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Babytalk

Dr Sally Ward

BabyTalk

Maximise your child's potential
in just 30 minutes a day



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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurThe ability to use language well is one of the greatest gifts you can give your children. Helping them to communicate, to listen, and to understand, will build the foundation of their future learning. BabyTalk is a revolutionary programme for babies and children up to the age of four from leading language therapist Dr Sally Ward. The programme will:--optimise your child's language development--Enhance your child's ability to concentrate and learn--Enrich your child's imaginative play--Maximise the potential of your child's intelligenceThe BabyTalk programme takes just half an hour of playtime a day, is simple, stress-free, easily followed by any parent, carer or childcare professional - and above all, is great fun!ExtraitBirth to

Three MonthsThe newborn baby arrives totally helpless and dependent, but nonetheless amazingly well equipped in a number of ways to interact with the adults around him. He shows an emotional inclination toward people from the very start of life and soon engages them in the communication process. He recognizes his mothers and fathers voices on his very first day,¹ from how they sounded while he was in the womb. He also will respond to a television or radio show that has been frequently played in his vicinity!² (He has in fact been hearing for the past two months, as the auditory system is functional from the seventh month of pregnancy.) The newborns hearing is not yet as sensitive as that of adults;³ he shows a reflex turning toward low quiet sounds, which will later be lost. Within days, he can distinguish recordings of his own cries from those of other babies and can discriminate between the sound of a real baby crying and a computer simulation, crying harder in response to the former. At this stage too, he shows a preference for speech that is high-pitched and very tuneful, with lots of rises and falls.^{4, 5} By the age of one month, he is showing interest in listening to a wide range of sounds and will fixate on one sound for some time. An extraordinary feature at this stage is that by the age of four weeks, he can distinguish between phonemes, which are the smallest units in the language to signal meaning. This means, for example, that he knows there are two different sounds when he hears the words pat and bat spoken, although the difference is only a tiny one.⁶ By two months, babies can even discriminate male from female voices. It is tempting to conclude that the infant arrives closely attuned to speech, but it is also possible that speech is suited to the innate characteristics of the human condition. At the same time he is exploring sound, the new baby shows a parallel interest in people. Faces engage his attention, having many of the qualities that he finds most attractive: movement, three dimensions rather than two, contrast between dark and light, and curved lines.^{7, 8, 9} By the age of only thirty-six hours, he already shows a preference for watching a video of his mothers face over one of a stranger, demonstrating amazingly rapid learning.¹⁰ He also prefers to watch the movements made by people rather than those made by animals or inanimate objects.¹¹ The newborn baby has an extraordinary ability: lost a few weeks later of imitating tongue protrusion and mouth opening.¹² He can also imitate facial expressions of sadness, happiness, and surprise.^{13, 14, 15} Nobody quite knows why these abilities exist at this time, or why they disappear. In the early weeks, the baby cries and produces other vocalizations like hiccups and burps, all related to his bodily functions. Although these sounds are not used to communicate intentionally at this stage, the adults around him respond to his noises, paving the way for true interaction a little later. The baby learns that different behaviors receive different responses. For example, he cries and fusses, and his mother says, Oh, you want your diaper changed, or he looks toward a toy and she says, You want to see teddy, as she brings it toward him. The magical first smile is seen at about six weeks. It is an extremely powerful stimulus to the adults around him, who are prepared to do almost anything up to and including standing on their heads to evoke one! At this stage, the amount he vocalizes and the frequency with which his facial expressions change does not differ according to whether or not he is looking at an adult. He will smile to a range of stimuli, and not only at people.¹⁶ He may now start an interaction sequence with an adult by catching his eye and conclude it by looking away. Cooing emerges at this time, usually signaling that he is contented. From the age of eight weeks, the baby's gaze and the little sounds he makes are more frequently directed at adults, and by twelve weeks, he shows a very well established preference for people rather than any other stimulus in his environment. He vocalizes much more to them than to anything else and most of all to his mother.¹⁷ He is now, for the first time, responsive to his mothers facial expressions and tone of voice and can change his own facial expressions. He is more inclined to smile at familiar adults than at strangers. Over the period of the first three months, babies develop the capacity to produce more and more complex sounds, starting with the vague vowel-like squeaks of the newborn to the more complex expressions of pleasure and occasional vocalizations of two or more different syllables. By three months, he produces the most delightful laughter and will now respond to a smile by smiling back. (Please remember, though, that babies do develop at different rates, and that in the early stages, even whether he was born a week early or late makes a difference.) In the first three months, social interaction typically occurs between infant and adult, without other objects or events serving as a focus of the interaction. This will be one of the big changes to come in the baby's continued development.

