

Progression of a Child with Autism from a Non-Social to a More Social World Through Narrative Play Therapy

LANGUAGE

PLAY

NARRATIVE

PHASE ONE FIRST CONTACT

- Nonverbal
- Unrelated gestures
- Frequently self-talks
- Limited babbling by 2-4 mo.
- Uses a few meaningful words
- Takes limited vocal turns/eye gaze

- Imitates some sounds
- Facial expressions to protest/request
- Crying/tantrums
- Unaware of sharing opportunities
- Uses sounds/gestures w/main caregiver

- No symbolic play
- Plays in isolation
- Non-intentional actions
- Non-meaningful play
- Fixates on light, sounds, graphemes
- Extensive repetitive actions

- No plan/agenda
- Uses one-two objects
- Expresses irrelevant emotions
- Consistent fantasy play

- No story structure
- No sequence
- Repeats unrelated details
- No retelling

- Uses consistent fantasy
- No agenda/story
- Unaware of a theme/main idea
- Attends to details only
- No meaningful thought
- Unaware of abstract thinking

PHASE TWO JOINT ATTENTION

- Verbalizes words/phrases
- Related gestures to protest/request
- Limited self-talk
- Babbling by 6-9 months
- Meaningful words/phrases
- Few vocal turns w/eye gaze shifts

- Imitates words/phrases/gestures
- Facial expressions w/ideas
- Words for basic emotions
- Shares objects w/prompts
- Language w/familiar peers/adults

- Simple symbolic play
- Parallel play w/other
- Intentional actions
- Meaningful play
- Limits fixation on light, sounds, graphemes
- Limited repetitive actions

- Simple plan/agenda
- One to two play sets
- Expresses relevant emotions
- Shifts between fantasy/reality with prompts

- Simple story structure (beg, mid, end)
- Sequences simple actions
- Relates simple details but misses main gestalt
- Retells unconnected details

- Inconsistent fantasy
- Creates & controls own agenda
- Wants to create own theme
- Formulates details & themes w/another
- Meaningful thought
- Inconsistent abstract thinking

PHASE THREE CHILD INITIATED RECIPROCIITY

- Verbalizes in relevant sentences
- Gestures relevant to words
- Limits self-talk
- Reduces babbling by 12 mo. to use words/sentences
- Meaningful sentences in interactions
- Frequent vocal turns/eye gaze shifts

- Imitates all language frequently
- Facial expression w/intonation
- Expresses emotions w/sentences w/another
- Shares objects without prompting
- Uses language with most adults/peers

- Inconsistent complex symbolic play
- Plays w/one peer in close physical proximity to play
- Complex intentional actions
- Combines meaningful play w/language
- Subtle fixations on light, sounds, graphemes
- Less repetitive actions than intentional actions

- Plans actions w/another
- Uses several play sets w/another
- Expresses relevant emotions in themes
- Differentiates between fantasy/reality play

- Inconsistent complex story structure (beg, mid, end, high pt., resolution)
- Sequences more complex ideas w/high point
- Story w/complex themes & details
- Retells story w/connected details & main theme

- Fantasy enhances story theme
- Allows others to create agenda
- Flexibility w/others w/theme
- Formulates simple stories w/themes
- Complex meaningful thought
- Consistent abstract thought

PHASE FOUR SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

- Responds & formulates relevant language
- Gestures match meaning/ideas/emotions
- Only subtle self-talk
- Eliminates babbling to express ideas in sentences
- Combines meaningful ideas in complex sentences
- Frequently consistent vocal turns w/eye gaze shifts

- Limits imitation to develop creative language with actions
- Coordinates natural facial expression w/intonation in negotiation
- Expresses emotions to negotiate w/several others
- Shares objects, stories, events, & ideas
- Engages in reciprocal conversation w/new peers & adults

- Consistent complex symbolic play w/others
- Plays w/several peers in natural settings
- Consistent complex intentional actions
- Meaningful/creative actions in games with others
- Unnoticed fixations on light, sound, graphemes
- Few repetitive actions

- w/strong intentional actions
- Allows others to change agenda/plans
- Plays w/several sets w/others in many play areas
- Combines language/gesture to express emotions
- Shifts between fantasy & reality play

- Consistent complex story structures
- Sequences several events & ideas
- Resolves stories w/complex details/themes
- Retells complete meaningful stories

- Interweaves fantasy & reality in theme
- Allows others to control/participate in forming stories
- Consistent flexibility w/others w/theme
- Creative story formulation w/several children
- More complex inferences from main idea
- Abstract thinking about themes