

AUDITORY MEMORY

Auditory memory is the memory for things you have just heard. It is an important skill as it helps you keep words long enough in your head for you to be able to work out what they mean. It is easier to remember what you have heard if you can see things which remind you.

Auditory Memory Strategies:

Auditory memory is the memory for things you have just heard. These skills can be improved through practice. People with a good auditory memory often use a strategy to help them remember what they have heard.

Some children need to be taught these strategies, especially children who find it difficult to remember what they hear. There are several strategies listed below:

- **Silent Rehearsal**
This is when instructions or key words are repeated SILENTLY. For example, if a child is told to “Go to Mr Brown’s office and tell him that Tommy is going to the dentist”, they would have to silently repeat (in their heads, or mouthing, or to begin with even saying quietly) the important words – Mr Brown, Tommy, dentist.
- **Visualising**
When the child is given an instruction, they may be able to IMAGINE themselves doing the task. If they can imagine what has to happen, they won’t need to rely on their auditory memory – they can use their visual memory instead.
- **Chunking**
This involves BREAKING DOWN instructions into smaller, manageable pieces. For example, when we’re told a phone number we don’t try to remember it as 6 individual numbers, but instead try to remember it as groups of numbers e.g. 722294 is usually remembered as; seven-double-two and two-nine-four.
- **Physical Strategies**
This is useful when instructions can be broken down into lists. Children can count the instructions on their fingers, use counters, or push beads on a string (like an abacus) – this means that they have a physical/visual reminder about how many details they have been given.

Children will find some strategies more useful than others, and may even be able to suggest/adapt strategies so that they can be used more successfully.

Before introducing any of these techniques, it might be useful to see if the child can identify any strategies that they are ALREADY using. These can then be practiced and developed.

Activities:

Before you try these activities, make sure that your child:

- Will not be distracted by noises or other things going on nearby
- Is ready to listen (i.e. call his/her name)
- Keeps looking at you while you are talking
- Waits for you to finish before starting
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If he/she gets part but not all of it right, try again with the whole sentence. Breaking the sentence down makes it a lot easier, so only do this after a couple of tries – it is good for your child to experience success in the end! Try not to give away clues with your hands or through looking at the right things.

Each activity involves asking the child to choose some objects by name from a small selection available. You can make the task harder by having more items to choose from, and easier by having less of a choice. The more things you ask for in one go, the harder your child will find it! Try asking for 2 things at first. Ask for more if your child can do this easily and less if they find 2 items difficult. The right number to practise is when your child gets it right sometimes and wrong sometimes – stick with that number of items until they get a bit better.

You can make it fun by playing these games:

- SHOPPING – tell the child which things to 'buy' from the 'shop' on the other side of the room (a table with some objects on).
- POSTING – tell the child which pictures/objects to put in the 'post box' (Make a hole in a cardboard box).
- WASHING – tell the child which clothes to put in the washing machine/ hang on a pretend washing line (a piece of string across the room).
- HIDING – tell the child which pictures/ objects to hide around the room. You/ another child then has to look for them. Don't worry if your child tells you where to look – children often do this!
- PUZZLES – tell him/her which pieces to put back in the puzzle.
- FISHING – use a magnetic fishing rod/ a fridge magnet on a piece of string. Put paperclips onto pictures/photo's of members of your family or friends. Tell your child which one to catch with the magnet.

- FARMS – put some toy farm animals out around the room. Make some animal noises for your child to go and fetch those toys. When he's collected them he/she might like to choose whether to put them in the field/ barn/ give them some dinner etc.
- SPORTS DAY - say a sequence of 3 actions for your child to do e.g. 'run, hop, jump'. Can your child remember Them?
- MUSIC - Play a series of 3 instruments behind a chair. Can your child play them in the same order when it's their turn? (Make sure they know what sound all the instruments make first).

Auditory Memory Ideas For Older Children:

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Activities

- 1) Spread some objects/ pictures visibly around the room. Then take it in turns to tell the other which ones to collect. Give a moment for the person to see where they are, then say 'ready-steady-go'. See who can collect their pictures/ objects the fastest. Start off with having 3 at a time and increase it if it's too easy.
- 2) Put some objects (or pictures) under up-turned beakers/boxes (one under each). Mix the beakers around and then take it in turns to say which 3 the other person has to hunt for under the cups. Again, if 3 is too easy, increase the number you say at a time to the appropriate level for your child.
- 3) A 'sorting out' game, telling each other where to put the objects. E.g. 'put the ball in the box and the cup and car in the bag!' This is a 5-word example. Choose an easier sentence depending on what your child can cope with.
- 4) When you have read a story, get your child to re-tell it without looking at the pictures again. Try to go through everything that happened in it – you might need to give some clues/ alternatives if your child gets stuck.
- 5) 'I went shopping and I bought...' game. Take turns to add an item to the list. Each time you must repeat all the items in the list in the right order. Encourage the child to look at the person to help them remember what that person bought.
- 6) 'Name that tune' Hum or sing a tune e.g. 'Eastenders', 'Blue Peter', a song from school. Can the children say where it is from?
- 7) 'The Lorry Driver' draw a simple map on a piece of paper with some roads, a school, shop, car park, library etc. on it. Name the streets. Give instructions to follow e.g. 'Go up Silly Street and turn left at the top and drive past the swimming baths'.

Putting things into sequence is an important skill closely associated with auditory memory

Time and Sequence Concepts:

Some examples of time concepts:

First/last	Days	Before/after
Early/late	Months	Arrive/leave
Finish/start	Seasons	Now/later

Activities

- **Days**

Practise chanting the days of the week.

Talk about what day it is today and talk about yesterday/tomorrow.

Draw a picture to represent something you have done today, collect a weeks worth and make them into a chart.

- **Times of the Day**

Make a chart divided into columns with a symbol in each column to represent the time of day

e.g. morning, afternoon, evening, night. Think about things you do at different times of the day and draw them in the right columns.

- **Months and Seasons**

Practise chanting the months of the year.

Talk about the month we are in now, what was last month? What will be next month?

Make a chart showing:

People's Birthdays.

Seasons.

Special events such as Easter, Christmas, Halloween, Bonfire night, Eid, Hanukah.

- **Sequencing**

Almost any task that involves a sequenced set of activities can be used to teach time concept words.

Choose a task where activities need to be done in a certain order e.g. making toast, getting dressed.

Do the activity with the child or act it out with toys (e.g. dress dolly, teddy going out). Emphasise the time concept words you want to teach e.g. first, next, then, after. Then repeat the task with the child giving you instructions to follow. Sets of pictures are available to sequence in the right order.

- **Make a Story**

Write some events on pieces of paper and see if your child can put them in the right order eg. 'Brush teeth, get up, go to school, have breakfast'. You can do this with days of the week, and also with pictures/ photographs.

- **Sequences**

Practise any sequences you can think of e.g. Days of the week, months, seasons, numbers, the alphabet, morning routines, school lesson order, getting dressed etc.

- **Game Rules**

Ask your child to tell you the rules of a game. Can they get the rules in the right order? Write the rules down as they are said and help your child put the sentences/ rules in the right order to make more sense.