

Intervention Sheet

Following Oral Directions

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Shouldn't following oral directions be easy for students?

You might think—since no reading or writing is involved—that following oral directions would be easy for all students. But consider a common monologue given by a classroom teacher:

Good morning, students! Before we begin our reading lesson for the day, if you brought your field trip permission slip, I need you to put it in the red basket on my desk. Then clear your desk of all materials except for your language arts book and turn to page 49. Read the first and second paragraphs down our targeted vocabulary words from the web that you use on these pages and then get ready to tell a sentence using each of the words with your learning buddy.

To the student who has difficulty processing language and remembering auditory information, following through on these tasks could be a daunting prospect!

To help students practice listening skills, use the activities on the following pages to create simple and complex directions.

What Is Auditory Processing?

Auditory processing is the brain's ability to receive and understand the information that is heard through the ears and is more complex than just listening or hearing. A student can have normal hearing but have difficulty processing the information he or she hears.

The student may not have one or more of the following abilities:

- **Auditory figure ground** – to understand a message given in background noise.
- **Auditory discrimination** – to tell the difference between sounds or words.
- **Auditory memory** – to remember what is heard and use it at a different time.
- **Auditory closure** – to supply information that was not heard completely.
- **Auditory synthesis** – to blend sounds together to make a word or tell the individual sounds in each word.
- **Auditory cohesion** – to follow complicated conversations that require an understanding of jokes or puns, making inferences, or drawing conclusions.

When successfully remembering and following oral directions is challenging for a student, he or she may be having difficulty with auditory memory.

Intervention Ideas to Improve Listening

Many strategies can be used in the classroom to improve a student's ability to follow oral directions. Consider the following strategies to facilitate a student's processing of language before focusing on isolated skills.

- Get the student's attention before you give a direction.
- Develop predictable classroom routines so the student knows what to expect every day.
- Provide preferential seating in which the student is close to the teacher's instruction and away from visual and auditory distractions (e.g., pencil sharpener, windows, designated spot where papers are turned in).
- Give the student visual supports, such as writing directions and information on the board or providing a written or picture schedule.
- Simplify the directions given by using short sentences or chunking the information into smaller parts.
- Refrain from interrupting yourself as you give directions.
- Use a variety of sequence words to aid in the processing of a direction (e.g., *first, second, next, then, finally*).
- Have the student paraphrase the directions to you before beginning an assignment.
- Analyze the verbal and nonverbal cues you give to let the class know you are giving a direction or saying important information, then explicitly teach these signals to the students. Examples: Do you speak louder? Do you say, "This is really important"? Do you speak more slowly? Do you say "listen" and then pause?
- Use lots of gestures and vary the loudness and inflection of your voice.
- Recognize signs of fatigue and give short breaks after activities that require listening.
- Use praise and rewards to encourage positive listening behaviors. Avoid showing your frustration when the student needs you to repeat the direction or misunderstands the direction.
- Encourage the student to ask questions to clarify or appropriately signal when he or she is uncertain of the direction.
- Enlist the student in helping decide what strategies would best help him or her recall and follow directions.

SIMPLE DIRECTIONS

Use the following list of directions to create one-, two-, and three-step directions for the student to follow.

- | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Count to three. | Get out a book. | Pick up your pencil. | Point to your nose. |
| Stand up. | Scratch your arm. | Look at the ceiling. | Say my name. |
| Hop on one foot. | Clap your hands. | Spell your name. | Click your tongue. |
| Point to the door. | Walk to my desk. | Sit on the floor. | Tell me your name. |
| Cross your arms. | Cover your mouth. | Touch your toes. | Pat your head. |
| Kick your foot. | Pretend to cry. | Bark like a dog. | Look at the flag. |
| Open this book. | Shake your head. | Tap your desk. | Close your eyes. |
| Count to six. | Find a crayon. | Sit beside your desk. | Walk to the trash can. |
| Pretend to whistle. | Snap your fingers. | Touch your knee. | Name a classmate. |

One-Step Simple Directions: Say the direction to your student and record (+) for a correct response or (0) for an incorrect response. Present the directions in a different order every day.

One-Step Simple Direction	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
<i>Touch your toes.</i>										
<h1>SAMPLE</h1>										
Total Correct	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10

Practicing Oral Directions

Two-Step Simple Directions: Say the two-part direction to your student and record (+) for a correct response or (0) for an incorrect response. The student must follow both parts of the direction in the order given. Present the directions in a different order every day.

Two-Step Simple Direction	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
Bark like a dog, then scratch your arm.										
Total Correct	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10

SAMPLE

Practicing Oral Directions

Three-Step Simple Directions: Say the three-part direction to your student and record (+) for a correct response or (0) for an incorrect response. The student must follow all parts of the direction in the order given. Present the directions in a different order every day.

Three-Step Simple Direction	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
<i>Point to the door, count to 3, then say my name.</i>										
Total Correct	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10

SAMPLE

COMPLEX DIRECTIONS

Use the following list of directions to create one-, two-, and three-step directions for the student to follow.

Show me your little finger.
Stand on your right foot.
Hop on your left foot.
Whisper your last name.
Draw a 3-sided shape in the air.
Kick your left foot 3 times.
Open this book to page 4.
Spell your name in a high voice.
Count to six with a low voice.
Name the month you were born.
Name something inside a mouth.
Tell me how old you will be on your next birthday.

Get out your science book.
Scratch your right arm.
Clap your hands over your head.
Walk to a desk in front of you.
Cover your mouth as you cough.
Name something you can drink.
Point to the corner of your desk.
Close your mouth tightly.
Find a blue crayon.
Name a vehicle with 2 wheels.
Hold a book in one hand.
Tell me an animal that starts with the /k/ sound.

Show the bottom of your foot.
Touch your knee with your elbow.
Count backwards from 10.
Tell me the first letter of your name.
Touch your toes with a pencil.
Snap your fingers twice.
Tap your desk with a crayon.
Name a number that's after 14.
Pretend to whistle with no sound.
Turn your head to the right.
Cover your eyes with your arm.
Touch your nose with your left thumb.

One-Step Complex Directions: Say the direction to your student and record (+) for a correct response or (0) for an incorrect response. Present the directions in a different order every day.

One-Step Complex Direction	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
Cover your mouth as you cough.										
SAMPLE										
Total Correct	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10

Practicing Oral Directions

Two-Step Complex Directions: Say the two-part direction to your student and record (+) for a correct response or (0) for an incorrect response. The student must follow both parts of the direction in the order given. Present the directions in a different order every day.

Two-Step Complex Direction	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
Draw a 3-sided shape in the air, then count backward from 10.										
SAMPLE										
Total Correct	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10

Practicing Oral Directions

Three-Step Complex Directions: Say the three-part direction to your student and record (+) for a correct response or (0) for an incorrect response. The student must follow all parts of the direction in the order given. Present the directions in a different order every day.

Three-Step Complex Direction	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
<i>Close your mouth tightly, show the bottom of your foot, then name a vehicle with 2 wheels.</i>										
Total Correct	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10	___/10

SAMPLE