively.

It was noted that learners were wasting their valuable time by copying the detail of the activity into their response and this cannot be credited.

The following response was awarded a total of 17 marks composed of 8 marks for recommendations (Level 4 mark band) and 9 marks for justification of recommendations (Level 3 mark band) as the learner had addressed all three aspects of the question and supported the responses with justification and theory. The learner has completed the first aspect of the activity very well and has woven applicable theory into her work.

Activity 1: Ofsted report response

Caiman Road Nursery's latest Ofsted report

Jenni, the Deputy Manager at Caiman Road, has just received the latest Ofsted report. The quality of provision is overall good but some areas require improvement. The report states that to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundations Stage the provider must:

- *further develop systems of observation and assessment of each child to plan for the next steps in all areas of their learning, and to monitor their progress to complement their development*
- *review how staff can support the two to three-year-old children in their development of speech, communication and language*
- *further link speech, communication and language to the children's cognitive development.*

Produce a report responding to Caiman Road Nursery's latest Ofsted report, making recommendations to address issues raised. Justify these with reference to early years theory.

*This report is for the deputy manager at Caiman Road,
containing recommendations in light of the issues raised in the
recent ofsted report.*

The report states the setting should further develop systems of observation and assessment of each child to plan for the next steps in all areas of their learning, and to monitor their progress to complement their development. It is recommended that in order to 'plan for the next steps' the staff at Cairn Road should be aware of theories such as Vygotsky's zone of proximal development which explains children have a gap between what they are able to do unassisted this is their zone of actual development. And their zone of proximal development, which is what can be achieved with adult support. Vygotsky also says there should be a continuous cycle of observing and planning their next steps. Meaning that when children are doing explorative play or completing activities the practitioners should observe each child's behaviour in order to assess what they can do individually and what areas they need support. Staff could also create more time for one-on-one sessions in order to assess a child's progress over time and identify any need for additional support. Practitioners should allow child-initiated opportunities such as allowing children to bring something of theirs into the setting to observe ~~how~~ the child's holistic development and

Plan activities in order to provide opportunities for their next steps of development to be introduced and observed. Staff should also be aware of Piaget's universal stages of development and apply this knowledge of sensorimotor, pre-operational and concrete operational to observe the expected milestones and support children to develop and acquire skills.

The report also claims the setting should review how staff can support the two to three-year old children in their development of speech, communication and language.

Practitioners can do this through having knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Profile which specifies: "Children listen attentively in a range of situations. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaging in cycle of observing and planning their next steps.

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The report also claims the setting should review how staff can support the two to three-year old children in their development of speech, communication and language.

Practitioners can do this through having knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Profile which specifies: "Children listen attentively in a range of situations. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaging in

another activity." Practitioners can apply this knowledge with their practice on working with two to three-year olds as this can help promote their development of speech, language and communication. Practitioners should also be made aware of theories such as Chomsky's language acquisition device which explains children have an innate ability to learn and understand the rules of language. Meaning that all children's language development follows a pattern, staff can support children with this by providing a language-rich environment for example presenting labelling displays and word banks, have ~~word~~ conversations with children and ask open ended questions.

Activities such as playing a game of opposites where one child says a word and the other has to say the opposite promotes language, speech and communication development as it develops children's vocabulary and provides a language-rich environment which is vital for their development.

The report also states the setting should further link speech, communication and language to the children's cognitive development. Staff within the setting can do this if they are provided with knowledge of theories such as Vygotsky who claims that learning is an active process where cognition and language development are linked as they are a result of social interaction. Practitioners can

help promote the inter-linked development of language and cognition through Sustained Shared Thinking, where adults and children talk during play and activities to support exploring ideas and work together to problem solve. This is vital as language is key to cognitive development.

The setting can further the link between speech, language and communication to children's cognitive development by building up children's vocabulary as it boosts cognition. Which can be included in the settings everyday routine for example including a word of the week and having conversations with the children to role model good communication, speech and language skills.

In conclusion, the areas that require improvement according to the recent Ofsted report means it is recommended the setting uses knowledge of theories such as Skinner's operant conditioning theory to reinforce children with positive rewards when they reach milestones of development in order to promote and support their holistic development as it is all inter-linked.

Activity 2

Activity two was an individual case study relating to Hari who is almost five years old and has language delay. She is becoming isolated and this is affecting other areas of development. Learners were asked to produce a set of actions to support Hari.

