

# SEND Bulletin NO. 18



## Verbal comprehension

Verbal comprehension is the ability to listen to information that has been given orally then, remember it, understand it and use the information across a range of tasks.

Children who have difficulty in this area may:

- have problems with understanding oral directions and instructions
- have poor attention and listening skills
- be easily distracted by classroom noise
- often ask for repetition of what has been said
- have difficulty following more complex discussion
- have some word-finding difficulties
- have reading comprehension problems
- have difficulty understanding information without visual and concrete cues
- have difficulty in understanding abstract concepts
- give inappropriate answers to questions
- have poor organisational skills
- have kinaesthetic strengths (learning more easily when actively involved in a lesson through movement and touch)
- have visual/spatial strengths (learn more easily from charts, diagrams, videos, demonstrations and other visual materials).

## Activities to develop verbal comprehension skills

### Follow directions

- a) follow everyday directions (eg 'line up by the door');
- b) follow more complex directions, using directional and positional language (forwards, right, half-turn, north, etc).

### Simon says

The familiar game, using a range of body movements.

## **Follow instructions**

Follow simple instructions, a) using possessives ('put your book on my desk');  
b) using language of time ('go out to play after you have tidied up');  
c) using adjectives ('put the small, blue balls in the basket').

## **Listen and colour/listen and draw**

Listen to oral descriptions, then colour or draw a picture.

## **Yes or no?**

Oral true/false statements; can be simple (eg 'a fish can swim', 'a dog can whistle') or more complex (eg 'an insect has three body parts', 'all insects have wings'). The level of complexity depends on pupil ability within the curriculum area.

## **Sense or nonsense**

Listen to sentences, then identify those that make sense; this could be linked to a subject topic. Pupils can also read, write or draw sentences that make sense.

## **Picture/sentence matching**

Listen to sentences, then identify the correct picture for each; this can be used to focus on grammatical understanding of words within sentences (eg 'the brown dog is behind the tree').

## **What am I?**

Listen and identify the item from four or five oral sentence clues, becoming easier from first to last. See how quickly pupils can guess it.

## **Who am I?**

Guess the person after listening to descriptive sentence clues (story characters, occupations, animals, etc).

## **Where am I?**

Choose a location on a map after listening to oral clues (using positional language).

## **Cause and effect**

Complete a sentence orally (eg 'The tree fell down because...').

## **Why? Because**

Story character motivation activities (eg 'Why do you think he shut the gate?'), using a range of familiar/unfamiliar texts.

If you have any particular items you would like information on or any interesting information or resources which you would like to share with your colleagues via this fortnightly bulletin please e-mail them to me:

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Many thanks

Anne

SEN / ARI/ 06/07/2022