ECC Series: Compensatory Skills – Listening Skills

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3:00-4:00 PM

Presented by
Ann Adkins – TSBVI Outreach
adkinsa@tsbvi.edu

Developed for
Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired Outreach Programs
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Housekeeping

- Download handouts and sign-in roster from Files pod if you do not have them.
- Send sign-in roster to keithc@tsbvi.edu or fax to 512-206-9320
- Make sure you registered and complete evaluation within 60 days including code for ACVREP/SBEC credit
- View captions in a separate window at www.streamtext.net/text.aspx?event=TSBVI
- Part 1 of code: will be announced at the start of the webinar only. After 3:15 PM you will not be able to get this information, so please do your best to be on time.

Adobe Connect Webinar Tour

- For tips about screen navigation go to http://www.connectusers.com/tutorials/2008/11/meeting_accessibility/
- Location of pods
- Power Point content included in your handout
- Poll participation – enter response in chat if you cannot access the poll

To join the meeting: http://tsbvi.adobeconnect.com/ecc/
ECC Series: Compensatory Skills – Listening Skills

Importance of Listening Skills Instruction for Students with Visual Impairments

• “The world provides an abundance of sounds and auditory information, information that will facilitate our students’ understandings of and access to their curriculum, their environment, and their community, and contribute to their success and engagement in life…”
  • Source - Barclay, viii
• “Every student with a visual impairment must rely heavily upon the distance sense of hearing…(which) provides the means for understanding the environment around them.”
  • Source - Barclay, vii
• “The ability to listen is essential to individuals who are visually impaired.”
• “…the deliberate development of listening skills for all children with visual impairments needs to begin in infancy and continue through a child’s development.”
  • Source - Barclay, page 3

More…Importance of Listening Skills

• So much of what we do as TVIs “hinges” upon the development of excellent listening skills…listening skills play an important role in the continued development of:
  o Language and communication skills
  o Concept development
  o Literacy skills
  o Skills for independent travel (O&M)
  o Appropriate social interaction skills
  o The use of technology

“Hearing” vs. “Listening”

• “Whereas hearing is the passive ability to receive sound, listening is a deliberate process by which sound is given meaning. Listening is a learned skill.”
  • Source - G. Ferrington (2003), in Barclay, page 3
• Research discusses listening as an “active cognitive process”…
  – For students with visual impairments, this process “takes a unique path”
  – It must be “more deliberate and more experiential”
  • Source - Barclay, page 5

Passive vs. Active Listening

• Barclay’s book describes examples of inappropriate “instruction” in listening skills – using passive approaches such as shaking a sound-making object next to a child, putting headphones on the student so they can listen to the story, playing a recording of environmental sounds, etc. (page 5)
• None of these require active listening unless they are paired with an activity, objects or something meaningful.
Providing Meaningful, Real-Life Experiences

- What is heard is not meaningful unless it is associated with something that is already known.
- Research suggests that when sensory input, including auditory information, is imbedded within a purposeful activity, it is meaningful to the central nervous system and can promote learning.

Providing Meaningful Experiences

- Students must be actively involved in the listening activity in order to be able to connect it to previously learned (heard & understood) information and to imbed the information into long-term memory.
- Our students need many meaningful, real-life experiences with sounds and auditory information in order to connect what they are hearing (new information) to sounds they heard & understood before.

Active Listening & Learning

- Active involvement & interactions promote active listening!
- An indication of the relationships between listening skills, language skills, communication skills, concept development – and the real-life experiences needed to teach them.

Why We Must Teach Listening Skills

- “Adults and peers often have a tendency to assume that some students with visual impairments understand the language they hear based on the fact that the students may say a lot of words.” (ECC Essentials, page 133)
- “One cannot assume that excellent listening skills are innate in students with visual impairments.” (Sharon Sacks in Forward to Barclay, v.)
- “Learning to listen and using listening skills effectively require systematic instruction…”
- “Learning to listen skillfully does not happen for our students without guidance and instruction.”
- “It is essential for children with visual impairments to learn how to take meaning from what they hear and feel.”
- Source - Barclay, Preface & Chapter 1, page 4

How Do We Do This?

