

The Cat and Dog Test Guide

As children develop their speech and language skills, it is important to think about their **understanding** of language, their **talking** (using words and sentences) and their **speech** (speaking clearly). If we notice a difficulty, it may not be a 'stand alone problem'. If a child has unclear speech or they are not talking as much as other children, they may have problems with understanding language.

This guide is to help parents and those working with children to complete **The Cat and Dog Test**. This test helps us to find out about a child's language skills and it is a good start point for children where there are concerns about their speech **or** language development.

If you are working with a child who you feel would benefit from completing this test, please discuss with parents/carers before proceeding.

You will need the pictures below. Please print these single-sided and in colour. Once you have printed the pictures, cut out them individually. If you do not have access to a colour printer, please contact us and we will post them. You will also need a record sheet (double-sided).



Getting started

- The test is divided into 5 sections and an extension. Complete the sections on different days so that your child can give their best attention skills.
- Choose a time when your child is happy, relaxed and well rested.
- Choose a quiet, well-lit place where you can sit comfortably for a little while.
- Ideally, sit across from each other at a table so that you can easily see each other faces.
- Check for distractions and background noise. Switch off TVs and devices. If possible, arrange for other children to be looked after elsewhere.
- If you can, video your child completing the test. Afterwards, you can watch the video to check your record sheet. You can also ask someone else to watch the video and see if they agree on how your child responded.

Carrying out the assessment

- Cut up the pictures and fill in the details at the top of the record sheet.
- Set out the pictures as indicated on the record sheet.
- Ask your child to respond to the requests, i.e. 'Show me the big dog's ears'. Mark with a ✓/x
- After your child responds to the request, put any picture that has been moved back to its original position. This is important to ensure your child is responding appropriately to the test.
- Each section has a question, i.e. 'What's this?' (point to the little dog's nose). Write down your child's responses in the spaces provided.
- For the extension section, ask your child listen to the sentences and recall what you said, using the pictures to prompt them. Write down your child's responses in the spaces provided.