

The Westby Play Scale (edited and interpreted for relevance)

- Stage I: 9 to 12 months

PLAY:

Travel to get what want, stop mouthing everything. Finds toy hidden under scarf.

LANGUAGE:

Some appropriate toy use with performance words (woo-woo, sound effects, etc).
Communication Skills: Request AND command (implies child directing others--already some control over their environment)

- Stage II: 13-17 months:

PLAY:

Purposeful exploration of toys--discovers how they operate via trial and error.
Variety of motor schema with toys. HANDS TOY TO ADULT IF UNABLE TO OPERATE (this, in my opinion, represents an early TOM awareness that others may possess skills they lack--good target to teach).

LANGUAGE:

Context dependent single words (says car when riding in car, but doesn't label car when asked). Words come and go in vocabulary (this is NORMAL children).
Uses language in the following ways: Request, command, call attention to self, establish interaction, greet, protest and label. At this stage (note the age), a child begins to ask for help, even if by gesture. According to Westby, this indicates that a child understands that adults are agents who can act on objects. Again, I think that cognitive awareness is directly related to TOM.

- Stage III: 17-19 months:

PLAY:

autosymbolic play--child pretends to fall asleep, or pretends to drink from a cup, or eat with a spoon. Playfulness/awareness of pretending emerge in relation to self. Uses tool to reach toy (e.g. Stick). Uses most common objects and toys appropriately. Finds toys invisibly hidden (put object in box, and dump out under a scarf).

LANGUAGE:

Functional and semantic development in language with the following uses demonstrated: 1. Recurrence (Again, Again!) 2. Existence (Here I am!) 3. Nonexistence (I am not!) 4. Rejection (No!) 5. Denial (Wasn't me.) 6. Agent and object (Billy took train.) 7. Action or state (Billy is hitting.) 8. Location (In the kitchen) 9. Object or person associated with object or location. (Mommy's in the kitchen). Additionally, there is a rapid growth in number of words USED. Will NOT refer to ABSENT situations (correlate this with request for things absent?)

Note: We attempted to interpret these language uses (all example in parentheses are our interpretation of these uses, but we fear we may have misinterpreted Westby's intent. If any SLP would care to define these for us more clearly, or give more relevant examples, please contact us.

- Stage IV: 19- 22 months:

PLAY:

symbolic play extends beyond self. E.g. Play with dolls--brushes doll's hair, feeds toy, puts doll to bed. Combines TWO toys in pretend play--e.g. Puts spoon in pan, pours from pitcher to cup.

LANGUAGE:

Begins to use possessives, (my , mine). NO word endings. Makes reference to objects and people NOT present (which acc. To Westby indicates consolidated sensorimotor concepts and internalized action schemas--a reflection of cognitive achievement).

- Stage V: 24 months:

PLAY:

pretends at activities of others--re-presents his daily experiences (play house, play acts as mommy, daddy, baby). Uses objects that are realistic and close to life size (won't use miniature action figures yet, apparently). Short events--no true sequences, except perhaps short, self-limiting ones such as puts food in pan, stirs and eats. BLOCK PLAY--consists of stacking and knocking down. Sand and water play consists of filling, pouring and dumping (now THAT takes some pressure off!). Child does NOT build representational structures. Blocks are not integrated into pretend play.

LANGUAGE:

All the same pragmatic language functions now extend to phrases and short sentences. Word endings: ING appears on words, plurals and possessives. Language functions extend to PRETEND, sharing information and questioning (NOTE--not answering questions--ACTIVELY questioning).

- Stage VI: 2 1/2 years:

PLAY:

Represents events less frequently experienced or observed, particularly impressive or traumatic events--1. Doctor-nurse-sick child 2. Teacher-child 3. Store-shopping. Events are still short and isolated. Realistic props still required. Roles shift quickly. Parallel play predominates.

LANGUAGE:

Responds appropriately to the following WH questions in context: What, who,

whose, where, what...do, ASKS WH questions, Responds to WHY questions inappropriately, except for well known routines. , ASKS why, but often inappropriately and does not attend to answer. TOM: child can use language to selectively analyze perception as seen by ASKING and ANSWERING WH-questions. Before age three, use of size occurs with respect to selves versus comparative.

- STAGE VII: 3 years old:

PLAY:

relates pretend schemas in a sequence. (EG. Mix cake, bake it, serve it, wash dishes.) Sequence evolves unplanned (we'd of course need to teach this, requiring some planning on our part.) This demonstrates a cognitive basis for using past tense and future aspect (TIME). Still dependent on realistic props. Associative play increases. Reenact old play scenarios with new outcomes (spontaneous improvisation) that reflect what child would have LIKED to have happen in scenario (eg. Doll hides at doctor's office, refusing to be examined).