It is most important that learners read the question and understand what is needed. Learners were also not thinking through responses, with many including devices such as 'hearing loops' and others diagnosing 'Hari' as 'being autistic' which were not relevant.

Stronger responses were able to make reference to Hari's isolation and provided suggestions to ensure that all areas of development were addressed.

The example below makes some reference to the actions which can be put in place for Hari although this is limited. Although there is a lack of theory the examiner has credited 'language rich environment'. The work has been awarded six marks in total. The learner should have related their response to other areas of development.

Activity 2: Child case study

*Hari is **almost five years old** and has language delay. She communicates mainly through pointing and touching.*

Jenni is aware of the impact that Hari's language delay is having on her other areas of development. She wants to ensure that Hari does not become isolated and also to provide her with the support she needs.

Produce a set of actions that Jenni can do to support Hari. Justify the actions with reference to early years theory.

Jenni can work with a speech and language therapist to help Hari with her language delay. She can do this by talking to Hari's parents about Hari's delay and what they are doing to

support her. They can work out together what support they can give Hari in place within the nursery. They can also work out what the parents can do at home and what Jenni and the staff can do at nursery.

Jenni can work with Hari on a one to one basis to encourage her language. She can ask Hari simple questions when she points to something like pointing to other children and asking her

simple questions such as do you want to play with the other children. Jenni could use little cues to try and get

Hari talking more. While being in a one to one basis Jenni could listen to Hari when she talks and try and encourage her to talk more. Having positive body language can support speech as it makes the children want to talk as you look interested.

Jenni could talk to the other staff and come up with a routine that Hari can have to help pick up her language such as at 12pm Hari

has a one to one with Jenni where they can do different activities to support her language. They can also do different types of activities in small groups with other children to keep supporting her other areas of development.

Jenni could make the nursery a language rich environment by putting up labelled posters and word banks to promote children's curiosity, having a reading area for the children to read and having story times and

and letting children pick different books to read each day and asking them about the story to get everyone engaged.

Jenni could ~~get~~ the 4 other members of staff fully qualified so that they will be more aware of how to help her's language development.

In contrast the following example has addressed the requirements of the activity and has been awarded a total of twelve marks. The learner has applied the EYFS and linked it throughout and has responded to the activity appropriately. The learner has additionally used the case study to develop her response, centres are reminded that the case study is in place to assist learners to enhance their responses.

Activity 2: Child case study

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Jenni is aware of the impact that Hari's language delay is having on her other areas of development. She wants to ensure that Hari does not become isolated and also to provide her with the support she needs.

Produce a set of actions that Jenni can do to support Hari. Justify the actions with reference to early years theory.

To support Hari, Jenni can provide her with a one on one key worker. This will help Hari as she will always have someone there asking her questions and talking to her to prompt communication. Hari will slowly form a relationship with her key worker and will gain the confidence to talk to them instead of just pointing and touching. The EYF3 states that "Every child can be strong and independent through forming positive relationships." So by Hari forming a positive relationship, she will start to feel more strong, confident and independent which will result in her talking more. This justifies her having a key worker as it is best practice as it's worked with other children so should hopefully work with her.

Jenni could also provide Hari with extra time being spent on her other areas of development. By spending extra time on her Physical, ~~intel~~ cognitive, emotional and social as well as targeted areas such as

numeracy and literacy, ~~for~~ Jenni will be able to ensure that Hari's language delay isn't impacting them, and if it is she will be able to help guide Hari into understanding and developing these areas more. Using resources such as books, counting blocks and role play, Hari will be able to use the skills she already has and be asked questions about them to develop her language. Such as Hari using her cognitive skills to read and explain a book to someone or her using her fine motor skills to connect counting blocks and then be prompted to discuss how many there are, what colour they are, ect. Jenni needs to remember that ② "Children ~~are~~ develop and learn in different ways and at different rates," so Hari might just need to be given extra time on tasks so that she isn't being isolated and is still doing all the same activities and lessons as the other children.

