

**Construct Progressions, Performance Descriptors,  
Rationale, and Alignment to Standards  
(NC Preschool Standards and NC Standard Course of Study)**

**Domain**

Language Development and Communication

**Claim**

Students can use and continue to develop effective listening and communication skills (e.g. verbal and non-verbal) for a range of purposes, audiences, and settings/contexts in increasingly complex ways.

**Construct**

Following Directions

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The examples given represent the intent of what a teacher or child might say during an exchange or conversation. The examples are to provide further clarification of the skill. Children's responses will vary (i.e. Skill: Indicates when something is not understood by gestures or asking "what?" The child may respond with, "Huh?")

DIRECTIONS		
Understanding	Skills	Performance Descriptors
Children understand how to respond to directions, requests, and commands in a variety of settings (one-on-one with an adult, one-on-one with a peer, small group setting, large group setting).	A. Responds with silence.	When a child hears a direction, request, or command given by the teacher or peer, the child does not respond with a verbal or non-verbal answer. When the teacher or peer repeats the same direction, request, or command to ensure the child has heard the statement, the child provides a cue (looking/glancing at the speaker, making eye contact) to indicate that the speaker has been heard, but the child still does not respond verbally or non-verbally. The child does not complete the request.
	B. Responds non-verbally to simple requests in a variety of ways (nodding, pointing, gesturing, facial expressions, eye pointing, sign language).	When the teacher says, "Would you please take this note to the office?" the child nods (gives thumbs up, takes the note and smiles, etc.) to indicate to the teacher an intention to take the note to the office. The child then completes the request.  When singing a song in the classroom that involves requests (e.g., "If You're Happy and You Know It"), the child does not sing but completes the request in the song (claps hands, stomps feet, etc.).
	C. Indicates when something is not understood by making gestures or asking "what?"	When the teacher or peer asks the child a question ("Do you have your lunchbox?" "Is your best friend Erika?" "Do you like apples?" etc.), the child asks, "What?" or makes a gesture (shrugs shoulders, raises/creases eyebrows and looks at the speaker, signs "what" using sign language, etc.) to indicate to the speaker the child does not understand what was asked or stated.
	D. When given visual cues, accurately follows an oral one-step direction that includes positional words:	In a variety of settings and situations, the child completes one-on-one directions correctly when provided with a visual cue.  <b>on, off, in, out, under</b> Examples:

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• on, off, in, out, under</li><li>• in front of, behind, on top of, bottom, before, after</li><li>• next to, between, above, below</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The teacher points (as a visual cue) and says, “Put the crayon under the paper.”</li><li>• When the child is working in centers, the teacher holds up a child’s journal and points to the journal basket and instructs the child who “owns” the journal to put the journal in the basket. The child then takes the journal and places it in the basket.</li><li>• When the child enters the classroom, the teacher says, “Good Morning. Remember to put your coat on the hook.” The teacher walks over and touches the coat hooks in the classroom while providing the directions. The child places coat on the hook.</li></ul> <p><b>in front of, behind, on top of, bottom, before, after</b> Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The teacher points (as a visual cue) and says, “Put the crayon in front of the box.” Child puts crayon in front of box.</li><li>• As children are gathering in the room for group time, the teacher walks over to a child and says (while pointing to John), “Would you please sit behind John?” The child sits behind John.</li></ul> <p><b>next to, between, above, below</b> Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The teacher points (as a visual cue) and says, “Put the crayon next to the box.” Child puts crayon next to the box.</li><li>• After the teacher reads <i>The Gingerbread Man</i>, children in a small group are engaged in creating their personal gingerbread man. After finishing with that activity, they bring their gingerbread men to use for a listening activity. The teacher has brought to the lesson some additional small items (hats, shoes, buttons, ties, mittens, etc.). The teacher gives oral directions to the small group of children. While holding the purple hat in one hand and the gingerbread man in the other hand, the teacher says, “Place the purple hat above the gingerbread man.” Child places the purple hat above the gingerbread man.</li></ul>
	E. <u>Without visual cues</u> ,	In a variety of settings and situations, the child completes one-on-one directions correctly

