



# Laguna Beach Language & Speech Clinic

Helping Children and Empowering Parents

31642 So. Coast Hwy, Ste. #205, Laguna Beach, CA 92651

www.lagunabeachlanguagespeech.com 949 715 5845

## How Many Times Do I Have to Tell You??

Well that depends. Many things can happen between receiving an auditory signal and acting upon it. Quick science review; in order for you to hear a sound, there must be an auditory signal and an ear to capture it. Once the signal hits your ear, your brain goes to work interpreting the signal. First, the signal is coded as speech or a non-speech sound. Then it's further labeled for storage in the brain so it can be retrieved or assigned further meaning in the future. We learn that sounds blend to formulate words and words sequenced together convey a message. Finally the brain learns how to process auditory stimuli and act upon the information accordingly.

After attending more than a few workshops, I found that Lori Heymann, MA, CCC-SLP, Director of the Auditory Processing Center in Manhattan, NY created a table that outlined the layering skills needed for top down and bottom up processing of verbal (auditory) information. I went further and defined these skills as it related to the classroom curriculum and therapy. By knowing the key elements and scaffolding of skills needed to comprehend the spoken word, it becomes easier for parents, caregivers and educators to figure out where the auditory breakdown may be occurring. Since children spend 50-70% of each school day learning through listening, we need to actively teach AND practice these skills often.

<b>Oral Cohesion</b>				
<b>Following Directions</b>	<b>Answering Oral Questions</b>		<b>Identifying Main Idea</b>	
<b>Phonological Segmentation</b> Recognizing part –whole relationships within words Recognizing that words are made up of sounds/syllables; prefixes, suffixes		<b>Phonological Blending</b> Recognizing how to blend sounds to form syllables and words		
<b>Auditory Memory</b> Remembering & retaining what you heard		<b>Auditory sequential memory</b> Remembering and retaining the order of information you heard		
<b>Auditory Figure Ground</b> Being able to filter out irrelevant sounds and attend to the speaker	<b>Auditory Phoneme Discrimination</b> Discerning the difference between sounds; m vs. n, p vs. d, b  Minimal pairs: Change 1 sound, change meaning Mop vs. hop Cone vs. cove	<b>Suprasegmentals</b> Hearing the variation of timing between words as well as how pitch, tone and prosody conveys meaning.  i.e., Watch out the door vs. WATCH OUT, the door.  Green house vs. greenhouse	<b>Auditory Closure</b> Being able to fill in the blank based on the what you did hear.  I want peanut butter and ____  He went to the st____.	<b>Binaural Integration Separation</b> (dichotic listening) Being able to process information that comes into both sides of your ear. Most people have a right ear advantage.
<b>Auditory Attention</b> Being able to attend to the auditory signals, speaker's voice and also sustain attention to a speaker.				

Below are some tips that will help increase listening skills and auditory processing.



## Laguna Beach Language & Speech Clinic

Helping Children and Empowering Parents

31642 So. Coast Hwy, Ste. #205, Laguna Beach, CA 92651

www.lagunabeachlanguagespeech.com 949 715 5845

### Hocus FOCUS!

Redirect positively and avoid saying things like, “don’t pay attention to the lawnmower”. By saying “don’t pay attention”, a person is more likely to pay more attention to that distractor! Yep, instead of using energy to filter the sound out, the brain will actually focus on it more! So a better to redirect attention or (help sustain attention over time) is to use the word: **FOCUS** with the action desired. For example: Suzie focus on what I am saying or Bob, let’s focus on the smartboard. Focus on my words. If kids are not familiar with the word “focus”, then introduce the concept by using binoculars or a camera and show how the lens can zoom in and out to focus on a target.

### Show and Tell

It’s very important to literally demonstrate the behaviors you want to see. When you say, “pay attention”. Many students really don’t know what you to do. Use role playing, acting and demonstration to provide both examples and non-examples of how to listen. Discuss how you need your body and eyes for listening too.

For instance, demonstrate body listening by having the students/ kids practice

- Sitting quietly (feet on the floor, back against the chair) vs. being fidgety, rocking chair
- Quiet hands vs. hands that are poking, touching and distracting others.
- Eyes looking everywhere vs. at the person talking (listening eyes)
- Quiet mouth vs. talking to friends, singing to yourself
- Students can draw posters featuring ways to show good listening. Then posters posted and rotated as reminders in the classroom throughout the year

Older students need help with listening as well. Use a survey to promote a discussion about listening.