Jenni could also communicate and interact with Hari's parents to ensure that she has the support needed at home as well as at school. The EYF's states that ③ "Every child deserves the best possible start in life to help support and fulfil their potential" which means that in order for Hari to reach her full potential, she needs to be supported

from all aspects of her life. Jenni could set Hari tasks to do over the week at home so that she can ensure her parents/carers are trying to help. For example, the task may be to read a book aloud to her carer, and then write a few sentences about what happened in the book.* This will ensure that Jenni knows Hari is having support from home and that Hari is understanding what she is ~~reading~~ reading as she will need to use her cognitive and fine motor skills to write about it or draw ~~it~~ about it.

Another action that could take place is Hari working in groups with her classmates. This will support her language development as all the children will be talking and discussing the activity so she will ~~just~~ be encouraged to join in so that she doesn't feel left out of the group. This will also help other areas of development as the group activity may be during literacy or numeracy or physical education so she will be developing other areas while also developing her language and communication. The role of the adult in this will be to ensure that Hari is joining in and taking part so that she isn't isolated and alone the whole time.

* or draw a picture.

Jenni could also use the schools new ICT equipment to aid Hari. She will find it exciting to be able to go onto online learning games such as an addition game or a storybook game and be able to play and discuss what she has to do in the game. By her explaining what to do, she is developing her cognitive skills as well as her language skills because she has to think about what she has done and figure out how to explain it to someone. The role of the practitioner is to allow Hari to be able to 'teach' them how to play the game so that she is processing and understanding what she has had to do. This is supported by the EYFS as it states that basing the curriculum around "interests of each individual child, they will become more focused, purposeful and engaged in activities," so by Hari being able to pick her own learning game she will be invested in what she is doing and will enjoy playing and explaining the game to others.

Activity 3

Throughout activity 3 learners were required to plan two activities which are appropriate for two to three year olds and relate to numeracy development. Centres should note that there are a large number of marks to be accessed for Activity 3. The choice of activities should be related to numeracy and be age related. Provisions for children with additional language needs children should also be included within the two activities. Examiners have noted that some learners are providing provision for 'additional needs' this however is too generic and does not adequately respond to the activity.

Examiners remain concerned that learners are losing a large amount of marks for not responding to all aspects of the activity as they have not provided a plan. Likewise some activities were not suited to numeracy or age related. As in previous series, it appears that learners have devised an activity and have attempted to apply it to numeracy later rather than devising the activity around numeracy: such examples include playing in sand.

Activities cannot be credited if they are seen to be a health and safety risk, however examiners have noted that many learners are now including health and safety aspects into their planning and this is to be commended. Centres should now take this forward and encourage learners to think through activities, as an example, instead of using counters, or acorns, which could be a health and safety hazard to younger children, learners could use larger objects to enable the children to count .

Application of theory still tends to be weak with learners making reference to either Skinner or Vygotsky and in some instances, without any application.

Examiners are now very pleased to be seeing the planning of the activities, this in itself enables learners to gain marks because they are including relevant information, albeit learners must remain vigilant that the activities are both age related and address the activity requirements. Templates for the plan are not required but can be used if this would assist learners to produce appropriate responses. These can be found in the Practical Evidence Portfolio (PEP).

The following example was awarded 14 marks out of a total of 28. The activities are appropriate with all aspects covered in relation to the requirements of the task however the theory lacks development for higher credit. The learner has made good use of planning.

2 → sort objects out.

Activity 3: Designing activities

Design **two** activities to support numeracy development for the children aged from **two to three years old** at Caiman Road Nursery, some of whom have additional language needs. The activities should use the setting's resources and include the role of the adults. These activities must be age appropriate and supported by theory.

Vygotsky
Bruner

→ know whats big / little.

← 3 → 1 to 10 identify shapes

count clips & jumps

Activity Title: Object sorting

Adult: child ratio: 1:4

Area of learning: Numeracy development

Age of children: 2 years old

Proposed learning outcomes: Be able to successfully sort the objects out into colours and then into size of bigger and smaller.

Brief description of activity: There will be 3 buckets with labelled colours on one side and size on the other. The children must sort the objects out into colours first then into size. If the children are able to they could count how many is in each bucket.

Resources: 3 buckets, labels of red, blue, yellow and big, medium, small * And sized.

Variety of coloured objects to match the labels. An open large table space.

Language input: The child will be able to possibly describe what the object is by colour or size, they can then talk between their group which they think is bigger or smaller which introduces conversational speech and social speech linking to Vygotsky's theory. Vygotsky says social speech and private speech are

both separate until the age of three years old. After some children may possibly be able to count the objects which brings in language.

