



# PLS™-5 Screening Test *for* Early Childhood Educators



## *CJ, aged 1 year, 6 months*

CJ, who is one year and six months old, was recently enrolled at Laurel Brook Early Head Start program, a center-based program serving infants and toddlers from low-income families. The 1-year-olds at this center were screened by an occupational therapist who is a member of the county's cross-disciplinary trained early intervention team that conducts routine cognitive, motor, and speech/language screenings. The PLS-5 Screening Test for Early Childhood Educators was used to screen speech and language skills.

CJ is an inquisitive, active toddler who loves to play with blocks and trucks. CJ points to things he wants and has a few words that are very hard to understand (e.g., he says *guh-kuh* for *cookie*). The occupational therapist had administered some of the screening tasks with CJ, and had the opportunity to talk with CJ's mom when she came to pick him up from the center. The occupational therapist also had the opportunity to observe CJ with his class during snack time.



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# CJ's Performance on the PLS™ -5 Screening Test for Early Childhood Educators

## Language Section

CJ was able to do all the language tasks for age 1:

**Language Task 1**—Looks at objects or people the caregiver points to and names. CJ observes attentively when the teacher points out toys in the classroom and items on the playground (e.g., *flower, bug, bird*).

**Language Task 2**—Says at least one word. CJ uses eight words, including *guh-kuh* for *cookie, mama, dada, Baba* (for his brother Brandon), *up, muh* for *milk, mo* for *more*, and *uh-oh*.

**Language Task 3**—Looks at and plays with another person for at least one minute. CJ's mom reported that he plays peek-a-boo, patty cake, and "How big is the baby — SO BIG?" This was confirmed by his teacher.

**Language Task 4**—Responds to words like *no* or *no-no*. CJ reached for several items from the table and paused to look at his mother when she said, "no-no". He would pause when she said, "no", look at the examiner, then smile mischievously and slowly reach for the objects while watching the examiner's reaction.

**Language Task 5**—Understands a specific word or phrase without you using gestures to help the child. CJ demonstrated that he understood words like *up* (he lifted his arms when the examiner said, "Up!") and understood the phrase *come here*.

Because CJ earned a score of 1 for each of these tasks (with a Language Total Score of 5), he passed the language section of the screening.

## Feeding Section

CJ did not demonstrate any of the behaviors that suggest feeding concerns. Because none of the atypical behaviors were noted, CJ passed the feeding section of the screening.

## Social/Interpersonal Section

The occupational therapist noted that CJ showed none of the atypical social/interpersonal behaviors listed. CJ passed the social/interpersonal section of the screening.

## Screening Summary

### Screening Summary

Check only one box for each section. If the child does not meet the pass criteria, check "Refer for Additional Testing."

Section	Pass	Refer for Additional Testing
Language	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feeding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social/Interpersonal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Screening Summary for CJ, aged 1 year, 6 months

CJ's teacher is concerned that his communication behaviors seem to be somewhat limited compared to his classmates. CJ's mother mentioned that CJ's brother Brandon spoke much earlier than CJ and his speech was easier to understand than CJ's at 18 months.

At CJ's age, there is a wide range of speech and language behaviors that can be considered "typical". Some children are slow to start talking, then language skills "explode" closer to (or soon after) the child's second birthday. While CJ passed the language screening, the teacher will continue to monitor his speech as he gets closer to age 2 to see if he is beginning to speak more clearly and say more words at that time. A follow-up screening may be considered after his second birthday if he is still has a limited repertoire of words and if intelligibility has not improved.

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