

# **L3 Lead Examiner Report 2001**

January 2020

**L3 Qualification in CPLD**

**Unit 2: Development 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.

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### Unit 2: Development of Children’s Communication, Literacy and Numeracy Skills (31598H)

Grade	Unclassified	Level 3			
		N	P	M	D
Boundary Mark	0	11	22	36	51

## Introduction

This is the fifth series for Unit 2.

Examiners were generally pleased with the work which learners produced this series and 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 good standard, however there are still a substantial number of learners who are producing too much writing in which there are limited relevant points. Learners must focus on the activity requirements if they are to be credited for their work. Where examiners see good work they are happy to reward the learner positively, however marks cannot be given for inaccurate or inapplicable content.

Examiners also noted that knowledge of theory was, in a fair number of cases extremely limited and this was losing some learners vital marks. It is imperative that the entire unit specification is delivered including theoretical considerations and that learners are taught how to apply these theories appropriately.

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. This is a useful tool as it provides learners with good guidance as to which aspects of the specification the activities on the paper are likely to cover. Learners must read the three activities carefully and respond to them by providing the requested information within that activity.

In general application of theory remains weak; centres should note the breakdown of marks awarded for each activity, as examples in the first two activities the reference to theory and examples of best practice can achieve twelve out of the possible twenty marks for each of the activities. Examiners are still noting that a large proportion of learners are naming theorists without any application, others are providing either incomplete or inaccurate information. Unfortunately, statements such as ‘Vygotsky is a social theorist’ or ‘scaffolding’ without any further application to the activity will receive minimal if any credit. Having said that centres are to be commended for ensuring learners understand the examination techniques required to successfully complete longer questions to access a good range of marks.

## Individual Questions

### 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:

- *Ensure staff are aware of child development theory and best practice to understand ways in which children’s speech, communication and language are linked to cognitive development*
- *Provide the children with further opportunity to develop language skills using both outdoor and indoor facilities*
- *Work effectively with parents and carers to encourage enjoyment of literacy*

The first aspect of the task: Ensure staff are aware of child development theory and best practice to understand ways etc tended to be done well by learners who read the question and understood that this was about how staff could be made aware of child development theory. They had correctly used the case studies to suggest Mrs Langley who had expertise within this area could perhaps provide staff training, incorporating relevant cognitive theories of which there was a good choice including for example: Vygotsky, Piaget, Information Processing Theory and Chomsky. High ability learners then explained the theory or theories they had chosen and how it applied to the understanding of children’s speech, communication and language. Many learners referred to Skinner for which they could not be credited.

Learners tended to complete the second part of the activity by providing some useful recommendations. Forest Schools were a popular response for outdoor activities. Sometimes learners did not provide examples of activities but just stated a variety of tasks needed to be completed with reasons why. Common responses were role play, circle time and reading books.

The final section on working with parents to promote literacy included information on sending books home, toy library, work sheets, language activities, parents coming in to read with the children, keeping parents informed about the child’s development stage. Sometimes there was reference to parents not speaking English, this was not however valid as it was not mentioned in the case study. Some learners referenced family income being below average and therefore parents would not be able to afford books, games etc. hence it was important for the School to help the parents by allowing them to borrow books/games/activities, which indicated the learners had used the case study well.

In general learners tended to cover the recommendations aspect of the activity well. However the quality of Justification of Recommendations varied in quality across the cohort with some learners not referencing early years theory, or tending to provide a list of theories

and a description in the introduction to the activity but not threading the theory through the three tasks with the result that many did not achieve good marks in Activity one as a whole. Centres should not encourage learners to copy out the activity, this is wasting their valuable time and cannot be credited.

The following example is typical of an average response. In the first task, the learner has not provided ways to ensure staff are aware of theory, they have however gone on to explain Chomsky’s theory and how it relates to cognitive development. In the second aspect, the learner has described the use of enriching activities and linked them to outdoor activities although this is weak. Skinner and positive reinforcement is then applied; although this is not relevant, the learner may well have gained some benefit from developing and applying Chomsky’s theory here. Indoor activities have been described on page four, with some relevant points which are not supported by theory. In the final aspect, there is evidence of a number of appropriate recommendations, however these are not supported by theory.

