# Question Answering and Asking Milestones

In language development, a child must be able to ask and answer questions in order to navigate a conversation and to seek and relay information. When assessing a child’s ability to ask and answer questions, it is important to separate her content knowledge from her ability to ask or answer questions.

## Answering Questions

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<th>Age</th>
<th>Milestones</th>
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| 1 – 2 years | • Looks in the appropriate place when asked a simple question, such as “Where is Daddy?”  
• Chooses an object with intentionality when asked about a choice of two, such as “Do you want milk or juice?”  
• Answers “where” questions, such as “Where’s the ball?” by pointing to the pictured item in a book  
• Answers “What’s this?” questions about familiar objects or pictures such as cookie or baby  
• Answers “yes/no” questions, possibly with a head nod or shake |
| 2 – 3 years | • Points to objects when described, such as “What do you wear on your head?”  
• Answers simple wh- questions logically  
• Answers critical thinking questions, such as “What do you do when you are cold?”  
• Answers questions, such as, “Where…?,” “What’s that?,” “What’s … doing?,” “Who is…?”  
• Answers or understands “Can you…?” questions |
| 3 – 4 years | • Answers more complex questions logically, such as “who,” “why,” “where,” and “how”  
• Answers “If…what?” questions, such as “If it starts raining, what would you do?”  
• Answers questions about functions of objects, such as “What are spoons for?” and “Why do we have shoes?” |
| 4 years     | • Answers “when” questions  
• Answers “how many” questions (in which the answer does not exceed four) |

## Asking Questions

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| 1 – 2 years | • Starts to use question forms, beginning with “What’s that?”  
• Uses rising intonation |
| 2 – 3 years | • Asks simple egocentric questions, such as “Where cookie?”  
• Asks “Where…?,” “What…?,” “What…doing?” questions |
| 2 – 3 years | • Asks one-word “why” questions  
• Uses “what,” “where,” “when,” “how,” and “whose” when asking questions  
• Asks “is” questions  
• Inverts auxiliary and subject in wh- questions, such as “Where is dad going?” |
| 3 – 4 years | • Asks the following types of questions using correct grammatical structure:  
Early Infinitive: “Do you want to…?”  
Future: “Are we going to…?”  
Modal can/may: “Can you…?” |


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