Individual needs: There are some children with an additional

Language who may need extra support. The nursery could put the child's home language, English and a picture onto the label so that the child is able to understand what is being asked of them and learn the English as well. The teacher supervising the adult could model what the children need to do so they can visually understand as well, they are also there to support them doing the activity if needed.

Health and Safety: The laminated labels may have sharp edges on them so the nursery staff need to ensure that none of the children scratch or cut themselves on them. If the labels fall on the floor they will become a slip hazard to everyone in the setting so the children and staff need to make sure that doesn't happen. The buckets will be a huge trip hazard to anyone so they need to be on the table at all times.

Role of the adult: The adult supervising the activity must set up the activity, carrying out a risk assessment for the area. They then should explain what the activity involves and possibly demonstrate to the children. If there is any children with ^{an} additional language they should clarify with them they understand what to do but ask for any help. Finally, they should supervise the activity ensuring nothing falls onto the floor and tidy away after. If they have any concerns about a child's progress they should discuss it with another member of staff.

Activity Title: counting jumps and steps outside.

Adult Child ratio: 1:4

Area of Learning: Numeracy development

Age of children: 3 years old

Proposed learning outcomes: Be able to successfully count to 10

and possibly further on.

Brief description of activity

~~Brief description of activity~~: The children should jump onto different coloured spots and count how many they jumped on to. The next time they could step onto them or hop onto them to practice counting.

Resources: variety of coloured spots spread out outside, Big outside area.

Language input: The language used will be counting from 1 to 10, possibly saying the colours of the spots, "more" or "less" if the children become competitive. Also using private and social speech, private speech which is their own thoughts within their head and social speech what they used outside with other people.

Individual Needs: Some children have an additional language so this activity may seem challenging. By the teacher demonstrating what to do the child/ren can visually see what's happening and have a clearer understanding. The teacher could pair them with a student who has English as their home language to do the activity with. This links to Vygotsky's "apprentice learning" by learning from other children, the child with an additional language could ^{start} learn how to count to 10 from them.

Health and Safety: The spots could be a trip hazard when the children are running around or jumping, the teacher must watch carefully for anyone being silly. If it is wet outside it could be a slip hazard so they could move the activity to another day.

If it is a hot day the staff must ensure the children have protective clothing and sun cream and are hydrated to prevent sun stroke or any other illnesses.

Role of the adult: The ~~children~~^{staff} need to ensure they have carried out a risk assessment to make sure it is safe. They should set up the activity, explain it to the children and give a demonstration, especially for those with an additional language. They should then supervise the activity so that no injuries take place and if so correctly record them in the accident book. After that they should put away the activity.

Summary

Centres may find it useful to link delivery of this unit with the following units:

Unit 9 Observation, assessment and planning,
A1 The importance of observation and assessment,
A2 Planning for children's development
B1 Observation recording methods
B2 Carry out and record observations of children
B3 Make accurate assessments of children .

Also links with,

Unit 5 Keeping children safe A2, C2
Unit 6 Children's physical development care and health needs A2
Unit 7 Children's personal social and emotional development A1, C1
Unit 8 Working with parents and others in early years C1

The Key Person Role is identified in,

Unit 7 Children's Personal Social and Emotional Development
A2 The Key Person approach.

Also links with,

Unit 5 Keeping children safe C1
Unit 6 Children's physical development care and health needs A2
Unit 8 Working with parents and others in early years A2, B1
Unit 9 Observation, assessment and planning, A2, C3

Further links for developmental milestones can be found in the following units,

Unit 1 Children's development
B1 Physical development
C1 Theoretical Approaches
D1 The self, others and place in the world

Plus links with

Unit 9 Observation, assessment and planning A1, B3

Links with

Unit 14 Montessori Approached in early Years A2, B1
Unit 19 Digital Technologies In early years Practice A1, B1, C1

Further Support for planning activities can be found in:

Unit 11 The Early Years Foundation Stage

B1 Learning and Development Requirements

B2 Assessment Requirements

D1 Support Children's Learning and Development Towards the Early Learning Goals

Also links with

Unit 3 Play and Learning B3

Unit 6 Children's Physical Development Care and Health Needs B1

Unit 9 Observation, Assessment and Planning A2, C1, C2, C3

Unit 12 Children's Development Outdoors A2, B1, B2, C1, C2



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