

EXPAND SPEECH SOUNDS

Think about what makes your child's speech more or less easy for others to follow.

How can these areas be adapted as well as looking at your child's own speech sound system?

THE SPEECH INTELLIGIBILITY TRIANGLE

Think of speech intelligibility as a triangle.

It's quite fluid, changing depending upon different conversations and situations. Each of the corners of the triangle impacts upon the others. You can change any or all of the three areas in order to help improve how intelligible your child's speech is to others.

The child themselves as the speaker

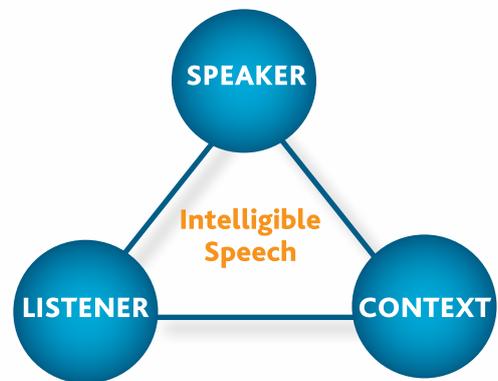
- How confident are they to speak to others? Will they persevere to get their message across? Do they have good communication skills? E.g. saying it differently if someone has not understood, giving the context of what they are talking about. Do they use additional cues if the listener has not followed.
- How clear is their speech sound system when saying the words?

The context of the interaction

- Topic Context: Does the listener know what topic your child is talking about i.e. is the context known or unknown?
- Language Context: Does your child generally use the correct word order so that it is easier to predict what your child might be trying to say?
- Environmental Context: How noisy or distracting is the room you are communicating in? How are you sitting in relation to each other, are you far away, by a bright window or in front of a loud speaker?

The listener in the interaction

- How familiar is the listener with your child? Are they familiar with the speech of children with hearing loss? Are they sympathetic listeners i.e. good at picking up what children are saying, willing to have a try and giving the child confidence to keep trying?



What can I do to help my child be understood?

PROVIDE YOUR CHILD'S LISTENER WITH THE CONTEXT OF WHAT THEY ARE TALKING ABOUT

What topics can I give my child to talk about? Find out when their show and tell day is.

Give your child a tangible prompt of something they can talk about.

- If you go shopping ask them to choose the cereal or a comic, this can be the topic for show & tell at school.

If the listener knows the context they are more likely to follow what your child is saying.

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Helping my child be understood when they are speaking.

> REF: 3.6 Helping my child be understood when I'm not there

How are the corners of the speech intelligibility triangle changing depending upon the different situations my child finds themselves in?



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- If you have read a favorite bedtime story let them take it in to tell their class.
- If you have bought a magazine together you can take a page in to show what you have colored.

Give your child's teachers the contexts for your child's conversations and ask school about what topics they are doing so that you are more likely to follow what your child is saying. This is called Topic Context. If we know the topic it's easier to follow what is being said.

Speech is also more intelligible because of its Language Context. So as your child's word order and sentence structure develop, people will more easily predict the word they are likely to be saying and so hear it more easily. As modern hearing technology improves, deaf children are less often having word order difficulties in their spoken language. If your child persistently has word order difficulties, consult your local professionals or cochlear implant team.

OTHERS NEED TO KNOW WHAT THEY CAN DO TO EASE CONVERSATIONS

Your child will be more intelligible to familiar and sympathetic listeners.

- As a family and as a class session, talk about how we speak well and what we can do if someone doesn't understand us. Include ideas of how to communicate in a group and how your child can take some control and manage difficult communication situations themselves. Have these on a wall chart, in a communication book or summarized to go in your child's daily school folder.
- Consistent staffing is important. If there is a temporary teacher for a day, remind your child of the strategies they can use to help themselves be understood better. Highlight the communication book (strategies) to the temporary teacher.

Make eye contact with me

- Adults physically get down to my level.
- Speak to me from ideally 1 meter but no more than 2 meters away.
- Slow down your rate of speech, but keep the natural rhythm.
- Speak naturally and don't over articulate.
- Say a tricky sentence again using different vocabulary.
- Say it again using shorter sentences.

GIVE YOUR CHILD STRATEGIES FOR WHEN CONVERSATIONS ARE HARD

The following are ideas of things to talk about with your child. Let them say what helps them and what doesn't. If you write them down, keep them and show them to school. They could be included in your child's individual program of study or school folder so that other members of staff will also see it.

If I don't understand the speaker

- I will ask, what does that word mean?
- I will say pardon.
- I will ask the teacher to put the radio aid on or to pass it around the class to those speaking.
- I will ask if it could be a bit quieter in here.

