I am a mom to a special needs child. I do WAY more than you could ever imagine. Now...what's YOUR superpower?!!

someecards user card
Welcome to the Communication and Language Workshop
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What do you think of this quote?

The more you listen, the more you hear.
Auditory vs. Language Processing Disorder

Parents of children who have deficits in language development may recognize the terms “auditory processing” and/or “language processing.” These terms can be confusing, and at times are mistakenly used interchangeably. Basically, when we hear sounds our brains go through a series of steps to process them. The first set of steps is auditory processing and the second set of steps is language processing.
What is Auditory Processing Disorder?

Auditory processing allows us to:

• distinguish and separate sounds
• determine when one distinct sound ends and another one begins
• recognize pitch
Children/Adolescents with Auditory Processing Disorder:

• May have trouble with reading and spelling.
• May have difficulty hearing in the presence of background noise. The student struggles with verbal directions, especially those with multiple steps.
• The student needs information repeated and clarified.
• The student confuses similar-sounding words, like chair and hair.
How can I help my child with Auditory Processing Disorder?

• Reduce background noise
• Gain attention with a touch or voice
• Make sure your child is looking at you when you speak
• Speak at a slightly slower rate, with expression
• If the direction has several parts, pause briefly between parts of the direction
• Add closed captions (subtitles) to movies television shows
• Check for understanding by having your child repeat what you’ve said
• Use an Assistive Listening Device such as an FM system (this may or may not be helpful depending on the type of auditory processing disorder)

HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD WITH AUDITORY PROCESSING DISORDER?
Teach your child to advocate for himself by asking for repetition of information that was not understood.
How you give directions is important...

TOO
MANY
WORDS
SoundHound

SoundHound is an application for the iPad or iPhone. It presents the lyrics at the same time the song is playing. This is a good way to hear the words and pair them with the sounds.
What is Language Processing?

Understanding the spoken message.

• “I ran to school.”
• “Go get your math book.”
• “Put on your coat and get your backpack.”
Symptoms of Language Processing Disorder

- Word retrieval problems
- Overuse of vague terms (e.g., “thing”)
- Misuse of words with related meanings
- Delayed responses; use of fillers (e.g., “Ummmm” “Uhhhhhhh”)
- Incomplete sentences or thoughts
• Use visual support to supplement auditory presented information

• Present new information in a multi-modality and context-rich environment to tap into the other senses

• Allow more “thinking time” to prevent unnecessary pressure during moments of difficulty

Strategies to Assist with Language Processing Difficulties
Strategies to Assist with Language Processing Difficulties

• Encourage your child to seek out a “study buddy” to check information during class assignments

• Make sure your child is ready to listen before you begin speaking

• Use a recording device to listen to class lectures

• Explain idioms or figurative language to your child. For example, don’t assume your child knows what you mean when you say “keep a lid on it”
Light up different centers of the brain when you teach language

If your child is having difficulty with language and auditory processing, present the information in multiple ways to activate different areas of the brain.
Why do we need to know the difference?

In order to effectively address a child’s difficulty with listening...
• it is critical to understand where the breakdown is occurring
• It is critical to have an accurate diagnosis

Treatment of the underlying deficit will ultimately result in the most effective treatment approach for a child’s specific needs.
Conclusion

When a child’s auditory processing and language processing systems are intact, he is able to learn new information and express thoughts effectively and efficiently.

Being able to hear a sound, discriminate it as meaningful speech, recognize it as the word “puppy,” associate the word with an adorable image and pleasant memories, and share these thoughts with others makes it all worthwhile!
What do you think of this quote?

The more you LISTEN
the more you HEAR
References


Problem Solving and Critical Thinking
Give a man a fish...
What is critical thinking?

Critical thinking and Creative thinking are essential components of problem solving.

• **Critical thinking** is the ability to mentally break down a problem or an idea into parts and analyze them. Critical thinking can also be called logical thinking.
  – Challenging and listening are two ways to facilitate critical thinking skills.

• **Creative thinking** is the ability to look at a problem in many different ways.
  – Brainstorming and reflecting are two ways to facilitate creative thinking skills.
How do I develop critical and creative thinking skills in my child?

