

Communication and Language Leaflet

January 2021

Focus this month:

Developing Listening Skills



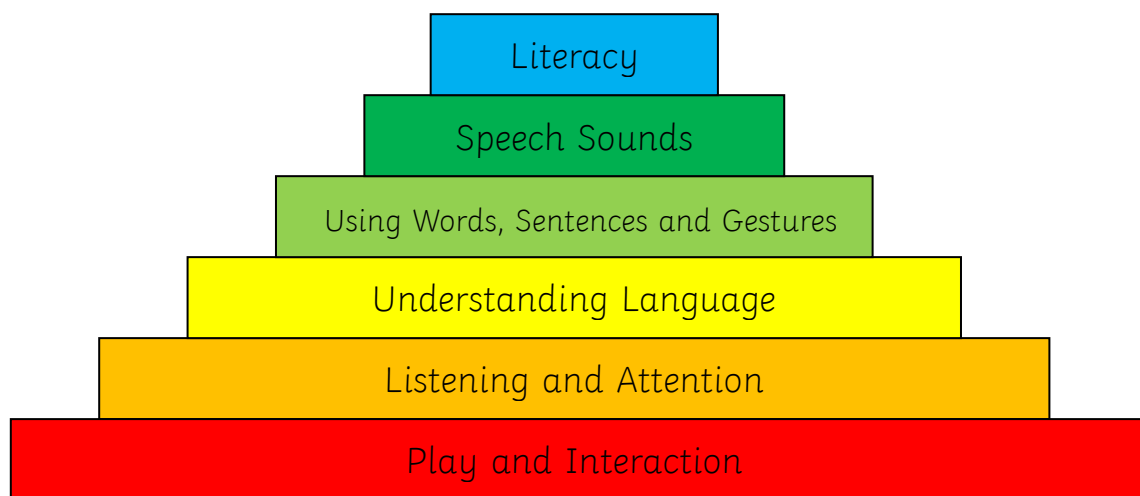
listen



listen

Why is this important?

Listening is a crucial skill for talking and learning. It is one of the first building blocks for talking and is distinct from hearing. Often parents say that their children can hear well but find it difficult to listen. Adults need to show children how to listen and we need to model good listening by listening carefully to them.



Listening is a crucial skill for talking and learning.

Attention and Listening

- Gain your child's attention by saying their name and making sure they are looking at you.
- Use simple actions like touching your ears to indicate you want them to listen.
- Keep instructions short and clear. Be where they can see your face.
- Draw your child's attention to sounds and where they are coming from.
- If they listen well, tell them "Good listening!"
- Try not to talk to them from a long way away. They may not realise you are talking to them.
- Try not to ask them to do something before you have their attention.

Everywhere we go there are many noises for us to listen to. Children need quiet time to help them listen to talking rather than the other noises going on around them.

Adults need to show children how to listen. When we listen to children, they learn what to do to be good listeners.

The best way to help your child to listen is by switching off all other distractions. TV, music, PlayStations etc. all add to background noise. Young children find it very difficult to listen with lots of other things happening around them.

Switch off and talk!

Face to face is the best place...

When you are face to face it will mean that:

- You can make eye contact.
- You can see what your child is saying.
- You can also see your child's facial expressions.
- You can talk about what you are looking at together.
- You can see if your child points or uses a gesture.

Listening Activity Idea 1 – Musical Instruments

You will need:

Get together some objects from around the house that can be used for sound making. Here are some ideas:

- Pans as drums with wooden spoon beaters.
- Plastic bottles as sound shakers- experiment with putting different things in the bottle to make different sounds e.g. pasta, rice, gravel, sand etc.
- Paper- scrunch it up and make different sounds.
- Milk bottles with different amounts of water in.

Let's Talk:
My turn
Your turn
Look
Listen

What to do:

Have fun listening to the different sounds the things make. Help your child play their instruments when you say 'go' and stop when you say 'stop'. Then get your child to be the 'teacher' and tell you when to 'stop' and 'go'.

Help your child play their instruments in different ways. Adjust the volume of the sounds make it loud like a lion or quiet like a mouse. Adjust the speed of the sounds make it slow like a sloth and fast like a cheetah.



Loud



Fast



Quiet



Slow

Listening Activity Idea 2 – Ready, Steady, Go!

You will need:

- Different equipment, depending on the game you play e.g. bubbles, ball, skittles, bricks, cars.

What to do:

This is useful for children to help with their concentration and can be carried out using a variety of games. The main element of this game is to practice waiting for 'go'.

Choose an activity your child likes. The idea is that your child has to wait for 'Ready... Steady... Go!' before they are allowed to do the activity, e.g. roll the ball to the skittles, blow the bubbles, roll the ball/car to each other, knock the tower of bricks down etc.

Let's Talk:

Describe what you are doing and what you see. "I am building a tall tower." "1, 2, 3! I blew 3 bubbles!"



Listening Activity Idea 3 – Where's That Noise?

You will need:

- A clock with a loud tick, your phone with the alarm on, an alarm clock, toy animals or a musical toy.

What to do:

First, let your child listen to the sound they are going to find. Then make your child cover their eyes. No peeking!

Hide the clock/noisy toy in the room and set it going. Go back to your child, tell them to uncover their eyes and go and find where the sound is coming from.

Repeat several times.



Let's Talk:

Try to break some words down into their sounds.

"You found the c-a-t!"

Don't forget to make it fun!

Listening Activity Idea 4 – The Sound Of Silence

You will need:

- A good pair of ears!

What to do:

Start by listening to the sound of silence. You can make some large ears to demonstrate that you listen using ears. You can do this anywhere- at home, in the park, in the woods etc. Encourage your child to look, listen, and see what noisemakers you can find.

Concentrate for as long as your child's interest lasts, whispering the names of each sound you hear. You could start just by doing this for 1 minute using a timer to indicate this. When you have finished you might like to draw some pictures of the sounds you heard.