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	<p>accurately follows oral one-step directions that include positional words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• on, off, in, out, under</li><li>• in front of, behind, on top of, bottom, before, after</li><li>• next to, between, above, below</li></ul>	<p>without a visual cue.</p> <p><b>on, off, in, out, under</b> Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The teacher says, “Take the crayon and put it under the paper.” The child puts the crayon under the paper.</li><li>• When the child is writing a journal entry at the writing center where the teacher is located, the teacher says, “Great writing! Please put your journal in the basket.” The child then takes the journal and places it in the basket.</li><li>• When the child enters the classroom, the teacher says, “Good morning. Remember to put your coat on the hook.” The child places coat on the hook.</li><li>• When the child is exploring with Unifix® cubes in the math center, the teacher sits down beside the child and says, “Can you put the red cube on top of the blue cube?” The child places the red cube on top of the blue cube.</li></ul> <p><b>in front of, behind, top, bottom, before, after</b> Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As children are gathering in the room for group time, the teacher walks over to the child and says, “Would you please sit behind John?” The child sits behind John.</li></ul> <p><b>next to, between, above, below</b> Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The teacher says, “Take the crayon and put it next to the box.” Child puts the crayon next to the box.</li><li>• After the teacher reads <i>The Gingerbread Man</i>, children in a small group are engaged in creating their personal gingerbread man. After finishing with that activity, they bring their gingerbread men to use for a listening activity. The teacher has brought to the lesson some additional small items (hats, shoes, buttons, ties, mittens, etc.). The teacher gives oral directions to the small group of children. The teacher says, “Place the purple hat above the gingerbread man.” Child places the purple hat above the gingerbread man.</li></ul>
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	<p>F. Asks simple questions to clarify directions, requests, and commands.</p>	<p>When the teacher provides directions for an assignment, the child asks questions for clarification.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The class is sitting together during group time and, the teacher says, “When you get back to your seat, I want you to pull out your magnetic letters and whiteboard for Word Work.” The child says, “Can you say that again?”</li><li>• When a teacher is explaining how to complete an activity, child asks questions such as the following: “Why are we doing that?” “What is that for?” “What are we doing?” “What do we do after ...?” “Can you say that again?”</li></ul>
	<p>G. <u>With visual cues</u> (if needed), follows two-step directions.</p>	<p>Teacher gives directions while pointing (as a visual cue), “Take the crayon out of the box and put the crayon under the paper.” Child removes crayon from box and puts it under the paper.</p> <p>When the child is exploring with Unifix® cubes in the math center, the teacher sits down beside the child and says, “I can tell you like exploring with the cubes. It is great how you have connected many colors of Unifix® cubes together to make a tower. Handing the child a red cube and pointing to the blue cube if a visual is needed, the teacher says, “Place the red cube on top of the blue cube, and then put the yellow cube under the blue cube.” (The teacher hands to child the yellow cube and points to the bottom of the blue cube – if a visual is needed.)</p> <p>When the child enters the classroom the teacher says, “Good morning. Remember to put your coat on the hook and put your reading book on your table.” (The pictures for the morning routine are posted on a bulletin board. The teacher could point to pictures on the bulletin board if a visual cue appears to be needed.) The child places coat on the</p>

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		hook and places the reading book on the table.
	H. <u>Without visual cues</u> , accurately follows two-step directions.	<p>When the child is exploring with Unifix® cubes in the math center, the teacher sits down beside the child and says, “I can tell you like exploring with the cubes. It is great how you have connected many colors of Unifix® cubes together to make a tower. Place the red cube on top of the blue cube and then put the yellow cube under the blue cube.” The child places the red cube on top of the blue cube and connects the yellow cube under the blue cube.</p> <p>When the child enters the classroom before the tardy bell, the teacher says, “Good Morning. Please unpack your book bag and bring your lunch money to me.” The child unpacks book bag and takes lunch money to the teacher.</p>
	I. <u>With visual cues</u> (if needed), accurately follows three- to four-step directions at one time, and carries out the tasks over time.	<p>While posting a picture schedule for later reference, the teacher gives directions orally, saying, “Finish your math stations, wash your hands, and eat your snack.” Child accurately follows directions.</p> <div data-bbox="842 889 1661 1068"></div> <p>When the children are sitting together at group time, the teacher provides directions to the class about the tasks to be completed over the next hour. The teacher says, “Class, when I excuse you from the group, you will need to finish the math problems on your table, wash your hands, and eat your snack.” The child finishes the math problems, washes hands, and then eats the snack. (The teacher may choose to post picture reminders at the front board for children’s reference if assistance is needed.)</p> <p>When the child enters the room in the morning, the teacher says, “When you get to your seat, please take out your writing journal, turn to the next clean page, and begin to write a sentence about something you would like to share with me. Raise your hand when you</p>

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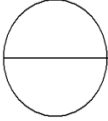