LANGUAGE:

Past tense (I ate, I walked) describing past events. Future aspect: I'm going to, etc.

- Stage VIII: 3 to 3 1/2:

PLAY:

Carries out play of earlier stages with doll house and fisher-price style toys (less realistic props--reflects child's ability to take another person's perspective -- TOM). Blocks are used to make enclosures. One object is used to represent another (row of chairs is bus) aka play is not stimulus bound. Uses doll or puppet as participant in play--doll is a friend now and has own personality (TOM).

LANGUAGE:

Marked increase in descriptive attributes--reflects emerging understanding of perception (TOM). Concepts emerge in speech: shapes, size, colors, texture, spatial relationships (DO WE EMPHASIZE THESE TOO EARLY?). Gives dialogue to puppets and dolls. Metalinguistic language: "HE SAID...", Uses indirect requests "Mommy lets me have cookies for breakfast.", Changes speech dependent on listener (definite TOM).

- Stage IX: 3 1/2 to 4 years:

PLAY:

Begins to problem solve events not experienced (e.g. Child builds enclosure for circus animals and needs a roof. Looking at several objects, rejects some without trying by reasoning too big, small, heavy, etc. Plans ahead. Hypothesizes "what would happen IF...". Uses Dolls and puppets to act out scenes. Builds 3 dimensional structures with blocks that represent actual objects seen.

LANGUAGE:

Conceptualizes "this should", "this would", "This won't" "If I do this, then.." "This is big enough, but it's too heavy". Verbalizes intentions by using "can, may , might, could , would, will" and conjunctions: "and, but, if, so, because." These are emerging skills, not competent skills (that takes until age 10-12 in typical children). Begins to respond appropriately to why and how questions that require reasoning about perception.

- Stage X: 5 years:

PLAY:

Plans a sequence of pretend events and organizes needs in advance--both objects and children. Can coordinate simultaneous events. E.g. Plan his role in a play situation and decide what others will be doing as well. No longer dependent on realistic props, can rely fully on imagination to set scenes. Full cooperative play seen.

LANGUAGE:

Planning coordinated events reflects the cognitive attainment of relative and subordinate clauses that relate two or more prepositions to each other. Uses relational terms such as "then, when, first, next, last, while, before and after", but doesn't develop full competence with usage until 10-12 years of age (typical children).

To quote the article more fully here:

Appendix A

Symbolic Play Scale Check List

Play	Language
<p>Stage I - 9 to 12 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ___ Awareness that objects exist when not seen; finds toy hidden under scarf ___ Means-end behavior - crawls or walks to get what he wants; pulls string toys ___ Does not mouth or bang all toys - some used appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ___ No true language; may have performative words, (words that are associated with actions or the total situation) <p>Exhibits following communicative functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ___ Request (instrumental) ___ Command (regulatory)
<p>Stage II - 13 to 17 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ___ Purposeful exploration of toys; discovers operation of toys through trial and error; uses variety of motoric schemas ___ Hands toy to adult if unable to operate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ___ Context dependent single words, for example, child may use the word "car" when riding in a car, but not when he sees a car; words tend to come and go in child's vocabulary <p>Exhibits following communicative functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ___ Request ___ Protesting ___ Command ___ Label ___ Interactional ___ Response ___ Personal ___ Greeting
<p>Stage III - 17 to 19 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ___ Autosymbolic play, for example, child pretends to go to sleep or pretends to drink from cup or eat from spoon ___ Uses most common objects and toys appropriately ___ Tool-use (uses stick to reach toy) ___ Finds toys invisibly hidden (when placed in box and box emptied under scarf) 	<p>Beginning of true verbal communication. Words have following functional and semantic relations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ___ Recurrence ___ Agent ___ Existence ___ Object ___ Nonexistence ___ Action or state ___ Rejection ___ Location ___ Denial ___ Object or person associated with object or location
<p>Stage IV - 19 to 22 months</p> <p>Symbolic play extends beyond the child's self:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ___ Plays with dolls; brushes doll's hair, feeds doll a bottle, or covers doll with blanket ___ Child performs pretend activities on more than one person or object; for example, feeds self, a doll, mother, and another child ___ Combines two toys in pretend play, for example, puts spoon in pan or pours from pot into cup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ___ Refers to objects and persons not present <p>Beginning of word combinations with following semantic relations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ___ Agent-action ___ Action-locative ___ Action-object ___ Object-locative ___ Agent-object ___ Possessive ___ Attributive ___ Dative

Appendix A (cont)

