



ASQ®-3 Materials and Item Adaptation Guide

ASQ®-3 questionnaires ask about simple things that many babies and young children do in play and daily routines. Parents answer based on what they've already seen or know their child is doing, and some may need to try activities or talk with a caregiver to know if their child is showing the skill. Some activities use materials that may not be familiar to the family, some may need to be substituted. Sometimes an activity may not fit a family's culture, or available materials. Providers should check with parents to be sure they are comfortable with the activities and have what they need before completing the ASQ-3.

Adapting Materials or Items as needed.

Not all items will need to be tried, but when they do...

If a suggested material (such as a ball, book, crayons) is not available or an item is inappropriate (such as a mirror), objects and activities may be substituted as long as the target skill is maintained for that item.

Support parents in several ways:

1. Let parents borrow needed material(s).
2. Coach parents on using alternate materials as available. See examples in the chart below.
3. Work with parents to adapt an item keeping the targeted skill as focus. For example, see what parents have or do in play/daily routine that will show the same skill.

What to know before adapting.

First consider the developmental area for clues to the target skill of an item.

- **Communication** - language skills. What a child understands (receptive) and how they vocalize, use words, or make sentences (expressive).
- **Gross motor** - how a child moves and coordinates body, arms, and legs.
- **Fine motor** - eye-hand and finger movements, and fingers/hand wrist in coordination.
- **Problem Solving** - how a child thinks, plays with things and how they solve problems
- **Personal-social** - self-help skills (feeding, dressing, toileting) and how they engage with others.

Example - Adapting an ASQ-3 item while keeping the target skill.

An item that asks about using a writing tool and copying the adult to scribble or draw a line is found in both the 27 month Fine Motor and 24 month Problem Solving areas (at different age intervals).

- In Fine Motor

Focus is on the ability to grasp a writing tool and control movements to make a line (pre- writing skills). Any kind of writing tool such as pen, pencil, crayon, chalk, marker can be used.

- In Problem Solving

Focus is on the child's ability to copy an adult model to assesses thinking and learning skills. With the item in this location, it's okay for the child to demonstrate by using their finger in paint or sand, or a soapy surface, or in sauce on a tray.

If an item is culturally inappropriate, and cannot be adapted, or materials are unavailable, it is ok to omit the item. Up to 2 items per area may be omitted and the score is adjusted. The OSP site will adjust the score or the ASQ Age Calculator app can be used <https://agesandstages.com/free-resources/asq-calculator/>

Material	Area	Alternate object/material
Ball Small Ball	Gross Motor Coordination and control of body, arms, legs	Large piece of paper crumpled into large ball (if possible, use tape around paper ball), soccer ball sized pillow, soft toy. Small soft toys that child can easily hold.
Beads to string	Fine Motor Eye–hand coordination, using hands together; pincer grasp with thumb and forefinger	Pasta shapes with a hole, such as tube or wheel pasta, cereal bits with hole, buttons with large holes (different size materials will be easier or more difficult to string). Yarn, pipe cleaner, shoelace, dental floss, fishing line; more rigid stringing materials are easier but anything child can string with is ok.
Book with pictures	Communication Receptive and expressive	Simple pictures the child will recognize (animals, foods, etc.) in a magazine, home-made simple story book with beginning, middle and end, or children’s book online in a tablet or phone.
	Fine Motor -Finger and hand control to flip pages of book or magazine	
Blocks: small (approx. 1 inch)	Fine Motor Eye–hand coordination, coordination of fingers and hand.	Smooth flat rocks; spools of thread, small boxes, food chunks (examples, carrot, zucchini, banana, cantaloupe); items need to be similar in size (approx. 1 inch x 1 inch) and stackable.
	Problem Solving - copy from an adult model	Materials such as jar lids, juice can lids, pieces of food; items should be small and all same type of item—they do not need to be stackable.
Crayons, marker, pencil, pen	Fine Motor grasp, control movements, pre-writing	Small stick, crayon-size that child can grasp, or for older ages use tripod grasp to practice writing; can draw in sand or dirt instead of paper.
	Problem Solving - copy from an adult model	Electronic device that uses finger to draw, finger paint, soapy painting, sauce or pudding on a plate.
Fork (child size)	Personal-Social - feed self, get food, transfer to mouth	Spoon, chopsticks, tortillas or spongy breads to scoop up food.
Ladder or step stool (with steps)	Gross Motor - coordinate body, arms and legs to climb	Large rock or small tree to climb, playground equipment such as climbing walls, climbing structure, monkey bars
Mirror	Problem Solving - Name recognition	Camera on computer or tablet, selfie camera on phone, picture of child (printed or on phone)
	Personal-Social/Self-awareness	
Paper	Fine Motor Finger and hand control, grasp, pre-writing	Paper bag, inside or back of envelope, back side of letter or scrap paper.
Puzzle (6-piece, interlocking)	Problem Solving - focus; visual spatial awareness	Home-made puzzle cut from front of cereal box, full-page picture from a magazine, or simple picture drawn on a full-size piece of paper or cardboard; cut into 6 pieces
Scissors (child-safe)	Fine Motor -Finger, hand, wrist strength and coordination	Small adult scissors with close parent supervision; clothes pins or clips to clip paper or thin cardboard.
Zipper	Communication - Receptive understanding of concepts; up/down, follow directions	Magnet on refrigerator, felt board with felt piece; have child hold arm out, and show them how to move hand up/down.