- Begin with evaluation!
- Identify strengths and needs – especially identify the gaps in learning that we know students with visual impairments may have.
- Plan the instruction & resources needed.
Resources for Evaluation of Listening Skills

- EVALS Kit (TSBVI, 2007), Section 1: Listening-Auditory Skills Checklist
- Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Early Development (Curriculum Associates, 2004)
- Oregon Project for Visually Impaired and Blind Preschool Children (Southern Oregon Education Service District, 2007)
- Independent Living Curriculum (TSBVI, 1993) – Volume 1 on Social Competence

Instruction in Listening Skills

- Must be deliberate & systematic
- Lack of incidental learning (observation) necessitates a “more conscious effort” to compensate for missing visual information
- Teach through meaningful experiences (must be meaningful to the student)
- It can help to add a tactual or visual component to sounds instead of using auditory information alone
- Repetition of experiences is important!
- Pair the language used with touch, actions, and objects
- Model and teach the language that links the perception of sounds to known information (what was previously heard and understood…importance of evaluation!)
- Use descriptive words that label the things they are hearing to what they are seeing, touching, tasting or doing
- Be consistent! Everyone on student’s team should use the same language & terminology.
- Monitor your own language – more is not always best. Use simple directions instead of questions & explanations.
- Allow & encourage students to participate as fully as possible in daily routine activities in order to help them develop an understanding of the language concepts involved.
- Consider the importance of *object permanence* for students with visual impairments & its relationship to listening skills. Barclay emphasized the relationship of object permanence to *joint attention*, which is crucial for communication skills (page 7).
Resources

For Instruction:

- *ECC Essentials – Chapters 4 & 5* (AFB Press, 2014)
- Listen and Think Series, APH (1972) – 3 levels (plus multiple choice answer sheets & teachers’ handbook)
- Oregon Project for Visually Impaired and Blind Preschool Children (Southern Oregon Education Service District, 2007)

Information about *Learning to Listen, Listening to Learn* (Barclay, 2012)

Two parts to book:
- Part 1 has six chapters on the development of listening skills, from infancy through high school, plus a chapter on O&M.
- Part 2 addresses the unique needs of students with additional disabilities related to listening skills, including those with hearing impairments, learning disabilities, and English language learners.

More on *Learning to Listen, Listening to Learn*

- Appendix A = Listening Skills Continuum (lists essential skills needed by age & grade level; includes sources for evaluation & instruction)
- Appendix B = Informal Checklist for Listening Skills Development
- Research based
- Strategies for students at all levels
- For both teachers and parents

More Information...

- Emphasizes the importance of specific & systematic instruction in listening skills
- Highlights the early development of listening skills at home and school, as well as the “shift” that students must make beginning in elementary school – to gain “access” to information in the classroom & in the community

And Even More...

- Comprehensive list of references at end of each chapter
- Annotated resource list at end of book
- LOTS of sidebars, tables, charts, lists of suggested activities, case studies, & lesson ideas throughout the book
- First-hand accounts from students & adults with visual impairments
- Strategies to support early literacy
Listening Skills and Literacy

- “In general…the auditory channel cannot be a student’s primary system for learning and obtaining information…”
- “Primary dependence on auditory information for learning…is not a reliable strategy unless the auditory information is parred with visual and tactile information.”
- *ECC Essentials*, page 133
- “Listening does not take the place of reading!”
- Listening is “an important learning medium that supplements and supports literacy skills.”
- But listening skills are important for the development of reading & writing skills, and later for acquiring information during classroom activities.
- Barclay, pages 17 & 18

Listening Skills Related to Literacy

- Discriminates & identifies verbal and nonverbal sounds
- Demonstrates understanding of spoken words, syllables, & sounds (phonemes)
- Knows & applies grade-level phonics & word-analysis skills in decoding words
- Asks & answers questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through auditory media
- Selects the main idea, summarizes, relates one idea to another, makes inferences
- Recounts or describes key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through auditory media
- Connects literary texts to personal experiences and previously encountered texts to enhance understanding and appreciation
- Barclay, page 108

Conclusion

The development of effective listening skills enhances the lives of all students with visual impairments…they:

- Improve awareness & understanding of the world,
- Are essential for understanding concepts & developing communication skills,
- Increase security & encourage curiosity,
- Are a prerequisite for satisfying social interactions, &
- Provide the foundation for literacy skills.
- Barclay, page 20
Additional Resources

- Paths to Literacy: [http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/developing-listening-skills](http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/developing-listening-skills) - information from Diane Brauner – and Jim Durkel (!)
- Wonder Baby: [http://www.wonderbaby.org/articles/listening-skills](http://www.wonderbaby.org/articles/listening-skills)
- *Imagine the Possibilities: Creative Approaches to Orientation and Mobility Instruction for Persons Who Are Visually Impaired* (AFB, 2001) – Chapter 4 on concept development
- Website: [http://www.teachingvisuallyimpaired.com/listening-skills.html](http://www.teachingvisuallyimpaired.com/listening-skills.html)

Poll Questions

Topics you’d like for us to address:

- Concept development
- Communication skills &/or language development
- Access to print materials
- Use of braille
- Nemeth Code
- Abacus
- Organization and study skills
- Spatial understanding
- Use of adaptive equipment
- Others to write in

Preferences for training formats:

- 1 hour webinars
- Longer webinars
- Face to face trainings
- Individual consultations/Theory to practice
- other
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Figure 1 TSBVI logo.

“*This project is supported by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the U.S. Department of Education.*

Figure 2 IDEAs that Work logo and OSEP disclaimer.