

## **Maths Language Blank Levels**

Blank, Rose and Berlin (1978) devised the Blank Language Scheme

It encourages the development of children's verbal reasoning and abstract language.

It is broken into four achievable steps.

### **Blank Level One: Vocabulary Development**

- Single word level – naming and understanding (e.g., pointing)
- Vocabulary in NNS 'Mathematical vocabulary' document

### **Blank Level Two: Concept development, phrases, early question words**

- Concepts including those about shape, size, quantity, space/ position, time, and number (many are in the NNS vocabulary document)
- Early question words which do not require a full sentence response – what, where, who

*Language/question types might include:*

Which number comes first?

What do the three stand for in twenty-three?

What goes with 3 to make 10?

Which is the biggest / smallest number?

Find the even number.

What are you doing? (Simple response)

What is different about....?

Where is the ....?

Show me the isosceles triangle.

### **Blank Level Three: Understanding and using sentences**

- Sentence level of understanding and response
- Understanding and use of diverse types of concrete sentences, e.g., instructions, descriptions, questions
- Focus on lengthening sentences
- 'How' questions

*Language/question types might include:*

Put the red cube next to the cuboid (instructions).

Find me something that is not round (negatives).

How are the prism and pyramid the same? (Comparison)

Tell me the order of your day (sequencing).

Can you explain how you found your answer? (summary)

What will you do next? (Prediction – based on concrete experience)

### Blank Level Four: Verbal reasoning, inference, social understanding (abstract)

- Beyond the stated information / concrete apparatus experience not available
- Using language to solve problems
- 'Why' questions requiring inference

*Language/question types might include:*

What made the pattern look this way? (cause)

What could you do to check your work? (Problem-solving)

How can you say that an answer is an even number? (inference)

What do we need to do in this investigation? (effect)

Why will the numbers in the pattern increase? (Justify a prediction)

How will the teacher feel about your work? (viewpoint)

### Useful References and Links

Elklan Language Builders

[Blank-level-2.pdf \(childspeechbedfordshire.nhs.uk\)](https://childspeechbedfordshire.nhs.uk/Blank-level-2.pdf)

Resources available at CCC Ocyys Support for Learning – Shared – C&L New Tidy UP - LANGUAGE