

Auditory Memory Strategies

Auditory memory involves being able to take-in information that is presented orally, to process that information, store it in one's mind and then recall what one has heard. Basically, it involves the skills of attending, listening, processing, storing and recalling. If a child struggles with auditory memory, they can find it difficult to follow instructions and pay attention. They may only pick-up bits and pieces of what is being said so can only recall a small amount or none of what is said. The following strategies can be used to support children with poor auditory memory.

- Limit the length and complexity of the message.
- Keep directions short and concise.
- When possible, break down instructions into smaller steps that are easier to remember.
- Repeat and/or rephrase important information.
- Have the student verbally repeat and rehearse information that should be remembered.
- Encourage the child to clarify if he has not understood what was said.
- Use comprehension checks to determine if key instructions have been understood.
- Use visual supports for instruction (for example, pointing, pictures, objects). Note—this may not be appropriate for the group of children who have difficulty integrating visual and auditory information.
- Write down key information to be remembered.
- Organize information to be learned; categorize information, i.e. it is easier to recall more words from a list if the words are categorized or “grouped” in some way (e.g. furniture, food).
- Allow extra time for the child to think and respond when answering questions.
- Allow extra time for class and homework assignments and examinations.
- Pre-teach new vocabulary and concepts before starting a new area topic (liaising with parents will be important to assist in this process).
- Encourage the child to use punctuation when reading as this provides pauses between segments of information and aids memory.
- Once literacy is established, encourage the use of agendas and timetables to support learning and organisation; use picture prompts for younger children who have not developed their literacy skills.
- Keep "cheat sheets" on hand for reference; help the child put together pages of grammar guidelines, math formulas, and foreign-language conjugation rules that can be used in class when needed.
- Teach the child to highlight or underline important facts/key words in questions when reading, and to re-read the underlined material.
- Encourage the child to review test material early and often; focus on small amounts at a time and periodically review what already been mastered.

- Encourage use of reminders to keep the child organized and ready to learn; use a daily planner or electronic calendar, and develop a routine for checking it.
- Encourage use of memory strategies to help the child learn new information and retain it over time. For example:
 - **Visualisation** means making a picture of something in your head so that you can remember it; when we make an internal visual image of information that we have heard, it helps us to remember the information.
 - **Rehearsal** involves the repetition of words, either silently to yourself or quietly out aloud, so that it is more easily remembered.
 - **Linking ideas** helps children remember information because it helps them to group like things together; one way of linking is to use categories.
 - **Create chants, rhymes, and raps** to remember spelling rules, multiplication tables, and history facts; rhythm makes information memorable.
 - **Use acronyms** and crazy phrases to remember a list of items; the acronym HOMES is often used to remember the Great Lakes: Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, and Superior. And how could you forget the names of the planets (and their relative distances from the sun) once you've learned that "My Very Excellent Mother Just Served Us Nine Pizzas"?

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