The work sits in Band 2 for Recommendations and just in Band 3 for Justification of Recommendations, with 11 marks having been awarded in total.

**Activity 1: Ofsted report response**

The head teacher has just received Weaver Street Nursery and Primary School’s latest Ofsted report. The quality of provision is good but some areas require improvement. The report states that to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- Ensure staff are aware of child development theory and best practice to understand ways in which children’s speech, communication and language are linked to cognitive development.
- Provide the children with further opportunities to develop language skills using both outdoor and indoor facilities.
- Work effectively with parents and carers to encourage enjoyment of literacy.

Produce a report responding to Weaver Street Nursery and Primary School’s latest Ofsted report, making recommendations to address the issues raised. Justify these with reference to early years theory.

(20)

All staff <sup>at weaver street</sup> should be aware of Theories that link to a child’s cognitive development. If staff are unaware, it can greatly affect the provision and education for these children. For example, The Theorist Chomsky states that children have a critical period to learn language in. After a set amount of time, children lose the ability to ever gain <sup>or absorb</sup> all that language in. Most of the language they are surrounded by. Chomsky also says that children have an LAD (Language - Acquisition Device), where once a child is exposed to language, it activates. Staff need to ensure that they are continuously speaking to the children and planning activities that promote their language. A child’s cognitive development is <sup>to do this</sup> their memory and ~~problems~~ how to problem solve. If they are not surrounded by



plenty of stimulating language and activities from a young age, it will be much harder for them to develop their cognitive development when they get older.

In order for children to develop their language skills, staff at Weaver street Nursery and Primary school need to ~~have~~ plan enriching and developmental opportunities for the children to progress.

A good example that can be done outside, ~~in the o~~ using the outdoor facilities can be in the woodland ~~gardening~~ areas. These activities can be mostly child-led, ~~so~~ practitioners can follow the child's interests and ask them questions about how many flowers they see or how much mud they want to dig up. By <sup>also</sup> giving children encouragement and following their interests, practitioners are creating a language rich environment. Furthermore, Skinner highlights the importance of ~~awarding~~ <sup>giving</sup> children positive reinforcement when they have shown to you that they are capable / have done something worth praising. ~~Even~~ A child is going to want to communicate that much more, if they know they are being awarded praise and making their teachers happy.



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Turn over ►

Lots of Parents / <sup>carers</sup> ~~the~~ believe that it is only the school's job to ensure their children are reading and practicing Literacy. This is not the case. Literacy needs to be practiced at home with the child's parents / carers to ensure it is ~~being~~ <sup>installed implemented properly</sup> ~~practiced~~ <sup>regularly</sup> and that the child understands it all.

For children to want to do anything, they mostly need the helpful encouragement of a parent - / carer. It is the same with Literacy. children will not be motivated to practice it if it is not practiced <sup>regularly</sup> ~~regularly~~ at home and seen <sup>as</sup> ~~important~~ important. Staff at Weaver street can provide parents with leaflets on how ~~to~~ Reading and writing is so important, & suggest books families can read together. They can also run sessions on developing Literacy to give ~~ent~~ Parents / carers the full insight on why it is so important and crucial. A great way to encourage enjoyment of Literacy is for the children to pick a story they want to be read to before bed. It is following the child's interests and motivating them to listen and want to read because they enjoy it.

Another For the Indoor facilities, a good ~~way~~ opportunity to develop language skills

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is ensuring that there is reduced background noise. A child is not going to speak if they can barely hear their own teachers.

small spaces <sup>like a reading corner or small table, is also good.</sup> ~~are~~ Staff speaking slowly and clearly is great because if a child is ~~very nervous~~ socially aware of others hearing, they won't have to worry. speaking slowly and clearly is effective because a child will not get confused. Another idea is songs and rhymes. children love these as they see them as fun, but as well as that, they help them to speak and learn language. Story sacs are also good because they prompt children, not force them to speak. For example, The Information Processing Theory says children construct understanding from experiences using their short term / working memory. If a child ~~is~~ has read a book with a Weaver street Practitioners, and then played ~~p~~ did a story sac with their teacher or class, it is giving the children the idea meaning of a story and bringing it to life. This will retain the information and help them to think creatively.

