



Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Outreach Programs

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ECC Series: Compensatory Skills – Listening Skills

April 14, 2016

3:00-4:00 PM

Presented by

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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:
 - Language and communication skills
 - Concept development
 - Literacy skills
 - Skills for independent travel (O&M)
 - Appropriate social interaction skills
 - 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

- *Learning to Listen, Listening to Learn* (AFB Press, 2012), Appendix B: Informal Checklist for Listening Skills Development
- Listening Skills Inventory, 2008 & 2009, from Learning Ally: Learning Through Listening (www.ltl.learningally.org)
- 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
- *Reading Connections: Strategies for Teaching Students with Visual Impairments* (AFB Press, 2015). Figure 10.2: Assessment of Listening Comprehension, page 256.

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:

- ✓ *Learning to Listen, Listening to Learn* (AFB Press, 2012)
- Learning Ally: Learning Through Listening (www.ltl.learningally.org) - Listening Skills Inventory, 2008 & 2009
- *ECC Essentials – Chapters 4 & 5* (AFB Press, 2014)
- *Reading Connections: Strategies for Teaching Students with Visual Impairments* (AFB Press, 2015) – Chapter 10, pages 251 & 256
- 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> - information from Diane Brauner – and Jim Durkel (!)
- Wonder Baby: <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>

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.



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Figure 2 IDEAs that Work logo and OSEP disclaimer.