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		are finished.” The child is able to go to table, take out the writing journal, turn to the next clean page, and then write a sentence. The child raises a hand when finished. (The teacher may choose to use visuals on the front board by drawing or posting pictures of a table, writing journal, clean page, a child writing, and a raised hand.)
	J. <u>Without visual cues</u> , accurately follows three- to four-step directions at one time and carries out the task over time.	Teacher gives directions orally with NO picture schedule: “Finish your math problems, wash your hands, and eat your snack.”  When the children are sitting together at group time, the teacher provides directions to the class about the tasks to be completed over time. The teacher says, “Class, when I excuse you from the group, you will need to finish the math problems on your table, wash your hands, and eat your snack. The child finishes the math stations, washes hands, and then eats snack. <b>(No Visuals are given.)</b>
	K. <u>With visual cues (if needed)</u> , accurately follows multi-step directions (four or more steps).	When the teacher provides directions individually, in a small group setting, or a large group setting, the teacher explains the expectations for what the child is to complete. After ensuring the children are paying attention, the teacher gives the directions orally while providing a visual to post for the children to refer to later (visuals can be drawn on the board, printed pictures, etc.).  Example: The teacher says, “This activity will be completed with your partner.  Lay the shapes on your partner’s or the table.   Find two shapes that are the same.    Partition the shapes into equal parts.

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		 <p>Raise your hand when you are finished and I will come to you.”</p> 
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## ADDITIONAL

### RATIONALE

Children need to be able to listen carefully to a variety of language genres, including extended discourse (multiple sentences within a dialogue and narrative with adults and peers), and then children need to be able to communicate in ways that are understandable to both adults and children. These combined skills are foundational for later learning and literacy at home and at school (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). As most children enter school, these skills are well established within their home and community and must be adapted for the context of school. However, some children come to school with rich language at home and in the community that may not be as aligned with the **context of school** (Heath, 1983; Vernon-Feagans, 1996).

- For instance, some communities value dynamic, overlapping communication, where multiple speakers speak or jump into the conversation at the same time. Yet, school conventions require children to wait their turn, speak one-at-a-time, and often communicate directly to the teacher or adult. Children who do not have extensive practice with such turn-taking routines will benefit from explicit instruction in listening and communicating in order to learn and understand the **conventions of school** (Vernon-Feagans, 1996).

All children need to listen carefully to the details of instruction in the classroom and increasingly be able to ask and answer questions. In particular, children must be able to recognize when they do not understand and find ways to both verbally and nonverbally gain access to the information they need to learn. School should provide the opportunity for all children to communicate at length and complexly with diverse children and adults in a supportive way that provides scaffolding for both listening and communicating.

**Alignment to Standards (NC Foundations for Early Learning & Development and the NC Standard Course of Study (Common Core & Essential Standards))**

### **ELDS and CCSS relating to understanding:**

Understands how to respond to directions, requests, and commands in a variety of settings (one-on-one with an adult, one-on-one with a peer, small group setting, large group setting)

### **Goal LDC-1: Children understand communications from others.**

#### **Developmental Indicators:**

#### **Older Toddlers**

LDC-1h Respond when others talk to them, using a larger variety of words or signs.

LDC-1i Respond to gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, and some words that show emotions.

LDC-1j Follow two-step directions with visual cues if needed (“Pick up the paper and put it in the trash.” “Get your cup and put it on the table.”).

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**Younger Preschoolers**

LDC-1k Show understanding of increasingly complex sentences.

LDC-1l With prompting and support, respond to requests for information or action.

LDC-1m Follow simple multistep directions with visual cues if needed.

**Older Preschoolers:**

LDC-1n: Show understanding of increasingly complex sentences.

LDC-1o: Respond to requests for information or action.

LDC-1p: Follow more detailed multi-step directions.

**Kindergarten:**

SL.K.2 Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.

SL.K.3 Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.

## Resources

Erickson, K.A., Koppenhaver, D.A., Yoder, D.E., & Nance, J. (1997). Integrated communication and literacy instruction for a child with multiple disabilities. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 12*(3), 142-150.

Goldin-Meadow, S., & Sandhofer, C.M. (1999). Gestures convey substantive information about a child's thoughts to ordinary listeners. *Developmental Science, 2*(1), 67-74.

Heath, S.B. (1996, 1983). *Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Linder, T., Anthony, T.L., Bundy, A.C., Charlifue-Smith, R., Hafer, J.C., Hancock, F., & Rooke, C.C. (2008). *Transdisciplinary Play-Based System (TPBA2/TPB12)*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., Inc.

Snow, C.E., Burns, M.S., & Griffin, P. (Eds.). (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Tharp, R.G., & Gallimore, R. (1988). *Rousing minds to life: Teaching, learning, and schooling in social context*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Vernon-Feagans, L. (1996). *Children's talk in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.