Ask the students what they do to monitor their listening skills: How do they think about listening...

Do I....

- sit in a good place to be a good listener
- pay attention to facial expressions
- get the emotion the speaker is trying to convey
- tune out if speaker if I think he’s boring
- get distracted by strange or different things the speaker does
- doodle or fidget within I’m listening
- “fake” listening by staring at the teacher

Then talk about the consequences of each action may have academically and socially.

### Auditory Figure Ground: Pick your spot

- Are you competing with other noises? TV, Music
- Are you shouting across a room? a house?
- Is someone clicking a pen?

Words get lost their way to ears when there is competing noise and space. I know it sounds basic but really...walk over, close the distance, get eye contact and then deliver the message. There’s a reason your mom said no shouting across the house. She wanted you to develop good communication skills.

Conversely, practice listening in noise. See how well everyone does playing “Simon Says” with background noise.

### Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is the ability to identify that spoken words include a series of individual sounds and that those sounds can be manipulated. Games that create awareness of sounds; blending sounds to form words, deleting sounds change a word, how words can rhyme, separate syllables, are important for building reading and language skills.



## Laguna Beach Language & Speech Clinic

Helping Children and Empowering Parents

31642 So. Coast Hwy, Ste. #205, Laguna Beach, CA 92651

www.lagunabeachlanguagespeech.com 949 715 5845

- Practice sound manipulation games like taking away one sound and adding another (i.e., bat...take away b...what's left..."at" . Now add /k/ sound to the front and now what do you word do you get...yes cat!).
- Practice counting how many syllables in a word.
  - Parents can shout out a word of 1-5 syllables and have the kids tap out syllables in words.
  - For older students, continue practicing phonemic awareness games with spelling words and new vocabulary from the homework or reading assignments. Use syllable segmentation to identify prefixes and suffixes.
- Syllable deletion games: Think of compound words such as rainbow, cowboy, sunshine. Have the students say the word, i.e., cowboy, take boy away and what's left.

### Rhyme Time

Nursery Rhymes and rhyming games are incredibly powerful tools for building phonological awareness and literacy skills. Ms. Heymann noted that nursery rhymes carry musicality and the patterns of beats and sounds that make up language. Repetition and memorization are vital to learning and that's how you learn nursery rhymes. With age, kids can move into more complex rhymes and poetry which offer rich examples of written language and spelling.

### Auditory Memory

Remember games like, "I'm going on a camping trip..." we used to play in the car. One person starts off, "I'm going on a camping trip and I'm bringing bananas". The next person has to include the things said previously before adding on; "I'm going on a camping trip and I'm bringing bananas and a backpack". This is a great game to practice auditory memory. With older students who do well at this game, tweak the vocabulary and add some descriptive terms, for example, "I'm going on a camping trip and bringing a dilapidated tent". Then you have opportunity to introduce or review new words.

### Auditory Sequential Memory

When children have difficulty recalling the events of the day or retelling a story in order, they have auditory sequential memory deficits. So practice with your child "retelling" stories. You can use books you have read, and ask your child to "retell" it to a sibling or other caregiver. This is great for older students as well.

### Semantically Speaking

Help your child use specific vocabulary instead of vague terms like "stuff" and "things". The content of language is called semantics. Ms. Heymann also advised that parents need to "plant and tend to your child's word garden". You help create the links and association between ideas, concepts and words. By talking things out and showing different examples, you expand a child's concept of things like "juice". At first, your child thinks everything is "juice", but then he learns that there are other kinds of "drinks" and "liquids" and the temperature can change, and the texture of thickness of a shake is certainly different then the hot chocolate grandma makes. By presenting examples of variations of one concept, children broaden their ideas and language. For older students, it's the variety of synonyms and descriptive terms they know and use that will make processing literature and stories of far and away places and people easier.

I hope you found this helpful. Thank you for considering me as a resource. I am available for parent and educator workshops.

Lynn Epstein, MS, SLP-CCC

Director of Laguna Beach Language & Speech Center

949 290 4679