(Total for Activity 1 = 20 marks)



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Turn over ►

## Activity 2

Activity two is an individual case study relating to Arthur who has just turned three, he is having difficulty with communication skills which is impacting on the child’s social and emotional development. Learners are required to produce a set of actions that can help the child’s communication skills and support his emotional and social development.

Activity two was not done well by a good number of learners as they did not respond to what was required adequately. It is most important that learners read the question and understand what is needed. The child in this case was three, therefore activities involving reading were not appropriate, examples are still being noted of learners still not thinking through responses carefully.

Some learners referenced Arthur having a key worker and suggested Ms Masoud as the ideal person because of her awareness of the impact on his social and emotional development. When considered the key workers role was described with some reference to theorists, relevant actions were discussed.

However, not all learners were able to provide suitable actions and many just concentrated on Arthur’s communication without referencing support for his emotional and social development. Occasionally social was considered by learners but not emotional. Sometimes information on speech therapists and special needs co-ordinators was given together with a possibility that Arthur had hearing problems or was from a home where English was not spoken, this was not relevant.

A variety of theorists were discussed but not always with application to the identified actions. Skinner, Vygotsky, Bruner, Bandura, Chomsky, Bowlby and Ainsworth were frequently seen. Actions identified included circle time, small groups, one to one interaction from the key worker or adult, role play, activities that involved Arthur’s interests, reading, sing nursery rhymes, language rich environment with labels, colourful displays, visual timetables and providing a buddy. Sometimes the recommendations made reference to early years theory and included stages from the EYFS but were not sufficient to access the higher mark bands. A few learners discussed in detail what would happen to Arthur if his communication, emotional and social needs were not met instead of providing a set of actions. Work with Arthur’s parents was included by some learners who discussed work done in school to be continued at home with suggestions for the parents to take Arthur to after school clubs, visits to the zoo etc. so he had something to talk about during circle time. This could not be credited as the activity relates to the role of the adults within the nursery and not to the parents.

In the following example the learner has referenced the EYFS in relation to Arthur’s age. Vygotsky has been used to justify the actions with other children, there are implied references to emotional development; observations, assessments and interaction with parents are developed. The final page justifies Arthur as being a ‘special helper’ and its role in supporting

emotional and social development. The range of recommendations made were seen to cover all aspects of the activity, hence the work was placed in Band 3, for Justification of Recommendations, the recommendations were fully justified and supported by explicit and sustained links to early years theory. Band 4 was awarded, with the learner being credited with a total of 17 marks.

**Activity 2: Child case study**

Arthur is **three years old** and has been attending Weaver Street Nursery for three months.

Arthur is having difficulty with communication skills. Ms Masoud is aware that this is having an impact on Arthur's social and emotional development.

Produce a set of actions the school can take to help develop Arthur's communication skills and support his emotional and social development.

You must:

- *suggest actions that exemplify best practice*
- *describe the resources required*
- *describe the role of the adults within the nursery*
- *justify your actions with reference to early years theory.*

(20)

The staff at Weaver Street Nursery should assign Ms Masoud to be Arthur's key practitioner within the nursery. The EYFS states that, at 3 years old, "children seek comfort from familiar adults". By having someone he can always talk to, Arthur is more likely to feel confident into expressing his emotions and using his communication and speech to do so. Ms Masoud should greet him each morning helping him familiarise with the setting. "Children aged 3 show confidence in asking for help" - EYFS. This means as his confidence grows so will his ability to willingly communicate.

Staff at Weaver Street should also encourage children to play with a variety of friends

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from all backgrounds so that everyone is included. Ms Masoud could introduce Arthur to two extroverted + outgoing pupils from the nursery who will be able to have a positive affect on Arthur's communication. As Vygotsky stated "language learning is an active process developed as a result of social interaction". Arthur mixing with children confident in communication will encourage him to do the same at the same time preventing him from feeling isolated from the other children in the group.

Staff should also introduce a quiet / restful area within the nursery where children are able to reflect and calm down if needed. Excessive exposure to high levels of language and communication could discourage and overwhelm Arthur therefore having a quiet place for him is also important. Vygotsky raised the importance of "private speech" in his theory. Children also talk to themselves which can occur in the quiet areas. This way Arthur will not be overwhelmed



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and will be more likely to grow confident in communication.