Symbolic Play Scale Check List

Play	Language
<p>Stage V - 24 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Represents daily experiences; plays house - is the mommy, daddy, or baby; objects used are realistic and close to life size — Events short and isolated; no true sequences; some self-limiting sequences - puts food in pan, stirs, and eats — Block play consists of stacking and knocking down — Sand and water play consist of filling, pouring, and dumping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Uses earlier pragmatic functions and semantic relations in phrases and short sentences <p>The following morphological markers appear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Present progressive (ing) on verbs — Plurals — Possessives
<p>Stage VI - 2½ years</p> <p>Represents events less frequently experienced or observed, particularly impressive or traumatic events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Doctor-nurse-sick child — Teacher-child — Store-shopping <p>Events still short and isolated. Realistic props still required. Roles shift quickly.</p>	<p>Responds appropriately to the following WH questions in context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — What — Who — Whose — Where — What . . . do <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Asks WH questions - generally puts WH at beginning of sentence — Responses to why questions inappropriate except for well-known routines, such as, "Why is the doctor here?" . . . "Baby sick." — Asks why, but often inappropriate and does not attend to answer
<p>Stage VII - 3 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Continues pretend activities of Stages V and VI, but now the play has a sequence. Events are not isolated, for example, child mixes cake, bakes it, serves it, washes the dishes; or doctor checks patient; calls ambulance, takes patient to hospital and operates. Sequence evolves . . . not planned. — Compensatory toy . . . re-enactment of experienced events with new outcomes — Associative play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Uses past tense, such as, "I ate the cake . . . I walked." — Uses future aspect (particularly "gonna") forms, such as, "I'm gonna wash dishes."

Appendix A (cont)

Symbolic Play Scale Check List

Play	Language
<p>Stage VIII - 3 to 3½</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Carries out play activities of previous stages with a doll house and Fisher-Price toys (barn, garage, airport, village). — Uses blocks and sandbox for imaginative play. Blocks used primarily as enclosures (fences and houses) for animals and dolls — Play not totally stimulus bound. Child uses one object to represent another. — Uses doll or puppet as participant in play 	<p>Descriptive vocabulary expands as child becomes more aware of perceptual attributes. Uses terms for the following concepts (not always correctly):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — shapes — sizes — colors — texture — spatial relationships — Gives dialogue to puppets and dolls — Metalinguistic language use, such as, "He said . . ." — Uses indirect requests, such as, "Mommy lets me have cookies for breakfast." — Changes speech depending on listener
<p>Stage IX - 3½ to 4 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Begins to problem-solve events not experienced. Plans ahead. Hypothesizes "what would happen if . . ." — Uses dolls and puppets to act out scenes — Builds 3-dimensional structures with blocks which are attempts at reproducing specific structures child has seen. 	<p>Verbalizes intentions and possible future events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Uses modals (can, may, might, will, would, could) — Uses conjunctions (and, but, if, so, because) <p>Note: Full competence for these modals and conjunctions does not develop until 10-12 years of age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Begins to respond appropriately to why and how questions that require reasoning about perception
<p>Stage X - 5 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Plans a sequence of pretend events. Organizes what he needs - both objects and other children. — Coordinates more than one event occurring at a time — Highly imaginative. Sets the scene without realistic props. — Full cooperative play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Uses relational terms (then, when, first, next, last, while, before, after) <p>Note: Full competence does not develop until 10-12 years of age</p>

Appendix B

Observation Form

	Onlooking	Solitary	Parallel	Associative	Cooperative
Game					
Symbolic Spontaneous					
Symbolic Imitative					
Practice					

Appendix C

Definition of play behaviors for the observation form

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| Practice | — The child engages in gross motor activities such as running, riding on bikes or wagons, climbing, throwing balls. Child works puzzles, strings beads, stacks blocks and knocks them down, fills and empties containers, operates cause-effect toys such as music boxes, "busy" boxes, talking toys, etc. |
| Symbolic Imitative | — The child engages in pretend play, but it is initiated and guided by another child or an adult. |
| Symbolic Spontaneous | — The child initiates the pretend activity. |
| Game | — The child engages in rule-governed game behavior and exhibits some understanding or appreciation of the rules. |
| Onlooking | — The child observes, but does not participate. |
| Solitary | — The child plays without reference to other children. |
| Parallel | — The child's play is of a companionable nature with similar materials, but with no personal interaction. |
| Associative | — The children's play is loosely organized around a common activity, shared interests, and materials. |
| Cooperative | — The play includes different roles, common goals, usually with one or two leaders, and is of relatively long duration and complexity. |

The observers using the forms record a description of the child's behavior within the appropriate box on the form. If a child engages in several different behaviors during a recording time, the behaviors are sequentially numbered.