If someone doesn't understand me

- I will say the sentence in a different way.
- I will slow down a bit.
- I will turn and look at them and say it again.
- I will tell them the subject I am talking about first.



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What is a communication book?

➤ REF: 4.0 Focus upon good communication wherever your child is.



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Helping my child's speech - using their Listening Loop.

➤ REF: 3.6 Helping your child hear the correct way of saying the words.

Remember: Be Sensitive - my child needs to stay confident in their speech abilities. Naturally remodelling clear speech production is crucial, but choose my moments.

Remember the Listening Loop: Highlighting the sound over and over again gives your child the chance to compare how you and they say a word.

THINGS WHICH MAKE IT EASIER TO SPEAK AND LISTEN IN A GROUP

- When in a group, one person speaks at a time and others take it in turns to say something.
- Don't have music on in the background when doing creative activities because then I can't hear what people are saying to me.
- Please say my name if I need to turn to look at the speaker in a noisy room.
- Try and cut down background chatter when teaching from the front of class or when discussing issues.
- Wear my radio aid. Turn it on for whole class work, hand it to the child speaking during discussions and turn it off when you are talking to another group and I'm working independently.
- Structure turns in a discussion so that I can have some time to think about what I want to say and can be given an opportunity to say it.
- Let me use visual cues like drawings and objects in my contribution so that others can follow what I'm saying.



My child's speech sounds

Some of the sounds in my child's speech are unclear or they use a different sound.

Even with modern hearing technology, speech clarity is dependent upon many factors which affect all children. These include your child's age, their listening skills, articulation skills, their communicative confidence.

A Speech & Language Therapist will be able to advise you on how to best approach focusing upon your child's speech sound system. A lot of children develop clearer speech over time, but you need the building blocks of listening and language in place first before specific focused work can be undertaken.

Speech sounds naturally develop at different times. Your child will follow a similar pattern to their hearing peers. Focus upon the earlier or easier sounds first.

Remember the Listening Loop: Expose your child to the sound you are targeting over and over again. Highlight them within games, repetitive books, phrases, words in pop songs, jokes, etc. For example: Ssss' sound. Play a game, 'I can see something red' (what is it?). Read a book e.g. Socks by Nick Sharratt

Helping my child's speech sounds through early phonics work

There is a link between a child's use of sounds in their speech and their use of sounds in written language.

At a young age we can focus upon this through their early phonics and pre-reading work.

A lot of our child's early reading work at pre-school and school is based around the theory linking speech sounds with phonics. For example, listening to rhyming words, the sounds at the beginning and ends of words, breaking words up by their sounds or syllables (robot talk). Remember how we Listen and Remember words? Part of it involves knowing which sounds are at the beginning and ends of words and which words rhyme with each other.

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The theory is a little complicated! Fortunately we don't really need to know it all. The **Speech Based Listening Games** are a lot of fun and are important, so let's do more of them at home.

Challenge: We need to build up my child's specific listening skills so that, if adapted for their specific needs, they can fully participate in all the phonics based activities in school.

Some useful adaptations are listed in the NDCS (National Deaf Children's Society) Phonics Guidance – for the teaching of phonics to deaf children in mainstream schools.

www.ndcs.org.uk/professional-support/our-resources/phonics-guidance

SPEECH BASED LISTENING GAMES

There are a lot of fun games that can be played which focus upon each of the specific skills your child needs to build up their listening skills and hopefully then improve their speech production skills.

These sections are linked with the 'Checklist', 'How is my child listening and using speech sounds in words?'

1. The number of words in a sentence
2. Rhyming words
3. Words are broken into syllables
4. The sound at the beginning of a word
5. Beginning, Middle, End sounds of words
6. Segmenting words into their sounds and building words up from their sounds (blending)
7. Sounds in words can be analyzed & manipulated



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Use quick games at home to build up your child's listening to speech sounds.

➤ REF: 3.8 Speech based listening games

They can therefore participate fully in all the phonics based activities in school if adapted to their specific needs, and focus upon building their listening skills.

something to do

ACTIVITY: Listening to and using speech sounds in words

Skill	Skill Label	Child's skill	My child
1 The number of words in a sentence can be identified e.g. 'how many words in this sentence?' 'Hello Tim' (2)	Sentence Segmentation		
2 Rhyming words are recognised and produced e.g. Key, Tree, Bee	Rhyming	Rhyming	
3 Words are broken into syllables E.g Ba-na-na, Um-bre-la	Syllable Segmentation	Robot syllable speak	
4 The sound at the beginning of the word (c-ar, b-ike, tr-ee, sl-ide)	Onset & Rime	Beginnings and Ends of words	
5 Sounds at the beginning, middle and end of words are identified.	Phoneme Identification	Beginning, Middle, End sounds	
6 Words broken into their individual sounds or built up into words. (c-a-t, p-o-t-a-t-o)	Phoneme Segmentation & Blending	Robot letter speak	
7 Sounds within words are manipulated (take 's' from spot = pot)	Phoneme Analysis	Creating new words Aliens learning to speak our language	

NOTE: Checklist available in the Resources Section item# 2J.