Staff at Weaver Street can conduct regular provision between Arthur's parents to keep track of his progress. "A child of 3 years is aware of their own feelings" - EYFS. Arthur's parents can be asked to ask him questions about the nursery at home. Arthur should be able to express how he is feeling and pass this information onto his parents which can then be passed onto the staff. Parents can also inform any worries Arthur has so staff can alter his experience in the nursery to suit his needs.

Staff at Weaver Street can also conduct observations and assessments of Arthur's development to track his progress. For example, staff should recognise Arthur's symbolic play / role play - often pretending to do something could be expressing how they are truly feeling. (stated by the EYFS) His levels of communication should be compared each week and further

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decisions / actions should be conducted by the staff as a result of this.

At 3 years "children are able to understand simple instructions". Staff could assign Arthur the role of a "class helper" asking him to do helpful activities throughout the day such as bringing the teacher a book from the bookshelf, giving everyone a pen to draw with. This will help Arthur's communication as he will be exposed to a variety of people where his speech + language skills can be practiced. Arthur will also feel included as he has an important role which would positively help his emotional and social development.

(Total for Activity 2 = 20 marks)



### Activity 3

For activity three learners were required to plan two activities which are appropriate for four year olds to five year olds and which relate to reading.

Centres must note there are a large number of marks to be accessed for Activity 3. 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 reading or were not age related. As in previous series, it appears that learners have devised an activity and have attempted to apply it to reading later, rather than devising the activity around the given activity. This strategy very rarely works well and learners should be provided with scenarios such as those on past papers to practice developing relevant responses.

Centres are reminded that the learners must devise the activities themselves; examiners are a little concerned that in a few instances the entire cohort from a centre were using the same activities; where this is the case examiners are instructed to refer the learner work to the malpractice department for further investigation.

Activities cannot be credited if they are seen to be a health and safety risk. Examiners have noted that many learners are now including health and safety aspects into their planning and whilst this is to be commended, where activities contain hazards such as children being near hot stoves, no aspect of that particular activity will be credited. This measure is being taken to ensure learners are not credited for activities which may harm a child. Centres should now take this forward and encourage learners to think through activities a little more.

Some learners used a format for the activity plans making them easy to read and to find the relevant information however, a large number are still writing paragraphs of text or sometimes a page with no paragraphs or headings.

Activity plans included story sacks, role play, computer programmes or apps, treasure hunts for letters or words in the outdoor area or in sand trays, word bingo, flash cards, snap games, drawing pictures and adding a sentence to explain the picture, group reading, teacher reading to a group or class sometimes with justification, following instructions for activities.

A few learners just provided plans for the teacher reading one to one in the library and a couple indicated tasks the parents could do at home. Quite a few writing activities were discussed and some that had no reference to reading skills – art and craft activities, making models from twigs.

Popular topics for various activities were – Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Going on a Bear Hunt, The Hungry Caterpillar, Three Little Pigs and The Gruffalo, centres must note that the activity must relate to reading skills or no matter how much effort the learner has put into it, it cannot be given much, if any credit.

Quite a large proportion did not consider activities for children with lower abilities and only mentioned it, likewise the role of the adult tended to be skimmed over with learners only briefly covering the role with comments such as: 'the adult would help children with

difficulties’ without any further development. Occasionally reference was made to wheelchair users, left-handed learners and English as a second language under the heading of ‘additional needs’, these were irrelevant as the activity did not request such additions and as a consequence they could not be credited.

A few learners who had produced detailed activity plans in a standard format discussed the learning that could be achieved in other areas of development – physical, social etc, once again, this was not requested in the activity and as a result could not be credited.

Not all learners referenced early years theory and when present included Chomsky, Vygotsky, Bruner and Skinner. Sometimes stages from the EYFS were indicated, this is good practice as it provides guidance to learners to ensure their plans remain age related. As in previous series, higher mark bands were often not accessed due to the weak justification of the planned activities. Application of theory still tends to be weak with learners very often making reference to either Skinner, Bandura or Piaget and in some instances, without any application. Chomsky also came up numerous times due to the use of ‘language’.