Language and General Development**THE FIRST MONTHS** Soon after birth, the baby shows his responsiveness to the adults around him. When he is fussy or crying, he can be quieted by being spoken to, by being picked up, and by eye contact. Nature has arranged things so that he focuses best at the distance he is from his mothers face when he is in her arms.¹⁸ He already shows interest in listening, ceasing his activity as a sound comes nearer. By the end of the first month he will fixate on a nearby sound. He cries frequently, but soon starts to

produce some vowel sounds other than crying. His noises are not in any way communicative at this stage, but rather reflect his bodily state. He clearly signals his degree of alertness and comfort with the presence or absence of crying or fussing and will actively seek eye contact with adults. In terms of general development, he is beginning to make rudimentary attempts to explore his world.¹⁹ He will turn his head toward a light, and although he has no binocular vision as yet, he already perceives that size and shape are constant even though objects are seen from different angles and distances. He can, at this very early stage, discriminate

between a cross, a circle, and a triangle.²⁰ He has very little control over his body, using jerky and involuntary movements. As is the case in all vertebrates, the general direction of behavioral organization is from head to foot, so that he can hold his head steady for a few seconds if he is supported at the shoulders,

but has little control over his legs. He shows some reflex behaviors that will become increasingly purposeful for example, clenching his hand on contact with a rattle. He shows a complete and coordinated, albeit temporary, walking reflex when he is held upright. **THE SECOND MONTH** In this period, the baby is showing more and more interest in both his environment in general and people in particular. He now often turns his head and looks in the direction of voices and appears to listen intently to anyone speaking. He seems to respond to tone of voice, and by the middle of this month will sometimes smile when he is spoken to. His voice is also developing. Cooing emerges during this month. Cooing is quieter and more musical than crying and can be heard when he is content. It consists of a consonant-type sound followed by a vowel-type

sound, with occasional repetition. At this stage, the baby may develop special vocalizations signaling hunger, which is the first time his sound has a particular meaning. He will now demand attention by vocal fussing. He has longer and more defined waking periods. His motor development is dominated by the asymmetrical tonic neck reflex, in which his head is averted to the preferred side, with the arm on that side extended and the opposite one flexed. This position limits his visual field, but his control over his eye

muscles is strengthening. He can now turn his head toward a rattle or light and visually follow a moving object, first horizontally and then vertically. He is able to watch a play activity and will sometimes fixate on an object for a long time. His head control is also increasing as he can now lift it when he is lying on his tummy. His developing muscles can be seen at work during his vigorous kicking in the bath. **THE THIRD**

MONTH The baby is now showing rapidly increasing interest in speech and regularly looks around for, and successfully locates, speakers. He can differentiate between angry and friendly voices. He tends to watch the lips and mouth rather than the whole face, as if he realizes that that is where these very interesting sounds

come from. He shows increasing interest in sounds of all kinds, searching for them persistently with his eyes. He will look, for example, for an opening door, the clatter of cutlery, and the sounds associated with housework. He quiets down to listen to music. He loves it all, pop and classical, but at this stage prefers it to be quiet rather than loud. Best of all is the sound of his mother singing to him. His sound-making is also developing, in both quantity and quality. He makes noises to himself, occasionally now with two or more different syllables containing a consonant and a vowel, and can be heard to string ten or more little sounds together. He will sometimes produce a long vowel-like sound during or after feeding. By three months,

cooing is his main vocal activity, and it can be heard more often when he is contented. He also makes groping movements with his tongue and lips, as if attempting to say words. This happens mostly when he is face to face with an adult. There is a shift from sounds made at the front of the mouth to those made at the back and a big increase in the range... **Présentation de l'auteur** The ability to use language well is one of the

greatest gifts you can give your children. Helping them to communicate, to listen, and to understand, will build the foundation of their future learning. **BabyTalk** is a revolutionary programme for babies and children

up to the age of four from leading language therapist Dr Sally Ward. The programme will:--optimise your child's language development--Enhance your child's ability to concentrate and learn--Enrich your child's imaginative play--Maximise the potential of your child's intelligence **The BabyTalk** programme takes just half an hour of playtime a day, is simple, stress-free, easily followed by any parent, carer or childcare

professional - and above all, is great fun!