• Ask open-ended questions
• Categorize and classify
• Work in groups
• Have them make decisions
• Help them find patterns
What is problem solving?

• About.com lists **problem solving** as one of the six most important skills parents should teach their children.
  – Self-discipline
  – Social skills
  – Healthy decision making
  – Impulse control
  – Emotional regulation
  – Confidence
How Do I Promote Problem-Solving?

- Provide rich experiences and meaningful interactions with your child.
- Talk with your child about ideas and questions, not at her about behaviors or routines.
- Harness your child’s abilities to use toys and materials in unique and unexpected ways.
- Respect and value your child's ideas and support and validate her ways of thinking.
But wait! There’s more!

• Listen and talk to every child and ask open-ended questions.
• Do not readily find solutions for your child.
• BRAINSTORM
• Compare and contrast
• Be creative
When children learn problem solving skills, they...

- have more self-confidence
- have fewer behavior problems
- get along better with others
- perform better in school
- have healthier relationships with friends and authority figures
- have strong emotional health
School-age

Create a warm, supportive and playful environment for problem solving

- Manipulate the environment
  - Can’t reach something they want.
  - “Time to set the table. Mom’s not home for dinner.”

- Review calendar skills
  - Loaded with language: “Field day is two weeks from tomorrow,” “How many Fridays are in April?” “How many days until your birthday?”

- Allow your child to pick her clothing each night.
  - Use weather forecast, school schedule to help guide choices

- Think out loud and encourage your child’s participation
  - “We’re out of milk!” Now what?
I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.
References


Fun & Functional
Bringing Speech-Language Skill Development Practice to the Home
Practice makes...Progress!

• Familiarize yourself with your child’s IEP goals. Be mindful of skills that are developing or being targeted for remediation in school.

• Use these goals to create opportunities for practice and generalization at home.
Encouraging Language at Home with Preschoolers

• Gaining Attention

• Creating a need to talk

• Wait! Resist the urge to anticipate your child’s needs.
Gaining Attention

• Engage your child’s attention by:

1. Slowing down and modeling language.

2. Minimizing extraneous noise and distractions.


4. Encourage joint attention (experience sharing between 2 people) through cause and effect type toys or peek-a-boo, for example.
"I have her interest. Now what?"

• Your goal is to help your child move from where they are to the next level.

  From standing nearby → gesturing/pointing → vocalizing/signing → approximating a sound or label → producing a single word request → approximating phrase “I want...” → producing an intelligible production → increasing the number of requests and/or items

• Praise, praise and more praise! Immediately reinforce the behavior by giving your child the requested item. Label what they did; “you said ‘juice’.”

• The highest level of response given by the child becomes the new standard in getting the item on the next request.
Create the need to talk

• A child is much more likely to communicate if he has a reason for doing so.
• Use communication temptations to “tempt” your child to use communication to interact.
• How? Structure the child’s environment so that he cannot access items that they want independently.
Communication Temptations

• Some examples include:

1. Storing snacks/preferred toys in clear containers within view, but not within reach. You could also store these items in containers that are difficult to open.

2. Give your child a smaller than usual amount of liquid in their drinking cup. Let them drink it, then...wait.

3. Make “mistakes.” Children often find it comical when the adults in their life make “mistakes.” They love to have opportunities to point them out to you. This is a great way to build conversation skills. For example, serve dinner and “forget” to give your child their portion.

4. Take out a portion of your child’s favorite snack and start eating it. Wait for them to approach you to request some.

5. For this strategy to be effective, the child must want the thing you are using to tempt them.
Learning through Play

• Play with your child using the toys or games which they select to keep them engaged and give you more opportunity to enhance their language skills.

• If there is a particular toy/game that you have selected to use, a “first..., then...” approach may be helpful in getting your child to comply with your selected activity.
How To Ask Questions

• Asking your child questions is a great way to gauge their understanding and help build their skills, but be sure to find balance in using questions.

• Ask a variety of question types - yes/no, who, what, where, when, why, how, and open-ended.