In this example, the learner has produced two detailed plans which take into account all aspects of the activity. The plans contain relevant information and are succinct with sections on differentiation being included which are relevant to children with skills which are typically lower. Both plans are appropriately age related and address all aspects of the given activity. For recommendations, full marks have been awarded for both activities, the plans have been well justified by the use of the EYFS however there is little reference to other theory which prevents the learner being awarded a mark in band 4 and as a consequence, full marks.

23 marks have been awarded in total

**Activity 3: Designing activities**

Design **two** stimulating activities to support the children's reading skills in the reception class. These activities must be in addition to reading the books within the library and should also be accessible to children whose skills are typically lower than those expected for **four to five year olds**.

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.

(28)

Activity 1 - Group production of the current "class story time" book.

Learning objective: - Use role play to show + develop children's understanding of reading books.

Rationale: Using Bruner's enactive mode of development which believes in learning through physical actions, the reception children will conduct a short, group role play activity where they act out a scene from the book they are currently reading for class story time - Goldie Locks and the three bears.

Resources: - 5 copies of the picture book (Goldie Locks) - one for each group.  
- costumes and wigs taken from the school role play boxes.  
- paper slips with child's name and role they have been given.  
- story props e.g. bowls of porridge  
- woodland area used outside as a stage.



Description of activity:

1. Children will each be given a slip of paper with their name, and the role they have been assigned. Their reading skills will be used as they work out which slip contains their name.
2. Children will be placed into groups of 5 by the teacher. A key practitioner will be independently working with each group.
3. Children will have approximately 2 sentences maximum to say.
4. Their lines will be given in bold font on slips of paper. As the EYFIS states children aged 4/5 can "understand basic, simple sentence structure".
5. Their scenes will be practiced as they use reading skills to read their lines out loud.
6. Each group will independently perform.

Role of the adult:

- Ensure each child has an appropriate role assigned to their ability + reading skills.
- Separate children fairly into groups with children that can help each other based on their age + stage of development.



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- Ensure all safety measures are met as children perform on the outdoor stage.

(May need to resort to the indoor stage if weather is inappropriate/unsafe)

Differentiation: For children whose skills are typically lower than those expected for 4/5 year olds the teacher could tactically place them into groups with higher reading ability who will be able to provide help for example with reading their name slip or their lines. The lines given to these children should also be simple and appropriate for their ability to avoid them making possible errors resulting in an effect on their self confidence.

Activity 2 - Group story time + individual comprehension using a story sack.

Learning objective: To test children's reading skills through their ability to answer book-based questions using a story sack.

Rationale: The EYF's states that adults can support 4/5 year old children by talking about what is happening in the book

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and asking them questions. During this activity, children will be able to show their understanding on contents of the book as well as not feeling under pressure as the reading of the book will be done by a teacher in a group.

Resources:

- BOOK (read to the whole class)
- STORY SACK (containing props linked to the story)
- LIST of specific questions about the book for each child. (Planned by teacher)
- BOOK CORNER - where the activity will take place.

Description of activity:

1. Children will sit down in front of the teacher's chair where they can all visibly see her and the book.
2. Teacher will proceed to read the book carefully ensuring everyone can see.
3. At the end of the reading, the teacher will use the story sack by taking out the props and discussing them with the children.
4. The teacher will begin the individual comprehension by asking each child a different question about the book e.g.



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"What was the name of the boy with blonde hair in the story?"

5. Using Skinner's theory of positive reinforcement to encourage good behaviour, the teacher will give praise to each child as well as a sticker for the correct answer.

Role of the adult: - Ensure each child can clearly see the book whilst reading.

- Ensure the book is read clearly and loudly so each child can hear.

- Consider that each question is age and stage appropriate for the children's reading ability.

Differentiation: To enable a fair experience for the children whose skills are typically lower than those expected for 4/5 year olds the teacher should ensure the comprehension questions are age appropriate and suitable for their reading ability. They should also be given plenty of time to respond and they should not be overcorrected if they get an answer wrong. According to Skinner, "overcorrecting can deter children from developing their speech."

(Total for Activity 3 = 28 marks)

TOTAL FOR TASK = 68 MARKS

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## 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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