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A hierarchy of speech based listening games.

➤ REF: 3.8 How is my child listening to and using speech sounds



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ACTIVITY: Listening & Using Speech Sounds in Words

How is my child listening and using speech sounds in words?

	Skill	Skill label	Child's skill	My child
1	The number of words in a sentence can be identified e.g. 'how many words in this sentence?' 'Hello Tim' (2)	Sentence segmentation		
2	Rhyming words are recognised and produced e.g. Key, Tree, Bee	Rhyming	Rhyming	
3	Words are broken into syllables e.g Ba-na-na, Um-bre-la	Syllable segmentation	Robot syllable speak	
4	The sound at the beginning of the word (c-ar, b – ike, tr-ee, sl-ide)	Onset & rhyme	Beginnings and ends of words	
5	Sounds at the beginning, middle and end of words are identified	Phoneme identification	Beginning, middle, end sounds	
6	Words broken into their individual sounds or built up into words. (c-a-t, p-o-t-a-t-o)	Phoneme segmentation & blending	Robot letter speak	
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CHECKLIST ACTIVITY: 1) The number of words in a sentence

Occasionally as doing other things, ask your child how many words you used in the sentence. Start off with sentences they can read. Later, you read the sentence your child tells you and checks himself by reading it.

- Title of the book
- Title of the next chapter
- Words on a sign



CHECKLIST ACTIVITY: 2) Rhyming words

Initially your child will learn to recognize rhyme and then they will learn to generate it. Start with repetitive stories which your child is familiar with e.g. *Room on the Broom*, *Gruffalo*, *Stuck in the Muck*. Look at some poems at bedtime. Read a sentence and ask them which two words rhyme? Choose ones which look similar at first then progress. Find a word; can they think of another word which would rhyme with this one? Can your child guess what the last word might be to rhyme with an earlier word in a phrase?

Football cards or child's magazine

Find a word; can you make up a rhyming sentence?

- COLE: Cheryl Cole in a hole, with a mole.
- ROONEY: Rooney looking looney.
- TERRY: John Terry on a ferry, wishing you a Merry Christmas.

A group rhyming game

- Slap + Clap games.
 - » Count slowly 1,2,3,4.
 - » Slap your knees, clap your hands, snap fingers on one hand, snap fingers on other hand.
 - » Keep this rhythm up, but don't speed up!
 - » First person says two words that link e.g Rhyme Cat – Hat.
 - » Everyone keeps the slap + clap rhythm going.
 - » Next person says the last word and then one more e.g. Hat – Bat.

You can allow real and nonsense words as long as they follow the established rule.

If a word is wrong or if the rhythm is broken, you stop and the next person in the circle starts with a fresh word. Apply varying degrees of strictness depending upon those who are involved!

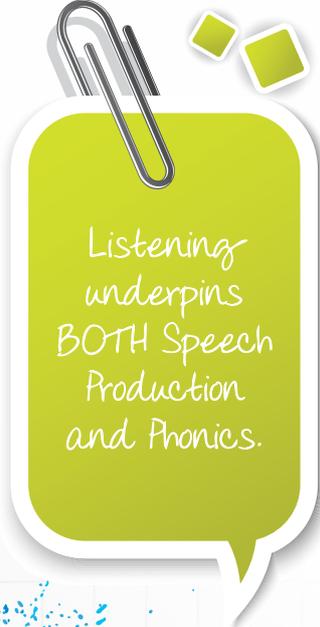


CHECKLIST ACTIVITY: 3) Words are broken into syllables

When reading together you will come across longer words which are harder to read. Encourage your child to sound it out; at the end say the word together. Can your child tell you how many syllables are in that word?

Syllable Snakes & Ladders

- Choose a topic e.g. what you can see, where you are sitting, or find a magazine or picture to prompt you, or a picture of a recent holiday, etc.
- Think of a word. How many syllables does it have? Move forwards this number of squares.
- Be clever and land on the ladders and miss the snakes!



Listening underpins BOTH Speech Production and Phonics.



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