

Concept Development Milestones

Knowledge of basic concepts is an essential component of language development. Basic concepts include terms that describe position, time, equality, quantity, and comparisons. Here is a summary of concept developmental milestones to guide your instruction.

Age	Milestones
1 – 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows simple spatial directions, such as <i>in</i> and <i>on</i> Understands <i>another</i> Uses simple directional terms, such as <i>up</i> and <i>down</i> Uses two or three prepositions, such as <i>on</i>, <i>in</i>, or <i>under</i>
2 – 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distinguishes between <i>in</i> and <i>under</i>, <i>one</i> and <i>many</i> Understands number concepts of <i>one</i> and <i>two</i> Understands size differences, such as <i>big/little</i> Understands <i>in</i>, <i>off</i>, <i>on</i>, <i>under</i>, <i>out of</i>, <i>together</i>, <i>away from</i> Begins to understand time concepts of <i>soon</i>, <i>later</i>, <i>wait</i> Selects three that are <i>the same</i> from a set of four objects Selects the object that is <i>not the same</i> from four objects with three of them identical Begins to use adjectives for color and size
3 – 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows quantity directions <i>empty</i>, <i>a lot</i> Follows equality directions <i>same</i>, <i>both</i> Understands <i>next to</i>, <i>beside</i>, <i>between</i> Identifies colors Matches one-to-one Points to object that is <i>different</i> from others Uses position concepts <i>behind</i>, <i>in front</i>, <i>around</i>
4 – 5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands comparative and superlative adjectives, such as <i>big</i>, <i>bigger</i>, <i>biggest</i> Understands time concepts <i>yesterday</i>, <i>today</i>, <i>tomorrow</i>, <i>first</i>, <i>then</i>, <i>next</i>, <i>days of the week</i>, <i>last week</i>, <i>next week</i> Understands <i>different</i>, <i>nearest</i>, <i>through</i>, <i>thin</i>, <i>whole</i> Identifies positional concepts <i>first</i>, <i>middle</i>, <i>last</i>
5 – 6 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands opposite concepts, such as <i>big/little</i>, <i>over/under</i> Understands <i>left/right</i> Understands number concepts up to 20 Answers "How are things the same/different?" Uses adjectives for describing Uses comparative adjectives, such as <i>loud</i>, <i>louder</i> Uses <i>yesterday</i> and <i>tomorrow</i> Uses adverb concepts <i>backward</i> and <i>forward</i> Uses prepositions <i>through</i>, <i>nearest</i>, <i>corner</i>, <i>middle</i> Names ordinal numbers, such as <i>first</i>, <i>second</i>, <i>third</i>

AutismInfo (www.autisminfo.com/milestones.htm#B); the Child Development Institute (www.childdevelopmentinfo.com); Nicolosi, Harryman, & Kresheck (2006); and Touhy, Brown, & Mercer-Moseley (2001)

It's common for children with communication disorders to be able to understand a particular concept word in one situation but be unable to carry that understanding over to a different situation. Just for Kids Basic Concepts (see page 115) presents concepts in a variety of settings to help youngsters generalize their learning. Click on FREE Downloads at linguistystems.com to print a complete unit from Just for Kids Basic Concepts and teach the concepts of same/alike/different in 18 different contexts!

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