• Be sure to keep a balance between the number of questions and other remarks, such as comments, expansions and parallel talk.
How to ask questions.

• Use open-ended questions to encourage more than 1 or 2 word responses. This encourages more use of language and critical thinking skills.

• These questions really begin as statements. For example, “tell me about what you are learning in math” or “I wonder what we could make with these materials.”
Key Points

• Give your child time to respond to what you say. Remember, they need to process what they hear, formulate a response, and speak the words to express their ideas.

• Up the ante. Once your child has established a skill at a particular level, encourage a higher level response. Reinforce and praise progress along the way.

• Follow your child’s lead. Use preferred toys and activities to engage them and sneak the language skills in through play.

• Try not to anticipate your child’s needs and wants. When we, as adults, learn to wait, we build opportunity for our children to use their own language skills.

• Incorporate language skill building into your daily routine (in the car, at the store, when working around the home or cooking).

• Schedule a “Family Game Night.” Take some of those games in the closet out, combine each player’s turn with a language task, and have some fun!
Building Conversation Skills

Students learn basic conversational skills by observing, asking questions and interacting with a variety of people.
Conversations are made up of:

• Greeting/initiation of a topic

• Building a conversation
  – Asking and answering questions
  – Exchanging information

• Concluding a conversation
Conversations also include:

- Nonverbal Communication:
  - Eye contact
  - Facial expressions
  - Gestures
A word about figurative language:

Conversations often include figurative language:

- Idioms (Bit off more than I can chew)

- Similes (Busy as a bee)

- Metaphors (Heart of gold)
“Goody! I was hopin’ to get a new puppy!”

WOW! IT’S RAINING CATS AND DOGS OUT THERE!
Sarcasm

Sarcasm is often a part of daily conversations

• Expresses the opposite meaning of what is actually said

• To interpret sarcasm the listener needs to attend to:
The context of the situation: “Lovely Day!”
The tone of voice:

- “Soooorry”
- “Yeah, right!”
The speaker’s facial expression: “It was great.”
How can parents help to develop conversational skills?

• Engage your child in conversations
  - choose a topic your child is interested in (TV show, video game, favorite character)
  - model listening skills
  - model nonverbal skills

• Ask Specific Questions
  - Instead of “What did you do today?”
    Try:
    “You had art today. What materials did you use?”
    “I see you worked in the ‘house area’ today. What did you work with?”
• Take turns asking and answering questions at the dinner table

• Provide natural learning opportunities
  – Use figurative expressions and provide explanation
  – Discuss facial expressions and body language of characters on TV
  – Discuss the literal and figurative meaning
    • Comics often use idioms and metaphors
Conversations outside the home:

• Ordering a meal in a restaurant
• Asking for an item at a store

  – Rehearse with your child
  – Provide the language if necessary
  – Discuss nonverbal skills
Conversation starters:

Activities for the car, while eating dinner, while waiting for an appointment:

- If I could be a super hero
- If I had a million dollars
- If I could have three wishes
Apps for everyday use

How to use your iDevice...
In the community, an iPad is used...

- as a prompting device, offering visual and auditory cues for the student
- to promote independence (e.g. picture activity schedule)
- To stream videos for modeling and play social stories that may be readily available
- To keep a child occupied during family outings especially in unpleasant situations or periods of extended waiting

Please consider the limitations

• As best stated by speech and language pathologist Danielle Samson (cited by S. Heitchew, 2012):

“This [the iPad] is really excellent technology, but does not work for everybody.” (2011)
How can we use the iPad?

• Consider the purpose of the device
  – Augmentative and Alternative Communication
  – Behavior Management
  – Speech Articulation
  – Vocabulary
  – Language Comprehension
  – Social Skills
What do you want from your app?

When looking for an app, having clear ideas about the purpose and function of the app is helpful.

– What do I want the app to do?
– What learning do I want to occur?
– Is the app really educational?
– What is the value in the classroom, home or community?
– Can the app be used for cooperative learning activities, turn taking and group learning?
– What is the cost of the app?
– If it is free, does it have advertising or a link that a student could easily be distracted by?
Let’s work together...